

## Lady Liberty

The Statue of Liberty is perhaps America's most famous landmark. Did you know that it has part of a poem inscribed on the statue? It is an excerpt of Emma Lazarus's famous words called "Mother of Exiles" which tells about poor and struggling immigrants sailing into New York harbor. The words are:

***"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free...."***

Did you know that this famous lady has an official titled name?

It is "Liberty Enlightening the World."



The Statue of Liberty was designed in France by Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi. It was prefabricated in France by Alexander Gustave Eiffel, the builder of the Eiffel Tower. The statue is made of copper on the outside which was hand-shaped and hammered into sheets. They were then attached to a giant iron frame.

Lady Liberty was a gift from the people of France but the concrete, steel and granite base was built by money donated by Americans. The statue was completed in France by 1884 and once it was assembled it was taken apart in sections and shipped over to New York. The statue was dedicated in 1886 by President Grover Cleveland. Part of his speech stated that she was to be a memorial to the alliance between France and the American colonists during the American Revolution.

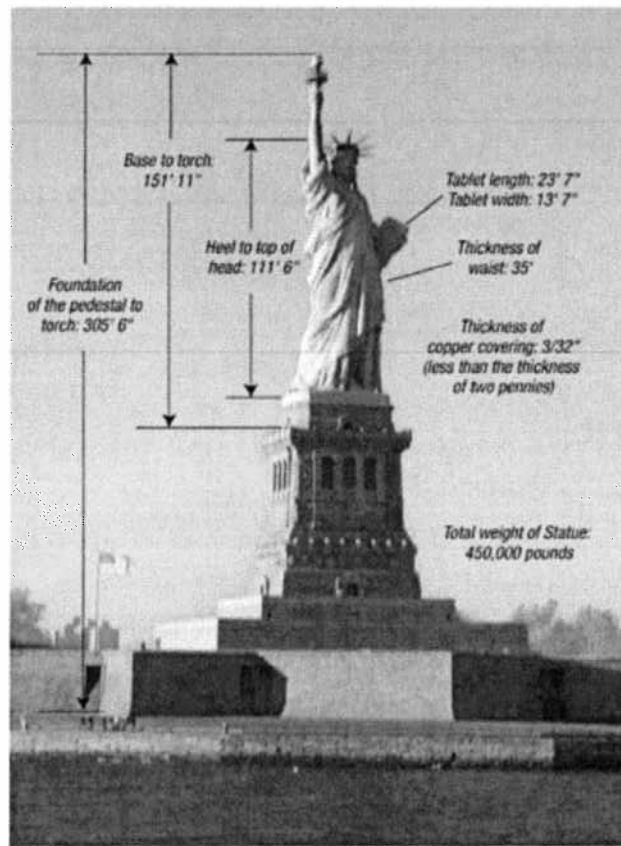
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During World War I, the Statue of Liberty became a national symbol of propaganda. Her image appeared on war bonds, aptly named *Liberty Bonds* which helped the United States government finance the war overseas. After the war, in 1924, the Statue of Liberty was declared a national monument.

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The Statue of Liberty is 305 feet 6 inches from her pedestal base to the top of her torch. She holds a burning torch in her right hand and wears a crown of seven spikes, representing the seven seas and continents. In her left hand is a stone tablet that has the date July 4, 1776 carved into it. At her feet lies a broken chain.

In the early 1980s the lady in the harbor underwent a major restoration. Once again the French and Americans partnered in refitting and updating the statue. They replaced the rusted iron frame with stainless steel structures. The original torch was replaced; the new one glowed with reflected light. The repairs were done just in time for the statues centennial celebration on July 4, 1986.



Today, over 4 million people visit the statue annually. It is only a 15 minute ferry ride from the New York City and Staten Island terminals. Upon entering the statue's base, you can still see the original torch of the statue. There are 354 triangular steps that wind their way up to the crown. From there you have a magnificent view of New York harbor. To reach the tip of the flame there is a 42-foot service ladder inside of her right arm. It has not been until this year (2010) that the torch has been open to the public. It has been closed since 1916 until now. In 1916 there was an act of espionage and a massive explosion in a dockyard which is today Liberty State park. The blast was so severe that it caused major structural damage to the statue. Since this explosion, the arm and torch have been fully renovated. Security measures over the past decades have closed the ladder but it is now open and safe for visitors to visit the very top of the statue.