

# STATUE OF LIBERTY



## Monumental Moments

- In 1885, France presented the Statue of Liberty to the United States as a symbol of the friendship between these two great nations dating back to the American Revolution.
- For millions of Americans, the Statue of Liberty was the first sight that their ancestors saw as they arrived in America in search of a better life for themselves and their families.
- The Statue was built by French sculptor, Frederic-Auguste Bartholdi (pronounced Fray-day-reek O-goost Bar-tol-dee) with help from Alexandre-Gustave Eiffel, the engineer who later built the Eiffel Tower in Paris, France.
- In July 1884, the Statue was shipped to the United States in 350 individual pieces and packed into 214 crates. The trip from France took 11 months by ship.
- The Statue was reassembled and placed on a base located on what is now called Liberty Island in the New York Harbor. President Grover Cleveland dedicated the Statue of Liberty on October 28, 1886.

## Statue Stats

- Also known as "Lady Liberty," the Statue of Liberty is as remarkable for its sheer size as its symbolism. The Statue of Liberty is 151 feet tall or 305 feet in height including the base. The Statue is made of 250,000 pounds of steel and covered with 62,000 pounds of copper.
- A Sculptor's Vision: Certain parts of the Statue have particular meanings:
  - **Torch:** Lady Liberty holds a torch high above her head to show the path to enlightenment.
  - **Crown:** The Statue of Liberty wears a crown with 25 windows which symbolize gemstones and the sun's rays shining over the world. The rays of the crown

represent the seven seas and seven continents of the world.

- **Chains:** Lady Liberty has chains and a broken shackle at her feet, symbolizing freedom from oppression and servitude.
- **Tablet:** The tablet in the Statue's left hand carries the inscription "July IV, MDCCLXXVI," which translates to July 4, 1776, the date of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.
- **Direction:** The Statue faces Southeast, making it visible to those entering the harbor by ship.
- A Poet's Patriotism: To raise money for the construction of the pedestal, American poet, Emma Lazarus, wrote "The New Colossus," a poem that describes America's welcoming of weary 19th century immigrants fleeing persecution and seeking new opportunities in the United States. A bronze plaque of the poem was installed on the inner wall of the pedestal in 1903. The poem concludes:

*"Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"*

As the "Mother of Exiles," – or parent to those who have no where else to turn, but seek freedom – she gives hope to oppressed people all over the world.

## Coin Connection

- To celebrate her 100th anniversary, the Statue of Liberty was featured on a United States commemorative coin in 1986. A close-up image of Lady Liberty appears on the obverse (the front of the coin) of the 1997 American Eagle platinum coins.
- The 2001 New York State Quarter® features the Statue of Liberty and the inscription "Gateway to Freedom."



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