



OFFICIAL VISIT GUIDE 2026

the 9/11 Memorial & Museum

New York · From 31.46€

<https://site-911memorial.visit-tickets.com/en/> · Skip-the-Line Tickets & Official Prices



History & Experience

ORIGIN & HISTORY

From Ruins to Reflection

GOOGLE **4.8** ★★★★★ 94 432 reviews

TIQETS **4.9** ★★★★★ 6 352 reviews

The story of the **9/11 Memorial & Museum** begins not with construction, but with a profound silence that followed the devastation of September 11, 2001. In the immediate aftermath, the site was a chaotic zone of rescue and recovery, where the footprints of the Twin Towers remained as gaping wounds in the earth. The decision to create a permanent memorial emerged from a global competition launched in 2003, seeking a design that could honor the nearly **3,000 victims** without replicating the lost towers. This quest for meaning led to the selection of Michael Arad's 'Reflecting Absence' in 2004, a bold concept that prioritized the void left behind over physical reconstruction.

The architectural vision was realized through a collaboration between architect Michael Arad and landscape architect Peter Walker, who designed two massive **reflecting pools** set into the ground at the exact locations of the original towers. These pools are not merely decorative; they are the largest man-made waterfalls in North America, drawing water from underground cisterns before cascading down sheer black granite walls. The design deliberately ignores the requirement to build structures over the footprints, instead allowing the **absence itself** to become the primary monument. This choice reflects a deep respect for the scale of the loss, ensuring that no new building would overshadow the memory of what was destroyed.

Beneath this serene park lies the museum, constructed by Davis Brody Bond and Snøhetta, which opened its doors to the public on **May 21, 2014**. The museum's entrance pavilion is located at street level, but the main galleries descend deep into the earth, reaching the bedrock of the World Trade Center site. This subterranean journey mirrors the emotional descent required to confront the reality of the attacks. The space houses monumental artifacts, including the last column recovered from the rubble, serving as a tangible link to the events of that day and the subsequent years of healing and rebuilding.

The memorial also honors the six victims of the **1993 World Trade Center bombing**, acknowledging that the tragedy of 2001 was part of a longer history of violence against this symbol of American commerce. The names of all victims are inscribed on bronze parapets surrounding the pools, arranged according to 'meaningful adjacencies' so that those who were together or related are placed side by side. This meticulous attention to detail ensures that every individual life is recognized, transforming the abstract number of casualties into a personal narrative of **loss and connection** that resonates with visitors from around the world.

THE EXPERIENCE

Stepping onto the plaza of the National September 11 Memorial, visitors are immediately struck by a sense of **solemn tranquility** amidst the bustling Financial District. The air feels different here, cooler and quieter, as the sound of rushing water from the reflecting pools drowns out the city's noise. The vast open spaces, framed by rows of swamp white oaks, invite a slow, reflective pace. There is no rush, only a gentle pull toward the edges of the pools, where the names of the victims glow softly in the bronze panels, creating an intimate dialogue between the living and the remembered.

Descending into the museum, the atmosphere shifts from open reflection to intense **historical immersion**. The light dims, guiding you through a linear narrative that moves from the morning of September 11 to the present day. The architecture itself becomes a vessel for memory, with walls of steel and glass framing powerful artifacts and personal stories. It is a place where silence is not empty but filled with the weight of testimony, demanding a respectful stillness that allows each visitor to process the magnitude of the event in their own way.



PREPARING FOR YOUR VISIT

Practical Information

ADDRESS Financial District • Subway: Cortlandt St (A, C, E) or Fulton St (A, C, E, J, Z, 2, 3, 4, 5).	OPENING HOURS The museum is closed on Tuesdays (unless otherwise noted) and on September 11. The outdoor memorial is open 7 days a week year-round.
PRICING Children under 4 free. {promo}. Book several months in advance to secure your time slot.	VISIT DURATION Allow between 45 and 90 minutes to explore the museum at a leisurely pace. Add 30 mins for security checks and biometric scanners.
PHOTOS Photography is allowed in certain areas but prohibited near sensitive artifacts. Check signs on site.	AUDIENCE Content is intense and recommended for teenagers (+12 years). The outdoor memorial is accessible to children with preparation.

