

Seaport Neighborhood Tour

Meet at Water St. Residence Hall 200 Water St. @ Fulton St.

1. **Water St. Residence Hall** was originally built as a luxury apartment complex for downtown Manhattan. It opened as a residence hall in the fall of 1998. It boasts a fitness center on the 5th Floor and a campus convenience store, the “C3 Quickstop” in the lobby. The Quickstop does take both Declining Dollars and Campus Cash.

Looking down Water St. towards John St. you will see **Europa Café (199 Water St.)**, an eatery that takes campus cash (the debit-card-like function on your NYUCard, which is separate from the Declining Dollars that come with NYU meal plans). There is also a **Staples** on the west side, the Fulton St. side, of the Water St. building if you’re ever in need of school supplies.

Lower Manhattan streets usually come with an interesting history behind their names. **Water St.** itself was once the easternmost part of Manhattan until the island was expanded in the 1690s. Other streets have shared this distinction, as you will see later in the tour. Water Street was also a commercial hub in the mid 19th century so the street was widened and made a two-ways to allow in more traffic. Several buildings were demolished in the widening of the street.

Turn left out of the residence hall to Fulton St. Turn right onto Fulton St. and walk into the shopping area until Front St.

2. Welcome to the **South Street Seaport**. This strip of shops and restaurants serves as a fun place to hang out and shop. There are benches all around to sit down and enjoy the ambiance. At the further end of the dock, you can sit right next to the water. Sometimes at the Seaport, you can catch a free street performance or a random concert put on by the Seaport, by a radio station, or by some other company. There are also promotions and contests always being run at the Seaport. And every winter season, from Thanksgiving to Christmas, the Big Apple Chorus puts on the Singing Christmas Tree, an hour set of holiday music. Be warned though, that on weekends throughout the year, the Seaport can get crowded.

Face towards Water St: At the entrance to the seaport is the **Titanic Memorial Tower** built in 1913 to commemorate the deaths of those on the Titanic. It originally stood atop the old **Seaman’s Church Institute** building (now at 241 Water St.) and would signal to the ships in the harbor when it was noon. It was brought to its current location in 1967.

The **South Street Seaport Museum (207 Front Street)** is also located here and has different exhibits throughout the year as well as boats, including the Peking and the Ambrose, docked in the harbor for visitation. You can check out their website for more info, www.southstseaport.org.

To your left: **Schermerhorn Row**, named after its developer Peter Schermerhorn, was built between 1811 and 1812. In the past, the row housed industries selling goods necessary for naval vessels. It is now the only surviving block of Georgian-Federal-style and Greek Revival commercial structures in the city. The row received landmark recognition in 1977. There are several stores and a restaurant on the ground floor of the row starting with **Brookstone** and ending with the **Heartland Brewery**.

Turn around and face the water: **Circle Line** has several boat tours leaving from the Seaport that travel around the waters surrounding Manhattan. For an admissions fee, you can see historic sites like the Empire State Building, Statue of Liberty, and the Brooklyn Bridge. There are also boat tours that leave from Battery Park City, further south in Manhattan. For more information, visit www.circlelinedowntown.com.

The **New York Water Taxi** also does tours on the water. Or you can just take a ride on the taxi stopping at its different commuter stops. For more information on routes and fares, visit the booth at the Seaport or visit online at www.nywatertaxi.com.

The **Pier 17 Pavilion** is located on the dock and is like a mini indoor shopping mall. Inside there’s a **Pizzeria Uno** and several retail stores like **Express** and **American Eagle**. A **TKTS** booth where you can get discounted theatre tickets is also located inside. There’s a food court on the top level with a promenade that has a spectacular view of the **Brooklyn Bridge**. Completed in 1883, it took 14 years and \$15 million to complete and is held up by fourteen thousand miles of wire. The bridge has a foot-path for walking traffic that you can enter at Centre Street (*you can locate Centre St. on the map*). While walking across the entire bridge and back may take

a while (round trip - about an hour in total), it's definitely one thing you should do while in New York. And it's free!

And just a little street name history: **Front St.** was named so because it became the island's eastern most border in the 18th century.

Cross back over Water St. on Fulton. Continue on Fulton until Pearl.

3. **Pearl St.** was also the eastern most part of the island at some point. It was named Pearl St. after the abundance of oyster shells that washed ashore.

Fulton Street was named in honor of Robert Fulton, who made the first successful steam-powered trip up the Hudson River in his steamship, the Clermont, from Lower Manhattan to Albany in 1807. This led to the launch of the world's first commercial steamboat service between Albany and Manhattan.

Looking down Fulton you'll notice a **McDonalds** down the road. This McDonalds is open 24 hours for your dining convenience. Across the street is **Burger King**. It is not open 24 hours but if McDonalds isn't your thing, Burger King might be.

Continue on Fulton St. to Ryders Alley.

