

ZOOMER

CANADA

ANNUAL GUIDE 2011

THE MONEY ISSUE

> SAVE MORE
> FIGHT DEBT
> CASH IN

FINANCIAL SECURITY FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE

MOSES

ZOOMER PHILOSOPHY
WHY STAYING ON THE JOB
WILL HELP CANADA'S ECONOMY
AND SAVE YOUR MARRIAGE, PG. 10

CARP

WORKING FOR YOU!
TOXIC TAX ALERT, PG. 96

Weight Matters

SIMPLE AND SCIENTIFIC
WAYS TO KEEP IT DOWN

GO NATURAL

EASY OVER-THE-COUNTER
HEALTH SOLUTIONS

FOR 40s 50s 60s 70s 80s PLUS

HE'S ONE GORDON LIGHTFOOT

SERIOUSLY
STILL ON THE ROAD

*"I just want you to know
that I'm doing great"*

PHOTOGRAPHY
BY BRYAN ADAMS

CROSS BORDER

BEYOND SHOPPING
IN BUFFALO

PLUS
TAKE THE FAMILY:
A WEEKEND IN
NEW YORK CITY

MARCH 2011 \$4.50 CANADA
ZOOMERMAG.COM DISPLAY UNTIL MARCH 15



0 55113 28965 1

EMPIRE STATE BUILDING

A Guide to the Views

A guidebook to the bird's-eye views of the Empire State Building is reflective of the edifice's Art Deco architecture.



CROSS-BORDER
TRAVEL SPECIAL
NEW YORK
STATE

City Pass: Save between \$49 and \$65 by buying a City Pass for six NYC attractions (\$79 for adults, \$59 for youths) — plus you get to skip most ticket lines, perfect if your time is limited. Attractions include Museum of Modern Art, American Museum of Natural History, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Top of the Rock (or the Guggenheim), Empire State Building, and admission and ferry ride to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island (or a two-hour Circle Line Sightseeing Cruise). Buy it online in advance or purchase it at any of the attractions and use it for the duration of your stay. www.citypass.com/new-york (available in 10 other cities, including Toronto and San Francisco).

ALL-AGES NEW YORK CITY

IT'S EASY TO TAKE A BITE OUT OF THE BIG APPLE WITH THE KIDS — OR GRANDKIDS — IN TOW BY VIVIAN VASSOS

Granted, the kids I'm talking about are in their teens, so the options become broader — or do they? If you're travelling with your toddler or an under-10 grandchild, New York City is filled with delights that don't necessarily cost much. A stroll through Central Park can include a visit to more than a dozen playgrounds, a climb on whimsical sculptures of characters from *Alice in Wonderland* and a ride on the vintage carousel. A skate on the park's Wollman Rink on a crisp winter's day is an active distraction, while a stop at the famed toy store FAO Schwarz, across from the southeast tip of the park, can amuse them for hours. (Nostalgia fact: it's also where Tom Hanks played on the jumbo-sized piano in *Big*, his breakthrough film.)

Toys, however, may not capture the imagination of teens. Don't get me wrong: FAO Schwarz did engage mine for about 20 minutes, and a ride on the indoor ferris wheel at Toys R Us in Times Square was all they needed, but my brood was interested in more mature pursuits: shopping, sightseeing and dining.

For our home base, we chose a neighbourhood that we'd yet to explore: the **Meatpacking District**, named for its primary industry during the last two centuries. Since fashion powerhouses Jeffrey, Alexander McQueen and Stella McCartney set up shop, combined with a stint as the gritty location of Samantha's apartment in *Sex and the City*, the area has expe-

rienced a rebirth as a retail and restaurant destination.

Super cool yet not cold, the **Hotel Gansevoort** in the district welcomed us with a billiards table in the lobby lounge and a roof-top pool open year-round, which turns into a vibrant nightspot after dark. (Hmmm, perhaps we don't ever have to leave!)

Prior to our arrival, I checked out the website. A highlight is the Gansevoort Kids program. Huh. Let's put that to the test. I sent off my criteria (adventurous teens, shopping, food, more food) and, a few days later, I received the results. Combined with a handful of pre-purchased City Passes (see sidebar above), we used a list of the Gansevoort concierge's suggestions to formulate some of our itinerary.

But this is New York. The lights of Broadway beckoned — and both kids have dramatic tendencies. What to see? Musicals abound, from *The Lion King* to *Wicked*. We opted for something with a little edge: *American Idiot*, the rock opera based on the band Green Day's music and lyrics. Disenchanted youth railing against the establishment? Perfect for teens who enjoy carrying on their own mini-rebellions at home. Much to my surprise, my husband and I were not the oldest couple in the audience. Teens and young adults made up the majority, but there was also a smattering of elder statesmen and women, by which I mean a few grandmothers and hippies reliving their own protest years.

