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Get Off-Site at New York Museums



By Anthony Somma, courtesy Cradle of Aviation Museum

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From the history of photography and baseball to galleries full of glass, airplanes and more, the museums of New York offer visitors insight into a variety of subjects. These institutions also make ideal backdrops for off-site meetings and events.

George Eastman Museum

Rochester

Gracing almost an entire block, the George Eastman Museum honors the art of photography, the study of film and Eastman's life, which left an indelible stamp on the city of Rochester. Eastman, founder of Kodak, invented the Brownie camera that revolutionized the industry and fueled America's love of film. His Colonial Revival house was built in the early 1900s and contains 50 rooms and an extensive archive addition that houses an unparalleled photography collection. It dates from the beginning of the medium and includes 400,000 photographs from 14,000 photographers and 16,000 items of camera technology.

"The facility is huge and unique in its layout, so we mold events to meet a group's need," said special events director Allen Buell. "Many times we'll have a meeting or conference followed by a reception or dinner."

Sit-down dinners accommodate up to 120 people, with four approved outside caterers that offer alcohol packages. The museum accommodates crowds into the hundreds for standing events. Two theaters, which seat 500 and 100, host meetings and movie screenings. Beautifully restored gardens make a fine spot for cocktail parties for up to 500 guests. Most events are held after 5 p.m., when the museum closes, except for Mondays, when events can be held during the day.

www.eastman.org

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Cradle of Aviation Museum

Long Island

Long Island's longstanding aviation history makes the Cradle of Aviation Museum a natural for off-site events. Among the 75 aircraft and spacecraft in eight exhibit galleries is a replica of the Wright Brothers' plane; a 1909 Bleriot, Charles Lindbergh's first plane; and an actual lunar module, which was built on the island. Shows at state-of-the-art JetBlue Sky Theater Planetarium add to the museum experience.

Most events are held after hours; the planetarium, however, can be rented during the day. The meandering galleries can accommodate cocktail receptions for up to 250 people per gallery or 2,000 guests in the combined galleries. The 300-seat Leroy R. and Rose W. Grumman Giant Screen Dome Theater serves as a striking backdrop for corporate presentations and parties. Hanger 2, filled with notable planes, can host cocktail parties for up to 200 people or 90 guests at a seated event.

"Our atrium lobby, with its four-story glass windows and planes hanging from the ceiling, can seat up to 1,000 people for dinner," said Joan LaRosa, director of sales for the Long Island Convention and Visitors Bureau. "We have a fabulous on-site caterer that can also set up a cash bar."

www.discoverlongisland.com

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