

Sunday, July 30, 2006 – New York City

Sunday, July 30: We got up at 4 AM and took the Super shuttle to Sky Harbor Airport for our 6 AM flight on Continental Airlines. We believed Continental Airlines is our first Airlines in US that really serve food not just peanut or pretzel. We arrived at Newark Airport in New Jersey about 3 PM local time. From there, we took a shuttle van to the Herald Square Hotel in Manhattan. The van ride took about 2 hours to cover 15 miles with most of the time spent in traffic jams. Manhattan is east of Newark and separated from it by the Hudson River, so our van ride took us under the river thru the Holland tunnel.

We got to the hotel about 5 PM. The hotel was in the middle of Manhattan. About two blocks from the Empire State building. It was hot and humid, and the entire region was in the middle of a summer heat wave. Our hotel room was quite small and cramped, and coasted \$100 a night; so goes the prices here. We decided to stay at this hotel cause of the hotel used to be Life Magazine building in 1893.

Figure 1: Herald Square Hotel



The first thing you see, as you enter this hotel, is the statue of WINGED LIFE by Philip Martiny which hovers protectively above the doorway on West 31 Street. It seductively appeals to the artist, lover and child in each of us and beckons one and all to enter his temple and persue the art, inhale the heady aroma of history and dance with the memories of all the joy that he has created within. The other good thing is the hotel was in the middle of Manhattan.

Manhattan is one of five boroughs of NYC, the other four being Brooklyn, Staten Island, the Bronx, and Queens. Bodies of water separate each of these five boroughs. After checking in, we walked out into the city to look around.

We stopped at Bryant Park, named after William Cullen Bryant. This park sits behind the New York Public Library, one of the biggest libraries in the world. We then walked to Times Square, which is a collection of intersections surrounded by skyscrapers, one of which is the headquarters of the New York Times newspaper.

Figure 2: Bryant Park



This is the busiest part of Manhattan, and some of the surrounding buildings included Toys'r'us, Madame Toussad's Wax Museum, the biggest McDonalds in the world, and Paramount Studios Corporate offices.

Figure 3: Newton at Toys r us



Dinner was at a fine Greek restaurant. The atmosphere was good, but it was too expensive and the food was not good. We went back to our hotel early to recover from the morning's early flight. Our hotel room was quite cramped and the window looked out onto a wall of another building. We did have air conditioning though, which is a rarity for this city.