

Stunning Digital Display To Take One World Trade Center Visitors On A 515-Year Trip Through Time



The lift rises out of the water. (NY Times)

Visitors to the observatory on top of the new One World Trade Center building in New York won't just travel up 102 storeys - they'll also traverse 515 years of history, thanks to a breathtaking digital presentation inside the lifts.

The panoramic timeline display, which will last 47 seconds as visitors travel to the upper deck, shows how New York has evolved from the year 1500 until modern day.

The entrance to the lifts in the new tower is 16m below ground, and as such the simulation begins by showing the lift encased in bedrock.

As the lift rises above ground level, the skyline quickly changes - transforming from an offshore marsh (a nod to the fact the area was once underwater), then into a peaceful riverfront, then into an early American settlement.

With the timeline speeding forward to the 1900s, a series of iconic buildings begin to emerge on the skyline, including the Park Row Building, the Singer Building and the Woolworth Building.

Controversially, the display will also give visitors a brief glimpse of the facade of the south tower of the World Trade Center, which was the home of the original World Trade Center observatory and was destroyed in the terrorist attacks on September 11 2001.



The city evolves before the eyes of visitors. (NY Times)

The building appears for four seconds - roughly proportional to the time the twin towers stood - then it dissolves to reveal the current skyline.

David W Checketts, the chief executive of Legends Hospitality, which will run the new three-level observatory, told the New York Times there was no way to avoid showing the building.

“The event is certainly a key part of history,” he said.

“We did not think you could ignore it. Having it appear in the year it did and disappear in the year it did was the respectful way of addressing the fact that it was part of the landscape.”



The World Trade Center south tower will appear for just four seconds. (NY Times)

After the south tower makes its appearance, scaffolding begins to envelop the visitor, simulating the recent construction of One World Trade Center.

David Kerschner, the Legends president of attractions, said the trip back to ground level will be a separate experience, with the lift simulating a flyover of the city before flying back into open windows of the tower.

He said it had to be designed carefully to avoid bringing back memories of the 9/11 tragedy.

The observatory is due to open next month and will cost \$32 for adults.



As visitors near the top of the building, the simulation shows the construction of the building around them. (NY Times)