

A day with Steve in Manhattan

Rants isn't really the right category for this, but I don't think an appropriate category exists...

My flight back home has been delayed until Tuesday night, so I get to spend the weekend in New York. I decided to head back to Manhattan so I could check it out in the daylight. Nighttime was cool, but I didn't have a lot of time there before, and there were a number of attractions that I still wanted to check out. Come live vicariously with me as I recount my experiences.

My hotel is in Long Island, which is about a half hour drive from Manhattan, so instead of driving and having to deal with both traffic on the way there and parking when I got there, I opted to take the Long Island Rail Road. I got stuck sitting with two old Jewish ladies who rambled on and on about basically nothing. I took note of a portion of their conversation regarding why one of the ladies had so much junk in her purse. I happened to think she carried too much as well. Forty-five minutes and \$9.50 later, I arrived at Penn Station in central Manhattan.

Right above Penn Station is Madison Square Garden. Unfortunately, I didn't realize that when I was leaving the station, so I didn't even check it out. The first place I checked out was two blocks east: the Empire State Building. It costs \$10 to get to the observation deck on the 86th floor. At around 1000 feet high, you can certainly see a lot; the view was absolutely incredible. You can see everything from the Statue of Liberty (although it's very small from that distance) to the Chrysler building to the Manhattan and Brooklyn bridges crossing the East River. The view helped me plan what I was going to do; I decided to walk south. Heading down 5th and 6th Avenues, I passed the Flatiron Building (that's the triangle-shaped one that is often featured in pictures), and continued through the mess of construction and traffic that is Soho and Tribeca.

The aim of this journey south was to see Ground Zero, where the twin towers of the World Trade Center once stood. I didn't think it was so far away, but walking 60 blocks is a good way to put distance in perspective. It is so crowded with people and traffic down there, that even without all the workers in those office buildings, I cannot imagine the chaos that ensued when all that crazy shit went down. I got some pictures of the big gaping hole that is currently there, and read some placards at the site commemorating the people who died during the attack. At Ground Zero, I met a nice couple from Denver, Colorado who gave me a map of Manhattan that I put to very good use.

Proceeding around the southern tip of the island, I walked through Battery Park and saw where the ferries for Liberty and Ellis Islands were docked. It was starting to drizzle, so I decided not to go across

to the Statue of Liberty. I took a picture from the shore, but I'm pretty sure it was too far away to turn out very well.

I was as far south as I was going to get, so I turned back up north. I walked past Wall Street in the Financial District and got pictures of Trump Tower and the New York Stock Exchange building. It started to rain a little harder now, so I decided to get somewhere with a roof. I took the subway all the way up to 72nd street west & 9th.

By the time I exited the subway, it wasn't raining so hard anymore. I walked east through Central Park, which is quite a nice place. There was a bunch of people swing dancing while wearing in-line skates; definitive proof that in New York, no matter how obscure your interests, there will always be a shitload of other crazy people who share them.

The east side of Central Park is bounded by 5th avenue. I was much further north than my original position, so southward was my direction of choice once again. I got about five blocks when the sky just opened up and brought buckets of water from the sky upon the unwary pedestrians below. I took refuge in T.G.I. Friday's, but not quickly enough to avoid getting extremely wet. After supper, it was still absolutely pouring, so I got a cab back to Penn Station to catch my train to Long Island.

Remember the old Jewish ladies from the way down? The way back was no better. I rode home behind two middle-aged lesbians with mullets. Ack. I never want to see that ever again.

Unfortunately, even though I took a schwack of photos, I do not have my compact flash card reader with me, so I can't get them off of my camera. You will all have to wait until I get home to see them. I think I took about 60 of them, give or take.

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