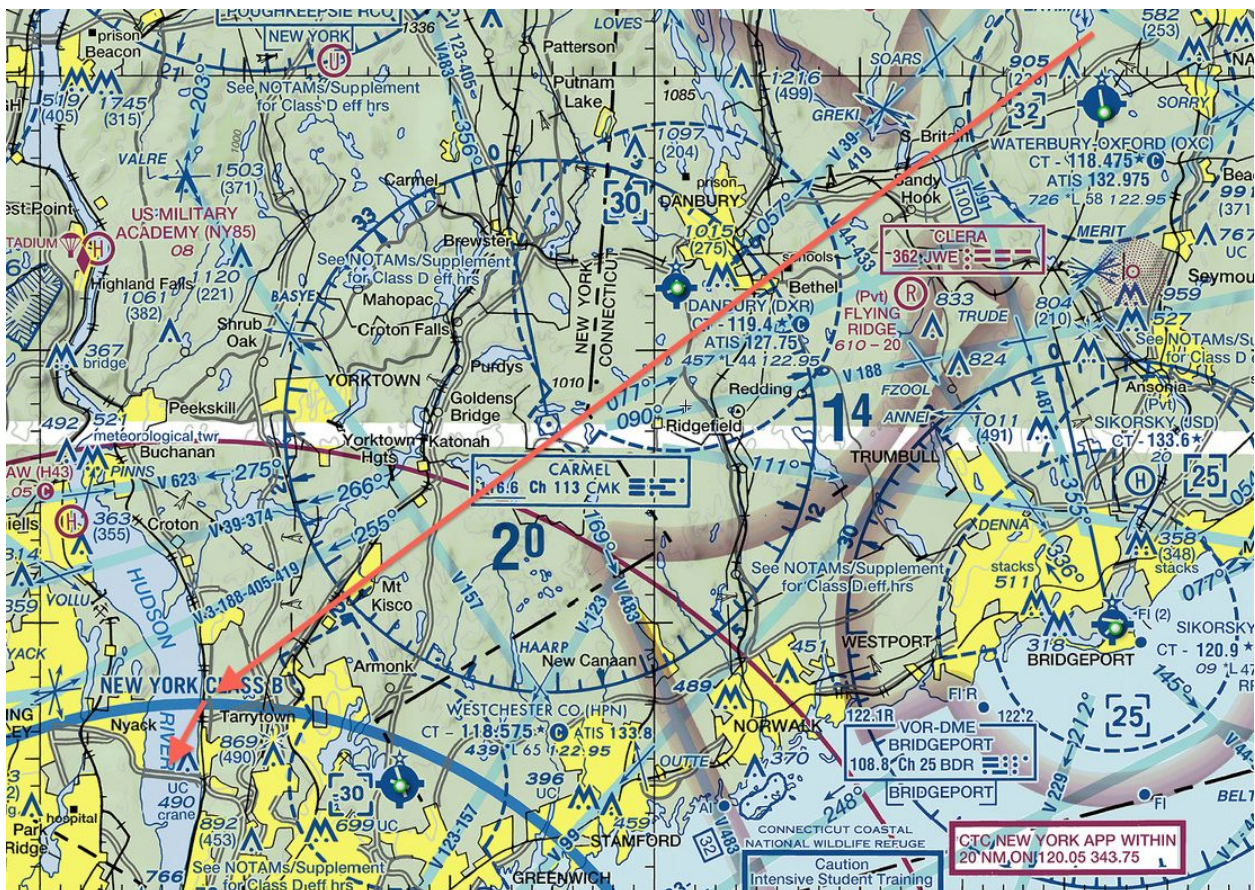


NYC / Hudson River Tour - How To Do It

By Dave Dion

Here's how I've done the NYC / Hudson River Tour many times.

To start - it's basically a straight line from FIT to the Tappan Zee Bridge (a good visual point to pick up the Hudson River for your start South to Manhattan). See the sectional - from FIT right over Bradley (BDL) then near Waterbury (OXC) and Danbury (DXR) and scoot by the Northern edge of Westchester County (HPN). I go at 4.5 msl to clear the airport airspaces overhead; at Westchester - their airspace is up to 3.0 msl and the bottom of Kennedy airspace is 3.0 msl ... so be at 3.0 msl as you scoot around / by Westchester and under Kennedy for a few minutes before arriving at the Tappan Zee Bridge.



> BTW - I've flown all the way (to and from the Hudson) with flight following and WITHOUT flight following (talked to no one). You should flight follow and when asked about intentions or destination ... say "Doing the Hudson River Exclusion today". After starting with Bradley Approach (119.0) ... a few handoffs to New York Approach and if they are having a good day ... you'll get a short cut through Westchester Airport (and they'll assign an altitude through Kennedy Class B) to arrive the Hudson River South of the Tappan Zee Bridge

Now it's South to Manhattan on the West side of the Hudson (New Jersey side) - see kneeboard below for the following step by step references:

> The following screenshots are the kneeboard available at faasafety.gov

> Get set up (per the kneeboard) - basically 1.0 msl, a comfortable airspeed (e.g., less than 140; I do a little slow ~100 ... with no flaps or flaps ... and not so fast as you'll need time to take it all the sights); on CTAF 123.05; and lights on.

