## Quick Overview

This is the audio-only described version for the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island park brochure. It contains maps, historic black and white and contemporary color photographs, timelines and text that present the history of the park and how to plan your visit. Side one focuses on the Statue of Liberty. Side two focuses on Ellis Island.

Ellis Island - side two

Side two of the brochure focuses on the history and planning your visit to Ellis island. Across the top one-fifth of the brochure is a historic photograph of immigrants and some of their artifacts. Below the immigrant photograph is text about the history of Ellis Island. Below this is a timeline. The bottom half of side two provides a map of Ellis Island and three floor plans within the Ellis Island Immigration Museum along with information about planning your visit. The text of the history of Ellis Island follows. Other information and images are presented under their own sections.

Millions of Americans can claim ancestors who came through Ellis Island. Religious persecution, political strife, unemployment, family connections, the lure of adventure: These were the circumstances of the greatest migration in modern history, when shipload after shipload of people, mostly Europeans, came to the United States. Beginning in 1892, the majority took their first steps toward becoming Americans at Ellis Island. Today Ellis Island is a memorial to all who have made this nation their adopted home.

In the decade after the American Revolution, about 5,000 people immigrated to the United States every year. By the early 1900s, that many arrived at Ellis Island each day, with a record 11,747 on April 17, 1907. All told, some 12 million came through Ellis Island. The immigration station at Ellis Island opened on January 1, 1892. Five years later the wooden structure burned, along with many immigration records. On December 17, 1900, a new, fireproof French Renaissance-­style building welcomed new arrivals. Ferries and barges brought steerage passengers from steamships. As immigrants entered the building and climbed the stairs, doctors watched for a limp, labored breathing, or other suspected troubles.

In the Registry Room (Great Hall), inspectors asked immigrants their name, hometown, occupation, destination, and amount of money they carried—up to 31 questions in all. Those allowed to pass continued downstairs, exchanged money, bought provisions and perhaps rail tickets. A third or so stayed in New York City; others headed elsewhere. While 20 percent were held back for further medical or legal examination, only about two percent were denied entry.

After the inspection process was transferred to US consulates in the 1920s, only a small number of detained immigrants passed through Ellis Island. In 1954 it closed completely. Buildings deteriorated until restoration began in the 1980s. Today at Ellis Island you can retrace the steps of people pursuing new lives in a new land.

### Ellis Island Timeline

1. 1774: Samuel Ellis purchases island.
2. 1808: Federal government acquires island for harbor defense. Fort Gibson completed 1811.
3. 1855–90: Immigration processing is done by individual states; Castle Garden (now Castle Clinton National Monument) is immigration station for New York State.
4. 1886: Statue of Liberty dedicated.
5. 1890–91: Immigration is now under federal control. New York station is at the Barge Office in Battery Park.
6. 1892: New station opens at Ellis Island; destroyed by fire in 1897.
7. 1900: Present Main Building opens; built of brick trimmed with limestone and granite.
8. 1901–10: 8.8 million immigrants arrive in US; 6 million processed at Ellis.
9. 1914–18: WW I curbs immigration; enemy aliens detained at Ellis.
10. 1920s: Federal laws set immigration quotas based on national origin. In 1924 US consulates take over inspection and processing. Ellis has deportation center, U.S. Public Health Service hospital, and later a Coast Guard facility.
11. 1939–45: World War II. German, Italian, and Japanese aliens interned at Ellis.
12. 1954: Ellis Island immigration station closed permanently.
13. 1965: National origin quotas abolished. Ellis Island becomes part of Statue of Liberty National Monument.
14. 1990: Restored Main Building opens as an immigration museum.

### The People and the Artifacts of Ellis Island

A photograph and three artifacts are described. The caption applies to the photo and artifacts and reads: “Newly arrived immigrants, early 1900s; Worker's identification; immigrant child's teddy bear, inspector's cap.