HOW TO GET THERE

Access & Transportation

	Subway : WTC Cortlandt — 1 min à pied New York Moynihan Train Hall At Penn Station (17 min) • Grand Central Station (19 min)
	Bus : WTC Cortlandt — 1 min à pied New York Moynihan Train Hall At Penn Station (27 min) • Grand Central Station (30 min)
	Car New York Moynihan Train Hall At Penn Station (19 min) • Grand Central Station (21 min)
	Citi Bike / Bicycle New York Moynihan Train Hall At Penn Station (24 min) • Grand Central Station (27 min)

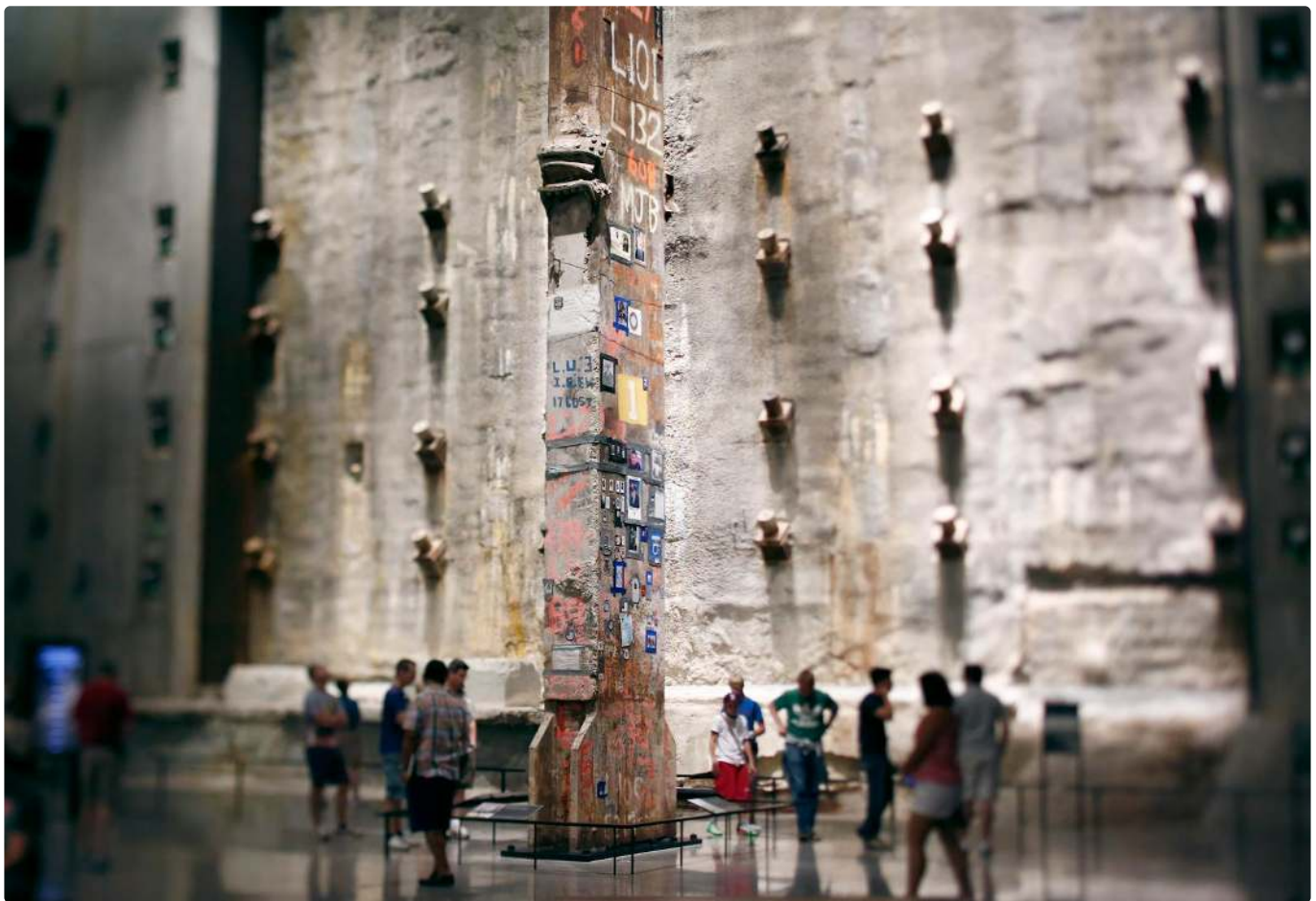
LOCALISATION

Où se trouve the 9/11 Memorial & Museum ?



