

CityPASS Luxury Two Ways

By Lillian Africano



Everyone loves a bargain. CityPASS is a genuine bargain, a book of admission tickets to major tourist attractions with savings of up to 50% compared to the combined regular box office prices. But even better: CityPASS ticket holders have the luxury of saving time and the convenience by skipping ticket lines (no matter how long they are) and heading straight for the entrance of whatever attraction they're visiting.

Some years ago, I became a hero to my family when we used my New York CityPASS booklets to visit the American Museum of Natural history during a school holiday period. Yes, I knew this wasn't a great time to

visit a top attraction in a busy city crowded with visitors. But when else do you take a school-age child to visit a museum without having him skip school?

Anyway, when we got to the museum, the line was horrendous, snaking down the block as far as the eye could see. We were, to say the least, discouraged. But wait – the guard called out: "CityPASS holders, this way" – and just like that, we cut the line! Next, we cut another line – the one to buy tickets. There was a special window for CityPASS holders, and all we had to do was hand in our coupons and receive an admission ticket, along with an appointment for the Rose Center (planetarium) show. My family seemed

to believe I had performed some sort of urban magic to get us into both the museum and the planetarium in just a few minutes, with a minimum of fuss, on a day when scores of people were waiting to get in.

Fast forward to our next experience: the Empire State Building Observatory. This time, because the weather was cloudy and chilly, the line was fairly short, but still we sailed through with what seemed truly like VIP treatment. Once again, my family was impressed, especially as the audio tour was included in our ticket.

The newest CityPASS for New York City, (adults, \$114; youths 6-17, \$89), includes the Empire State Building, the

American Museum of Natural History, the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Three more attractions are included and these involve choices: The Top of the Rock Observation Deck or the Guggenheim Museum; the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island or a Circle Line Sightseeing Cruise; the 9/11 Memorial & Museum or the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum. The New York City CityPASS booklet is valid for nine consecutive days.

CityPASS booklets are now also available in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Seattle, Southern California (booklet is valid for 14 consecutive days), Tampa Bay and Toronto (Canada).