1. Photo description: Across the top portion of side two is a black and white historic photograph of immigrants on Ellis Island. In a row across the entire foreground are eight immigrants, all of whom are Caucasian women and children. Depending on their height they are pictured either from slightly above or below the waist. Other immigrants are partially visible behind them. They all have serious facial expressions. Starting from the left, each of the eight immigrants in the front row are described in more detail. The first figure on the left is a little blond boy, about four years old, who squints into the sun. Next to him is a young girl, about seven years old, who wears a cotton long sleeved dress with lace trim and puffed shoulders. Next to her is a much taller young woman wearing a head scarf, cotton long sleeved petticoat, and light skirt. She holds a small parcel in her left hand. Next to her a young girl wears a light-colored fringed head scarf and dark long-sleeved woolen jacket. Beside and slightly in front of her is little girl, about five years old, who wears a head scarf and striped sailor collar. The little girl shields her eyes from the sun with her left hand. Standing next to and slightly behind the little girl is an older girl with a white head scarf and long-sleeved double-breasted jacket with velvet trim on the collar and cuffs. The next person is a middle-aged woman with a dark head scarf and long sleeve medium colored jacket with rick rack ribbon design on the front who squints into the sun. The last figure on the right is a young woman who wears a light head scarf and dark colored pleated blouse with a line of buttons down the center. These individuals are in the front line of a group of immigrants standing on the steps in front of the Main Immigration Building. Photo credit: National Archives
2. Artifact one description. At the right of the brochure underneath the last person in the front row of the black and white historic photograph are three artifacts clustered together. The first artifact on the left is a child’s teddy bear, 12 inches in height, seated with its legs and exposed feet facing toward us. The bear has light colored tan fur and is wearing coveralls. The coveralls are light grey with dark grey vertical stripes. The coveralls have a bright red collar, bright red cuffs at the bottom of each sleeve and a bright red, narrow belt at its waist. The bear’s eyes surface color has been worn away. Its nose is made of brown thread and it has also been partially worn away.
3. Artifact two description. In the middle of the grouping of artifacts is a rectangular beige identification card. At the top center is the date “1917.” Below the date is the title "United States Immigration Service, Ellis Island, NY." The card is a form with typed information requiring the person’s name who, in the case, is Miss Cecilia Greenstone. Underneath this information is the word “Representing”, which is filled in with the words “Hebrew Sheltering and Immigrant Aid Society.” Underneath this are the words “Until December 31, 1917 unless revoked.” Underneath this is the abbreviation for the word “number” followed by “98519/16” and then the signature of the commissioner.
4. Artifact three description: At the right of the grouping is a dark navy blue wool cap presented at an angle with a leather brim and braided hatband. One brass button is visible on the left end of the hatband. An embroidered insignia depicting the American eagle with a shield is located on the front center of the cap along with the letters "U.S. I.S." above the eagle and the word "Inspector" below the eagle.

## Your Visit to Ellis Island

The bottom left side of the brochure presents text and a map to help you with your visit. The text follows. The map and two photos of the registry room--one historic, one contemporary, are described under their own sections.

To make the most of your visit, consult the Main Building maps and the time chart.

The Ellis Island Immigration Museum, located in the Main Building, has exhibits, theaters, gift shop, cafe, and visitor facilities. Check at the Information Desk for guided tours, programs, and the documentary film schedule.

The museum has three floors of exhibits documenting immigrants’ experiences at Ellis Island, as well as the general history of immigration to the United States. Audio tours, available in several languages, offer a range of ways to explore the Ellis Island exhibits.

The rest of Ellis Island’s buildings—the 1930s Ferry Building, hospital, morgue, contagious disease wards, offices, housing, and maintenance facilities—can be viewed only on a guided tour. You must schedule tours in advance. For information about the Hard Hat Tour and park partner Save Ellis Island, please visit www.saveellisisland.org.

Fort Gibson, on Ellis Island 1811–1860s, was near today’s Wall of Honor. Its foundation was uncovered during work on the Wall, and is left visible. For more about Ellis Island’s military history, visit “Ellis Island Chronicles” exhibit on the museum’s third floor.

The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation built the American Immigrant Wall of Honor to commemorate all immigrants to America. Through donations, people can have a name added to the wall. Note: This is not a comprehensive list of the 12 million immigrants who passed through Ellis Island. The Wall is in back of the Main Building.

### Photos: Registry Room 1912 and Today

At the far left middle section of side are two photos--a historic photo above a contemporary one. The caption for both reads: “Registry Room (Great Hall), circa 1912 and today.” The description of each follows.

1. Black and white historic photo description: This photograph was taken from the east end of the Registry Room facing west. The room has a light-colored barrel ceiling that is over 50 feet from the floor to the peak of the ceiling of this room. A balcony with white railings circles the room halfway between the ceiling and floor. On the far wall, a large arched window is located near the ceiling in the center of the wall and fills the top third of the space. Light filters through this window. Below the window, a 48-star American flag is suspended from the balcony railing. On the left and right walls near the ceilings are more large arched windows, two on each side. Light streams from the windows on the south side. The floor of the room is filled with long wooden benches arranged east to west. All benches are occupied with rows of men, women, and children waiting to be processed by immigration inspectors at desks on the west side of the room. The room is crowded with people. Three or four people observe the crowds from the balcony above the main floor. The balcony running around the room is supported by columns.
2. Contemporary photo description: This photograph was taken after the Main Immigration Building reopened as a museum in 1990. From a similar position as the historic photograph. The mostly empty room has been restored so that it resembles the image of the room in 1912, but there are now rectangular tan tiles on the barrel ceiling and a red terracotta tile floor. A balcony with white railings still circles the room and the large arched windows still convey natural light into the room. Instead of one American flag hanging beneath the central window, there are now two American flags with 48 stars each mounted to the bottom of the railings on the left and right side of the room halfway between the east and west sides of the room. They are mounted at a 45 degree angle, across from each other. The room is no longer filled with benches crowded with immigrants. Instead, the room is empty with the exception of a small number of tourists scattered in groups walking into the Registry Room and on the balcony. They are dwarfed by the size of the room.