📍 180 Greenwich Street — NY 10007 New York

🌐 40°42.695' N, 74°0.800' O



ORGANIZATION

Navigating the Memorial Grounds

Memorial Plaza (Ground Level)

This is the outdoor park featuring the two large reflecting pools surrounded by bronze parapets engraved with the names of the victims. A forest of 512 swamp white oak trees provides shade and privacy, creating distinct groves for reflection. Visitors can read the 'Meaningful Adjacencies' guide to understand why certain names are grouped together.

Museum Entrance & Concourse

Located on Liberty Street, this level serves as the transition point. Here, you will pass through rigorous security checks similar to airport screening. The concourse lobby offers information desks, audio guide rentals, and a brief introduction to the museum's layout before descending into the main galleries.

Subterranean Galleries & Bedrock

The core of the museum experience lies below ground. You will walk through chronological exhibits detailing the events of 9/11, viewing artifacts like the Last Column and personal belongings. The path leads to the 'Survivor Staircase' and finally to the Bedrock Gallery, which features the Survivor Tree and a view of the actual bedrock foundation.

ACCESSIBILITY

**Accessibility for people with reduced mobility**

Full wheelchair accessibility with dedicated elevators and ramps for the museum and park.

**Families**

Intense content for teens; outdoor memorial accessible with parental preparation.

**Audio guide**

French, English, Spanish



Must-sees

SELECTION

Essential Elements of Remembrance

01

Outdoor Memorial

The Reflecting Pools

These two square pools mark the footprints of the Twin Towers. Water cascades down the sides, creating a **powerful auditory presence** that dominates the soundscape. The black granite bottom appears to have no end, symbolizing the depth of the loss. Standing at the edge, you feel the connection to the specific location where the towers once stood.

💡 The pools are the **largest man-made waterfalls** in North America, requiring complex engineering to maintain the constant flow of water from underground cisterns.

02

Bedrock Gallery

The Survivor Tree

This white birch tree survived the destruction of the World Trade Center, buried under debris for months. It was nursed back to health and replanted near the South Pool. Now housed in a glass enclosure, it stands as a universal symbol of **resilience and hope**. Its bare branches in winter and full leaves in summer mirror the cycle of grief and renewal.

💡 It was initially thought to be dead, but workers noticed small green shoots emerging from the roots, leading to its **miraculous recovery**.

03

Gallery 1

The Last Column

This massive steel beam, twisted and charred, was one of the last pieces of structural steel removed from the rubble. It hangs prominently in the first gallery, serving as a visceral reminder of the **physical force** of the collapse. Its size and damage convey the sheer scale of the destruction in a way that photographs cannot.

💡 It was identified by its unique markings and became a **symbolic anchor** for the museum's collection of artifacts.

04

Bronze Parapets

Meaningful Adjacencies

The names on the memorial are not alphabetical but arranged based on relationships. Colleagues, family members, and friends are placed next to each other. This thoughtful arrangement allows visitors to trace the **human connections** that existed on that day. Reading these groupings transforms the list of names into stories of shared lives.

💡 Families worked closely with designers to ensure that **no victim was isolated**, preserving the social fabric even in death.

05

Gallery 3

The Survivor Staircase

A section of the original emergency staircase from Tower One remains intact within the museum. It is preserved exactly as it was found, covered in dust and debris. Walking past it, you can almost hear the footsteps of those who escaped. It represents the **courage of survivors** and the narrow margin between life and death.

💡 This staircase was used by hundreds of people to escape, becoming a **lifeline** during the chaos.

06

Various Galleries

Personal Artifacts Display

Throughout the museum, cases display everyday items recovered from the site: shoes, watches, jewelry, and ID cards. These objects are deeply personal, grounding the historical narrative in individual experiences. Each item tells a story of a person who was there, making the **abstract tragedy concrete** and relatable.

💡 Many of these items were donated by families who wished to share their loved ones' **personal histories** with the world.

07

Outdoor Memorial

Oak Forest

The 512 swamp white oaks planted around the pools create a natural canopy. They provide shade and privacy, allowing visitors to find quiet moments away from the crowds. The trees represent **renewal and growth**, contrasting with the concrete surroundings. Their rustling leaves add a gentle, organic sound to the memorial experience.

💡 Swamp white oaks were chosen because they are native to New York and known for their **longevity and strength**.