4. **Ryder's Alley** became Ryder's Alley in 1842. It's named after Robert Ryder, an English surveyor during the Colonial Period. Previous names of the alley have been Eden's Alley and Rudder St. The alley turns right and opens up onto Gold St. In 2001, the section of Ryder's Alley that faces Gold St. was renamed **Eden's Alley**, after Mcdef Eden, a friend of Aaron Burr, who had an estate around where Times Square is today. The paving stones that are seen on the street are the original stones from the 1800s. In 2004, Robert Sullivan published a book called *Rats* that documented the life of rats in New York, specifically Eden's Alley. He spent a year watching the rats in the alley at night and wanted to interpret their interactions with humans.

There is **the Strand Books Annex (95 Fulton)** at the corner of Gold St. This is a great place to go for cheap used books. The full size Strand Bookstore is on the corner of 12th St. and Broadway.

Continue on Fulton until William St.

5. **William Street** had several other names in the past like King George Street and Borgis Joris path. It was also known as Glassmakers' Street in the mid 17th Century since it was home to several Dutch glassmakers. Operations on this block continued to the eve of the American Revolution.

At **131 William Street**, between Fulton St. and John St., was the birthplace of writer Washington Irving in 1783.

At this corner is **Café Seaport (150 William St.)**, which has good prices on sandwiches and burgers.

Continue on Fulton until Nassau St. Turn right (north) onto Nassau St. Continue on Nassau St. until Beekman St.

6. **Beekman St.** was named for Willem Beekman who came to America from Holland. His daughter married Peter Stuyvesant's son. Beekman went on to become a nine-term mayor of the colony. His property extended from what is now Nassau Street to the East River.

Looking to your right you should see the **NYU Downtown Hospital**. It began as the New York Infirmity in 1853, founded by Elizabeth Blackwell, MD, the first female physician in the United States. It was built primarily to provide care for the impoverished women and children of Lower Manhattan. Another part of the history is the Beekman Street hospital, started by a group of concerned financiers in response to a terrorist bombing at JP Morgan in the early 1920s. Large developments in the field of healthcare and breakthroughs in science and medicine have occurred in these two institutions including the adoption of formal written medical records and paramedic training and modern ambulance service. The NYU Downtown Hospital is the only full-service hospital in Lower Manhattan and is affiliated with the NYU School of Medicine.

Turn left (west) onto Beekman St. Continue on Beekman until Park Row.

7. **Theatre Alley**, which you have just passed does not actually contain any theatres. Theatre Alley was used as a service lane for carriages bringing theatergoers to the Park Theatre on Park Row. Because there were carriages approaching from each direction, and there were too many traffic jams, Theatre Alley became New York's first one-way street.

Where you stand is the end of the former “**Newspaper Row.**” From the 1840s to the turn of the century, this row, starting at the intersection of Centre St. and Park Row, housed the printing headquarters for over 15 daily newspapers, including *The World*, *The Tribune* and *The Times*, as well as foreign-language publications. In 1993, there were only four daily newspapers left.

Cross over Park Row and enter the park. Walk to the fountain in the center.

8. Across Park Row is **City Hall Park**, New York City’s first official park. The park is 250 years old and has been a burial ground for paupers and the site of public executions, parades, and protests. The Declaration of Independence was read here in 1776 in the presence of George Washington. In the park, there is a statue of Horace Greely, the founder of the Tribune. There is also a replica of one of the original subway entrance kiosks. There are benches situated around the park for relaxing on a beautiful day.

The park houses the **City Hall** of New York, completed in 1811 at a cost of \$500,000. It was the third City Hall in New York City. City Hall was the first station on the “First Municipal Rapid Transit Railroad of the City of New York.” The original line followed the Lexington Avenue route to Grand Central, went west on 42nd along what is now the shuttle route, and north on Broadway to 145th Street. The original stop is no longer in use.

Walk through the park (west) and exit on the other side of the fountain. Cross over Broadway. Turn left (south) on Broadway. Continue on Broadway until Barclay St.

9. Because of the proximity to Trinity Church (which will be visited later on the tour) several streets in this area were named after those involved with the church. **Barclay Street** was named after Reverend Henry Barclay who was the second rector of Trinity Church. He is shown preaching to the Indians in a panel on one of the Church’s doors.

Vesey Street, which you will visit next, was named after the Reverend William Vesey, the first rector of Trinity Church. He founded a school for slaves and Native Americans and helped to establish the Charity School (now Trinity School) on W. 91st St.

Continue on Broadway until Vesey St.

10. **211 Broadway – St. Paul’s Cathedral** is NYC’s oldest church building, built in 1764. It is New York’s only surviving pre-Revolutionary church and was modeled after St. Martin-in-the-Fields in London’s Trafalgar Square. It originally served Trinity Church’s uptown parishioners as the colonial city was expanding upwards. During the time that New York was the nation’s capital, George Washington worshipped here. The cathedral survived the 9/11 attacks despite being right across the street from Ground Zero. It served as a refuge for recovery workers during the clean-up. Inside the church are 9/11 displays and the events of days following the attack and on victims lost. Concerts at One, a series of free concerts held at one o’clock on various days and put on by Trinity Church, Wall St., are held here. For full concert listings, visit <http://www.trinitywallstreet.org/>.