### Map: Ellis Island

This is a bird's eye view and illustrated plan of Ellis Island. The map is oriented with North at the top. It shows the entire 27.5 acre island and all buildings and significant areas of interest. The island is surrounded by water with one boat docked and arrows pointing to reference the direction to Manhattan (northeast), New Jersey (northwest) and Liberty Island (southwest). The island is shaped like two squares, side by each, divided by a strip of water more than 40 yards wide. The side of the squares that face New Jersey, northwest, are topped by an additional narrow rectangle that closes the strip of water making it a U-shaped protected slip for the Ferries to dock in. Public Ferries dock on the Manhattan, northeast, side of the slip to discharge visitors in front of the main entrance to the Ellis Island Immigration Museum. The buildings on the southwest side of the slip, are shown as two dimensional, white rectangles, indicating that they are not open to the general public. The Museum and buildings on the other side, the Manhattan side, are shown in three dimensional outlines with red-tan sidewalls indicating they are open to the public. Facing the museum entrance, the American Immigrant Wall of Honor and Fort Gibson archaeological remains are located on the right far corner of the island.

To the right of this map, are maps of the three floors inside the museum. Each floor has descriptions of the exhibits. The floors are listed top to bottom, 3rd floor to first floor. The text and descriptions are presented under their own sections.

## Ellis Island Immigration Museum Floor Plans and Exhibits

The bottom right section of side two of the brochure provides information about the Ellis Island Immigration Museum’s three floors. It includes three floor plan maps and summary text of the focus of each floor’s exhibits. Starting at the top is the third floor map and text, underneath of which is the second floor map and text, followed by the first floor map and text. All maps are oriented with Manhattan at the top and the Museum Entrance at the bottom. They are presented under their own sections.

Each floor plan map is two dimensional, is viewed from above and floating in isolation. With some exceptions, the floors are shaped similarly to the island itself with two rectangular spaces on each end, connected by a narrower rectangle in the middle that is more wide than it is long in comparison to the rectangles on each end, somewhat similar to the capital letter “H.” Public space is indicated in white, private space is light grey. The building outline, room dividers and stairs are indicated in brown. The lettering labeling each area in the space is black. The text indicating the location of exhibits is white and within rectangular brown backgrounds.

### Third Floor

* The **Bob Hope Memorial Library** has historical research materials on Ellis and the Statue of Liberty. Hope immigrated through Ellis Island in 1908.
* A restored **Dormitory Room** shows accommodations for detainees, ca. 1908.
* **Changing Exhibits** gallery offers temporary exhibits related to Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty.
* **Restoring a Landmark** describes restoration projects led by the Statue of Liberty- Ellis Island Foundation and the National Park Service.
* **Silent Voices** explores the aftermath of the 1954 closing and abandonment of the immigration station.
* **Treasures From Home** displays over 2,000 possessions that immigrants brought from their homelands. Most were donated by immigrants or their families.
* **Ellis Island Chronicles** traces the history and expansion of the island from when the federal government took over in 1808 (3.3 acres) to today’s 27.5 acres.

#### Third Floor Map Description

Farthest left, or west on this floor is the Bob Hope Memorial Library. Outside the library entrance are restrooms, a baby changing station in the women's restroom, and the west elevator.

Moving east through the corridor, you come to the balcony that wraps around the perimeter of the room. Each end of the balcony is 25 feet deep by 70 feet wide with connecting four feet wide walkways on each side. The center is open to the Registry Room below. A third of the way east along the north side of the balcony is the Dormitory Room Exhibit. This is the only public space on this side.

Proceeding east along the south side of the balcony is the Changing Exhibit Gallery area on the right or south side. The entrance is at the furthest point east and to the right off the balcony. The east section of the balcony has exits at the north and south ends. Each balcony exit leads to a connecting U-shaped corridor that passes through the center of the east wing of the building. On the inside of the U is a private conference room and an open atrium to the second floor.

