



New York: New Museum For Swamped Lady Liberty

A NEW MUSEUM AIMS TO EASE OVER-CROWDING AT THE STATUE OF LIBERTY – A UNESCO LANDMARK THAT ATTRACTS 4.5 MILLION PEOPLE ANNUALLY.

By Bernard O’Riordan • May 13, 2019



Lady Liberty’s original 3,600 pound torch gets a new home this week when the \$100 million Statue of Liberty Museum opens in New York Harbour.

Visitors will be able to get up close and personal with the iconic glowing torch and experience a multimedia show with interactive galleries and a theatre when the new 26,000-square-foot space opens on Thursday.

[EarthCam](#) documented construction at the site, with a time-lapse video (above) capturing the moment the first sods were turned back in October 2016 through to the arrival of the torch at its new home this year.

It’s hoped the new Inspiration Gallery, located alongside the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Statue of Liberty, will ease over-crowding at the popular tourist landmark, which attracted around 4.5 million visitors last year.

While the majority of visitors were individuals, about 250,000 people also took commercial tours in 2018 – six times the number of people that did so a decade ago, according to the National Park Service which oversees the statue.

To combat over-tourism, commercial guided tours will not be allowed inside the new museum, the sixth-floor pedestal observation deck or the National Museum of Immigration at nearby Ellis Island from May 16.

Outdoor commercial tours will still be permitted but visitors will have to join official tours run by the National Park Service if they want to explore the statue’s famed observation deck and the Ellis Island Museum.

Close to 250 guides regularly lead tours on Liberty and Ellis Islands – about several dozen per day.

Even though just 4 per cent of tourist use outside tours, it’s claimed large groups are causing gridlock, blocking pathways and potentially damaging the iconic sites.

It’s symptomatic of the gridlock occurring across Manhattan, from the subways to the pavement, with a record-breaking 65.2 million people visiting last year.

Over the same period, the city’s population has ballooned to around 8.4 million people, making it one very congested, and increasingly agitated, city.

The new Statue of Liberty Museum with its floor-to-ceiling glass took three years to plan and construct, and includes three gallery



spaces as well as an immersive theatre that showcases the story of the statue and the ideals of freedom and democracy that she represents.

A processional staircase and rooftop pavilion with sweeping views of the Manhattan skyline will provide priceless selfie opportunities for the 30,000 people expected to visit each day.

The colossal, copper-plated iron torch – a gift from the people of France to mark the alliance between the two countries during the American Revolution – greeted more than 17 million immigrants arriving at nearby Ellis Island between 1892 to 1954.

More than 40 per cent of the US population are descendants of those who passed through Ellis Island in search of a better life.