Dining out in New York is a no-brainer. There are restaurants, diners and street food that beats the hot dog on every corner. For dinner with a Great White Way twist, we walked up Broadway to **Ellen's Stardust Diner** (tops on the concierge's suggestion list), where struggling musical theatre actors entertain while serving up typical diner fare. It's a riot. Waiters and waitresses belt out show tunes; the kids are enthralled. Cheque, please.

The City Pass helped us map out areas of the city we wanted to cover on each day. For one price, you get admission to some of New York's finest attractions, including midtown's **Museum of Modern Art (MoMA)** and the Empire State Building observatory, and a boat ride to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island from the southern tip of Manhattan. MoMA was a hit and a museum that, due to the more forward nature of the exhibits on display, I would have skipped when the kids were younger. But my rebels revelled in the impressionists (Van Gogh's "Starry Night"), cubists (anything by Picasso), tomato soup cans (Warhol, of course!) and spatters (the inimitable Jackson Pollack) that informed so many of my own years en route to Zoomerdom.

A few blocks away and just a page apart in the City Pass booklet is **Rockefeller Center**, home of NBC and the Top of the Rock observatory — wondrous 360-degree views of the island of Manhattan and perhaps a little less travelled than the **Empire State Building**. Exploring the

building's Depression-era frescoes, observing the skaters in the plaza below and scooping up T-shirts from the kids' favourite shows at the NBC Experience Store (everything from *Friends* to *The Office*) was topped only by the Rockette Red Velvet Cupcake from the adjacent Magnolia bakery, the midtown outpost of the beloved West Village haunt.

It's Friday night, and we haven't made reservations — the **Meatpacking District** is already humming. The concierge comes to the rescue and finds us a table at **Macelleria**, a lovely Italian boîte, steps from the hotel. Italian and no dress code? It doesn't take much to convince my teens. Macelleria (Italian for "butcher shop") takes its name from the neighbourhood's roots. The menu is varied, offering fresh, authentic pasta dishes, and the service is fast and top-notch. The concierge is two for two. We end the night walking off the pasta with a stroll up the **High Line**, an urban park created from abandoned elevated rail tracks. Equipped with landscaping, lounge chairs (all facing the Hudson River and sunset views) and winding paths, it's a great way to watch the streets below.

The Gansevoort is also a five-minute walk to the 14th Street subway station, served by the A, C, and E trains, which run up to the Upper West Side and down to Wall Street along Eighth Avenue. It's a speedy train ride to the **American Museum of Natural History** (Ben Stiller based his *Night at the Museum* here) and the life-sized blue whale, floating ethereally above museum-goers in the Milstein Hall of Ocean Life, is a must-see.

After a quick, delicious and inexpensive lunch at **Bill's Bar and Burger** (another brilliant neighbourhood suggestion from the concierge), it's time to go downtown. We catch the ferry from Battery Park to visit the **Statue of Liberty**, a pleasant afternoon jaunt (thanks, in part, to the line-skipping privilege of the City Pass).

Later, at the **Andaz Hotel's Wall and Water** restaurant in the recently embattled financial district, we devour chef Maximo Lopez May's Hudson Valley-inspired menu, featuring a unique appetizer — Cast Iron Melted Cheese (fondue-like, rich with farm-to-table cheese) — and mains that include fall-off-the-bone Slow-Braised Short Ribs (rumour has it he braises them for 12 hours). The open kitchen and the Saturday night crowd of couples and families take the pretension out of the power-brokering area and put all at ease. (Midtowners can enjoy similarly inspired fare at the Andaz Hotel's Fifth Avenue location.)

Back on Wall Street, the bull is getting the F/X treatment. We've stumbled onto the film set of the remake of Dudley Moore's *Arthur*, starring Helen Mirren. Spoiler alert! Arthur's car and the bull have just had a run-in. This is a first for all of us. A movie set and Lady Liberty in one day? Priceless. ■

For New York tourism, go to www.nycgo.com. For the Zoomer review of *American Idiot*, see "The Grandkids Guide to..." at www.zoomermag.com.

"★★★★ (out of four)
MUSICAL MAGIC IS MADE AGAIN
— Globe and Mail
 THE LINCOLN CENTER THEATER PRODUCTION OF
RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN'S
SOUTH PACIFIC
Directed by BARTLETT SHER
 ON STAGE NOW 'TIL APRIL 10!
416-644-3665 DancapTickets.com
 SAVE WITH GROUPS OF
 12 OR MORE! 416-644-3666
 PRIX FIXE DINING
 INSIDE THE THEATRE!
 TORONTO CENTRE
 FOR THE ARTS
 5040 Yonge St. Captivating Broadway Theatre®
 dancap