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The American Museum Of Natural History: The Perfect Covid-Friendly New York City Activity For Families



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Travel

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The American Museum of Natural History's Hall of Biodiversity includes examples of endangered ... [+]

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Finding things for families to do during Covid is not always easy. Enter the [American Museum of Natural History](#) in New York City. Currently the museum is open Wednesday to Sunday (from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.) and timed tickets are required. This allows visitors to space out their visit, and the reduced capacity means travelers can have a huge chunk of the museum to themselves.

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In addition to timed tickets to limit attendance and promote physical distancing, the museum has put in place many Covid health and safety precautions, including temperature checks at entry, marking paths to direct traffic one way and create distance between each person, limiting elevator and restroom capacity, disinfecting and cleaning high-touch areas, and providing hand-sanitizer stations throughout the building.

Since the museum is massive (you could easily spend a week here and still have more to see), it's good to have a plan in terms of what you want to see. A good option is to book tickets for the special exhibitions and check those off your list first. Currently, the two special exhibits are "[The Nature of Color](#)" and "[T. rex: The Ultimate Predator](#)."

Exploring Color



The Nature of Color exhibit helps explain why the lorikeet birds display a dazzling variety of ... [+]

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“[The Nature of Color](#)” is an immersive exhibit that lets kids (and adults) explore color in the natural and human world. The exhibit lets you “paint” without the mess. It’s easy—you are the artist by moving your hands up and down and side to side in the air. Then colors appear on the floor-to-ceiling interactive display.

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In the green room, you’ll learn how colorful plants and animals survive by embracing their looks; you’ll see the difference between those that aim to blend in to their surroundings (versus those that prefer to stand out). In the blue room, explore how objects produce colors by interacting and reflecting

light. You'll also learn how important color—think pigments and dyes—has been throughout the centuries. In the red room, discover how hues—specifically the color red—has been used to convey status, power, and other identities. After this exhibit, you'll view colors in a whole new way.

All About T. rex



Visitors to T. rex: The Ultimate Predator will encounter a massive life-sized model of T. rex with ... [+]
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“**T. rex: The Ultimate Predator**” is another popular exhibit at the museum. Even if you think you’re familiar with the entire tyrannosaur superfamily, you’ll be surprised at just how much you may not know. Through life-size models, fossils, and casts, and a shadow theater re-creating an epic battle, this exhibit explores how these creatures evolved and became the leaders of their species. Learn how paleontologists uncovered research that shows how the T. rex’s keen vision, smell, and hearing made it almost impossible for prey to escape its detection. With their massive size, sharp claws, and teeth that could bite through bone, this predator was unstoppable.

Navigating the Museum



The blue whale, located in the Hall of Ocean Life, is one of the top attractions at the museum. D. FINNIN/ AMNH

After exploring the special exhibits, you may want to hit some of the museum's most popular spots like the blue whale model in the [Hall of Ocean Life](#). If you think the T. rex was big, you'll be amazed at this creature: Blue whales are the largest animals on earth (and even bigger than the dinosaurs). The massive blue whale model is one of the most visited spots at the museum. It was first constructed in the mid-1960s when little was known about this animal—and even then it drew big crowds. By 2001 the whale underwent a massive renovation and changes were made based on research in order to make it a more accurate depiction. Museum artists corrected the blowholes, tapered the tail, flattened the bulging eyes, and even added a belly button. The 21,000 pounds of foam and fiberglass are held up by a single steel pipe that suspends the whale in the air. Walking under this enormous model is a museum highlight.

Another popular spot? The Rapa Nui (Easter Island) Moai Cast located in the [Hall of Pacific Peoples](#). Since it was featured in the movie *Night at the Museum*, don't be surprised if there's a line to take your photo next to this statue. The world-famous moai is a giant figure carved from volcanic rock, then moved to the water's edge in Rapa Nui, which is located 2,000 miles west of the Chilean coast. This massive plaster was made from a mold that dates back to 1934 when the museum sent an expedition team to Rapa Nui. While seeing the real moai still standing in Rapa Nui might be a challenge, visitors can easily see the replica right here at the museum.

Check out my [website](#).



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