Turn right (west) onto Vesey St. until Church St. Cross over Church St. to the World Trade Center site.

11. On September 11, 2001, the World Trade Center buildings were attacked by two hi-jacked planes. Five other WTC buildings were destroyed and almost 3,000 lives were lost. The area where these towers once stood is now referred to as **Ground Zero**. (*Students can take a few moments to look at the different plaques with information on the fence*)

Cross back over Church St. and walk (east) onto Fulton St. Continue on Fulton St. until Broadway. Turn right (south) on Broadway. Continue on Broadway until John St. Cross over Broadway.

12. **John Street** was named after a 17th century shoemaker, John Harpendingh. The area surrounding where John St. is now was once known as “Shoemaker’s Pasture” because of the abundance of tanneries located there. The tanneries had to move north though because of the foul odors they were producing.

Turn left (east) onto John St. Continue on John St. until Nassau St. Turn right (south) onto Nassau St. Continue on Nassau St. until Maiden Lane.

13. **Maiden Lane** was named by the Dutch because it ran along a stream where the women would do laundry. It was also the site of the first organized slave revolt on April 7, 1712. More than 20 slaves set fire to the home of Peter Van Tilborough, a slave-owner. Of the Van Tilborough household, 9 were killed. Slaves who were thought by the British to be conspiring to revolt were killed or tortured and dragged through the streets by carts.

Continue on Nassau St. until Liberty St.

14. **33 Liberty Street – The Federal Reserve Bank** building was completed in 1924 and currently holds about \$140 billion in gold. The bank's vaults are located 86 feet below street level. By 1927, the vaults contained 10% of the world's entire store of monetary gold. There are 12 Federal Reserve Banks throughout the nation with the New York bank being the largest. The bank does give free visitor tours and reservations must be in advance. For more information visit www.newyorkfed.org.

Liberty Street was once Crown St. In the years after the War of Independence, efforts to remove any references to Britain or British royalty included the renaming of several streets. Hence, in 1794, Crown Street was renamed Liberty Street.

Continue on Nassau until Cedar St.

15. *To your left* is **Chase Manhattan Plaza**, bounded by Pine, Liberty, Nassau and William Streets. Designed by the architecture firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, the 60-story Chase Manhattan building was constructed between January 1957 and the summer of 1960. The surrounding plaza's first public-art installation was completed in 1964, when sculptor Isamu Noguchi unveiled his five-meter-deep circular sunken-water sculpture *Sunken Plaza*, to the public. The piece contains basalt rocks transported here from Japan. The plaza is also occupied by French artist Jean Dubuffet's *Groupe de Quatre Arbres* or *Group of Four Trees* of which you can see a good view if you look to your left. Dubuffet's five-story black-and-white sculpture was completed in 1972 and is comprised of approximately 25 tons of aluminum, fiberglass, and plastic resin.

Continue on Nassau St. until Wall St.

16. *Looking to your right* you'll see the steeples to **Trinity Church**. Consecrated in 1846, Trinity Church's gilded cross dominated the skyline of lower Manhattan. Skyscrapers were built surrounding it as years passed, blocking its view to those sailing into the harbor. There have been three Trinity Church buildings at this site. The Church you see now was designed by Richard Upjohn and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Trinity Church was the first to minister to African-Americans, both enslaved and free, in 1705. The burial ground at Trinity includes the graves and memorial of historic figures including Alexander Hamilton, Robert Fulton, and Albert Gallatin, one of NYU's founding fathers.

This intersection is known as the "financial crossroads of the world." **Wall Street** was once the site of a protective wall built in 1653 to prevent invasion of New Amsterdam by the English. As the city began to move upward, the wall deteriorated and was demolished around 1695.

To your left is **Federal Hall (26 Wall St.)**. This was the site of New York City's 18th century City Hall. This is where the Stamp Act Congress assembled to protest "taxation without representation" and where the Continental Congress met after the American Revolution to establish procedures for creating new states. This is also where George Washington was inaugurated as the nation's first president. The current structure was built as the Customs House in 1842. It then became the U.S. Sub-Treasury in 1862 before being replaced by the Federal Reserve Bank.

Across Wall St. is the **J.P. Morgan Building** built in 1873. In 1920, a wagon exploded in front of the building killing 20 people. It was assumed it was aimed at the J.P. Morgan building. There are pockmarks on the Wall Street side left there for remembrance.

Further down on Broad St. (a continuation of Nassau St.) is **10-12 Broad Street - New York Stock Exchange**. Started in 1792 with a meeting of 24 merchants, brokers, and auctioneers who signed the Buttonwood Agreement. The Agreement stated that they would trade securities on a commission basis. In 1817, the New York brokers established a formal organization, the New York Stock & Exchange Board. It officially became the New York Stock Exchange in 1863.

