



Office of General Services

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OGS CAPITOL TOURS RECEIVES SECOND CERTIFICATE OF EXCELLENCE FROM PROMINENT TRAVEL WEBSITE

Empire State Plaza, & Corning Tower Also Recognized

New York State Office of General Services (OGS) Commissioner RoAnn Destito today announced the OGS capitol tours program was awarded its second “Certificate of Excellence” by TripAdvisor® for the consistently great reviews people submit to the TripAdvisor travel website after taking a free tour of New York’s statehouse. While the capitol tours program received this accolade last year, 2016 marks the first time that both the Empire State Plaza and the Corning Tower observation deck also received certificates of excellence from TripAdvisor.

“These certificates of excellence confirm that Governor Cuomo and the OGS team’s efforts to make the best use of public facilities and ensure the Capitol and Empire State Plaza are more accessible to the public are paying off,” Commissioner Destito said. “Visitors from around the world come to Albany to see the 19th century architectural details of the Capitol, the Empire State Plaza’s modern art collection, and the amazing views from the Corning Tower observation deck. We are grateful that so many of them take the time to write positive reviews.”

TripAdvisor awards a Certificate of Excellence to accommodations, and restaurants that consistently earn great reviews from travelers. A tour of the Capitol is currently listed on the website as the most popular of 60 things to do in Albany, with the New York State Museum at the opposite end of the Empire State Plaza listed as number two.

In the years following the January 2013 completion of the Capitol restoration project, the number of visitors taking a tour of the Capitol each year has increased from nearly 27,000 in 2011-2012 to more than 30,800 in 2015-16, which includes the more than 2,140 people who last year went on an October Capitol Hauntings Tour, one of the most popular of the special tours that are offered throughout the year.

Free tours of the Capitol are offered Monday through Friday at 10 a.m., noon, 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. OGS also offers weekend tours of the Capitol on the second Saturday of each month at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Reservations are required for the Saturday tours and for groups of 10 or more for weekday tours and can be made by calling (518) 474-2418

or visiting www.EmpireStatePlaza.org. All tours begin at the Empire State Plaza Visitor Center and Gift Shop, located on the north end of the plaza's concourse level, closest to the Capitol.

In 2015, which marked the 50th anniversary of the corner stone laying for the Empire State Plaza, OGS began offering twice-daily tours of the Plaza during the summer months that focus on its history and design, as well as the Empire State Plaza Art Collection. In 2015-2016, more than 640 visitors took the Plaza tour.

The Corning Tower Observation Deck is located on the 42nd floor of the building and offers breathtaking views of Albany, the Plaza, the Hudson River Valley, the Port of Albany, large portions of the city, the foothills of the Adirondacks, the Catskills, and the Berkshires of western Massachusetts. The observation deck is open to the public from 10 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. on weekdays and is accessible by a dedicated elevator that stops on the plaza-level of the tower. In 2015-2016, nearly 25,900 people visited the observation deck.

Visitors can find additional information about events, attractions, and parking at the New York State Capitol and Empire State Plaza at www.EmpireStatePlaza.org.

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