On the outside of the U, exhibits in clockwise order starting on the north side are Restoring a Landmark, Silent Voices, Treasures From Home, and Ellis Island Chronicles. Across from the entrance to Ellis Island Chronicles exhibit is the east elevator.

### Second Floor

* **Through America’s Gate** follows the immigration process: initial questioning in the Registry Room, medical inspections, and for some, temporary detention. About 20 percent were held for additional medical or legal examinations. Detained immigrants could plead their case to the Board of Special Inquiry in the Hearing Room; most were allowed through.
* In the Registry Room, or Great Hall, immigrants underwent medical and legal examinations. Following inspection they walked down the “Stairs of Separation.” Most boarded New York- or New Jersey-bound ferries. Some awaited further examinations, which could lead to detention or exclusion. At the bottom of the stairs, many immigrants met family members or friends at the “Kissing Post.” Be sure to look up at the magnificent Guastavino tiled ceiling, installed by 1918.
* **Peak Immigration Years** explores the massive immigration wave of 1880–1924: why people left their homelands and how they adapted to new lives in the United States. The exhibit also documents how changing attitudes toward immigration led to new laws and processing procedures.

#### Second Floor Map Description

The left side or west section of the second floor has U-shaped corridor in its middle. The corridor begins on the southwest corner of the Registry Room and returns on the northwest corner of the Registry Room, which is the center section of the entire second floor. The exhibit in the left section of this floor is Through America's Gate. It occupies a series of individual rooms that parallel the outside perimeter of this corridor. The majority of space to the inside of the corridor is not open to the public. At the far bottom left corner is another exhibit titled Hearing Room. On the left side of this floor are restrooms, a baby changing station in the women's restroom, and the south-side west elevator. Toward the Registry Room is the free-standing History Channel video.

The east, (or right) section of the building also has a U-shaped corridor through the center. Within the center of the U is Theater 2. The entrance is on the south side, Restrooms are on the right, across from the east elevator on this side of the floor.

The “Peak Immigration Years” exhibit starts in the southeast corner, continuing counterclockwise through connected rooms that parallel the outside perimeter of this corridor.

### First Floor

* **Journeys: New Eras of Immigration, 1945–Present** continues the immigration story beyond the Ellis Island years to the present day. Scheduled to open in 2013.
* **American Family Immigration History Center**, operated by the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, has a database of immigrant ships’ manifests from the Port of New York 1892–1924. Search here (fee) or visit www.ellisisland.org.
* You enter through the same doors as the immigrants into the Baggage Room. They would have left belongings here before continuing with the examination process. Today there’s an Information Desk, audio tour pickup, bookstore, and exhibit about the room’s original use.
* **Journeys: The Peopling of America 1550–1890** begins in the former railroad ticket office behind the Baggage Room. It tells the story of immigration to America before the US government opened Ellis Island.

First Floor Map Description

The main museum entrance is on the south or ferry side of the floor. This level has an additional L-shaped building on the west side and is where the Journeys: New Eras of Immigration, 1945 - Present exhibit is located. It is connected to the Main Immigration Building by a narrow corridor.

Upon entering the building is the center Baggage Room exhibit. Also in this area and immediately on the right upon entering is the Audio Tour Desk. Further away on the right, are the stairs to the Registry Room on the second floor. Immediately on the left, is the bookstore and further on the left is the information desk. Way in the back is the entrance to the exhibit “Journeys: The Peopling of America 1550-1890.”

The right rectangle of the building has a U-shaped hallway that takes you from and to the Baggage Room area. In this area is Theater One, the Ellis Island Cafe, the Gift Shop, and restrooms. The east elevator is on the right just before reentering the Baggage Room.

Returning back to and through the Baggage Room area on the left side and corridor of this floor, a pair of hallways split around a set of stairs. The American Family Immigration History Center, restrooms and the west elevator are in this area.

## How Much Time Do You Have?

**One Hour or Less:** Choose one of the following:

1. Take main audio tour (30–45 minutes).
2. Visit Registry Room (Great Hall) and second-floor exhibits.
3. Take a National Park Service Ranger-guided tour (45 minutes).

**Two to Four Hours:** All activities above, plus one of the following:

1. Take secondary level audio tour (30–60 minutes).
2. See the documentary film “Island of Hope, Island of Tears” (45 minutes).
3. See exhibits on first and third floors (1–2 hours).

**All Day:** All activities above, plus:

1. Take the audio tour “Journeys: The Peopling of America 1550–1890.”
2. Take the audio tour “Journeys: New Eras of Immigration, 1945–Present.”

**Other Activities**

1. Look up ancestors in the American Family Immigration History Center (fee).
2. Visit the American Immigrant Wall of Honor.
3. Visit Fort Gibson.