08

Gallery 2

Video Testimonies

Large screens display interviews with survivors, first responders, and family members. Hearing their voices adds an emotional layer to the visual exhibits. These testimonies capture the raw emotion and confusion of the day, offering a **direct human connection** to the events. They remind us that history is made of individual experiences.

💡 Some recordings were made shortly after the attacks, capturing the **immediate shock** and grief of the witnesses.

TIPS

Preparing for a Respectful Visit

TIMING

Arrive at least 30 minutes before your scheduled time slot to account for rigorous security checks, which are similar to airport procedures.

BILLET

Book tickets several months in advance via the official website, as slots sell out quickly, especially for weekends and holidays.

PARCOURS

Start with the outdoor memorial early in the morning when it is less crowded, then proceed to the museum for a more focused experience.

PHOTO

Photography is allowed in most areas but prohibited near sensitive artifacts; check signs carefully and respect the solemn atmosphere.

PAUSE

Take breaks in the oak forest groves to rest and reflect; the museum visit is emotionally intense and requires mental stamina.

ENFANTS

Prepare teenagers for the graphic content and emotional weight of the exhibits; the outdoor memorial is accessible but requires parental guidance.

AUDIOGUIDE

Rent the audio guide, available in nine languages, to gain deeper insights into the historical context and personal stories presented in the galleries.

CONFORT

Wear comfortable shoes suitable for prolonged walking and standing, as the visit involves navigating both the large outdoor plaza and the underground museum stairs.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FAQ

Do I need to book in advance for the museum?

Yes, booking is mandatory and can be made up to six months in advance. Time slots are strict and tickets sell out quickly, especially on weekends. Confirm your date as soon as possible.

Can I enter the museum without a ticket if I am visiting the memorial?

No, these are two separate entries. The outdoor memorial is free and open to all, while the museum requires a paid ticket purchased separately. No crossover is allowed without a valid museum ticket.

What is the cancellation policy?

Conditions vary depending on the ticket type, but free cancellation is often possible a few days before the visit. Check specific terms at purchase to avoid extra fees. Flexibility depends on the platform used.

Are there discounted rates?

Preferential rates exist for students, seniors, and US military members. Children under 4 generally enjoy free entry. Consult the official website to verify your eligibility before booking.

What is the difference between the memorial and the museum?

The memorial is an outdoor free park with reflecting pools and engraved names. The museum is a paid indoor building containing artifacts and historical exhibitions. They are two complementary but distinct experiences.

DID YOU KNOW?

Anecdotes & curiosities

Design of Absence

The winning design by Michael Arad and Peter Walker was chosen for its focus on **absence rather than presence**. Unlike other proposals that sought to rebuild the towers, this design uses the void to honor the victims, creating a space where memory fills the emptiness.

Depth Significance

The memorial is located 9.1 meters below street level, a reference to the date **September 11**. This depth connects the surface park to the underground museum, symbolizing the layers of history and memory beneath the city.

1993 Bombing Inclusion

The memorial honors the six victims of the **1993 World Trade Center bombing**, acknowledging that the tragedy of 2001 was part of a longer history of attacks on this site. This inclusion ensures a comprehensive record of loss.

Opening Ceremony

The museum opened to the public on **May 21, 2014**, six days after its dedication by President Barack Obama. This timing allowed for a period of preparation and reflection before welcoming the general public.

AROUND THE MUSEUM

The Financial District offers a stark contrast to the solemnity of the memorial, blending historic landmarks with modern vitality. After your visit, consider walking to the **Federal Hall National Memorial**, a free site where George Washington took his oath of office, providing a poignant historical counterpoint to the recent tragedies. For a panoramic perspective, ascend the **One World Observatory**, whose views encompass the memorial grounds and the Atlantic Ocean, offering a broader context of the city's resilience. If you need a moment of spiritual calm, the rebuilt **St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church** stands nearby, dedicated to the heroes of 9/11. Finally, explore the lively Fulton Street area for dining, where numerous restaurants and food halls provide a warm respite after the emotional intensity of the museum.



Visiting the 9/11 Memorial & Museum is more than a tour; it is an act of **collective remembrance**. It challenges us to look directly at the fragility of life and the resilience of the human spirit. Whether you stand by the cascading waters or walk through the dimly lit galleries, you leave with a deeper understanding of how a community heals. This experience is essential, not just for its historical significance, but for the quiet, powerful lesson it teaches about **hope and unity** in the face of unimaginable loss.