New York Class B Airspace Hudson River and East River Exclusion Special Flight Rules Area (SFRA)



Preflight Planning

- Be familiar with SFRA rules, procedures, and current charts

In BOTH Exclusions

- **Airspeed** - Not more than 140 knots
- **Anti-collision lights** - ON
- **Aircraft position/navigation lights** - ON
- **Landing lights** - ON (recommended)
- **New York TAC or Helicopter Route Chart** – Onboard (current edition)

SKYLINE ROUTE (Class B VFR Transition Route)



- **Obtain clearance prior to:**
 - Verrazano Bridge, Northbound – **127.85** (Newark Tower)
 - Alpine Tower, Southbound – **126.05** (LaGuardia Tower)

HUDSON RIVER EXCLUSION (CTAF 123.05)



- **Fly in proper altitude range**
 - **Transient operation*** [1,000 ft up to, not including, 1,300 ft MSL]
 - **Local operation**** [Surface up to, not including, 1,000 ft MSL]
- **Fly within the boundaries of the exclusion along the:**
 - Southbound - West shoreline
 - Northbound - East shoreline
- **Self-announce at mandatory reporting points (CTAF 123.05)**
 - You must include: aircraft type, current position, direction of flight, and altitude

🔊 **Example**
“Cessna, GWB, 900 feet, southbound.”

* Transient operation: Aircraft transiting the Hudson River Exclusion from end to end without intending to significantly change heading, altitude, or airspeed.

** Local operation: Any aircraft within the Hudson River Exclusion that is conducting an operation other than overflying.

EAST RIVER EXCLUSION (CTAF 123.075; LGA 126.05/263.00)



- **Fixed wing aircraft are prohibited unless authorized by ATC**
 - Contact LaGuardia Airport Traffic Control Tower prior to Governors Island on **126.05** or **263.00**
- **ALSO, monitor and report on CTAF 123.075**

> Make your positional radio calls (it's like being in the pattern) - you are letting others flying the Hudson know where you are / and they in turn. See kneeboard for the format for reporting points - "Cessna, GWB (i.e., GWB = George Washington Bridge), Southbound, 1,000 feet"

> Here's the reporting points (reference faasafety kneeboard) followed by reporting point pictures and other pictures of interest

New York Class B Airspace Hudson River and East River Exclusion Special Flight Rules Area (SFRA)



Mandatory reporting points shown.
 Note: Not for navigational purposes.

Important Frequencies

East River operations	123.075
LGA Tower Authorization	126.05 or 263.00
Hudson River Operations	123.05
Skyline Route Southbound	126.05 (LGA)
Skyline Route Northbound	127.85 (EWR)

Circling the Statue of Liberty



- Do so at the highest practical altitude below 1,000 feet MSL
- Circle in a counter-clockwise direction
- Be aware that local helicopter tour operators fly an irregular pattern near the Statue of Liberty at approximately 500 feet
- Remain especially vigilant for other traffic in the vicinity of the Statue of Liberty

> Alpine Tower on your right (New Jersey side) - "Cessna, Alpine Tower, Southbound, 1,000 feet"



George Washington Bridge (GWB) - "Cessna, GWB, Southbound, 1,000 feet"



> Intrepid on your left (next picture below - Southbound) and on your right (second picture below - Northbound). Intrepid is the aircraft carrier with the space shuttle and airplanes on the deck (next to cruise ships); reporting point for both Southbound and Northbound - “Cessna, Intrepid, Southbound (or Northbound), 1,000 feet”





> Next I skip the “Clock” as soon afterward is the Statue of Liberty (“The Lady” as they call it). Note kneeboard instruction for circling the Statue of Liberty: 1,000 or below and counter-clockwise. Eyes out for helicopters on sight seeing flights - “Cessna, at the Lady, 1,000 feet”



Then continue Southbound to the Verrazano Narrows Bridge (where the Hudson River streams into Long Island Sound) to make a left 180 to start heading Northbound - "Cessna, at the VZ, Northbound, 1,000 feet"



Now it gets extra cool - heading North (the New York side of the Hudson), and from the cockpit, you will fill your windscreen with Manhattan (new Tower under construction a few years ago)





> All eyes out as you pass Wall Street and approach the new tower (now complete at 1776 feet) and look to spot “Ground Zero” - there’s a spot off your right wing to see the Reflecting Pools (the foundation sites for the two World Trade Towers - see picture - reach out and touch it !!!)



Manhattan is off your right wing - to include the Empire State Building and Madison Square Garden (see picture)



GWB Northbound - getting ready to exit the area (wow - my shadow on the Hudson River and a Piper getting ready to overtake me on my left)

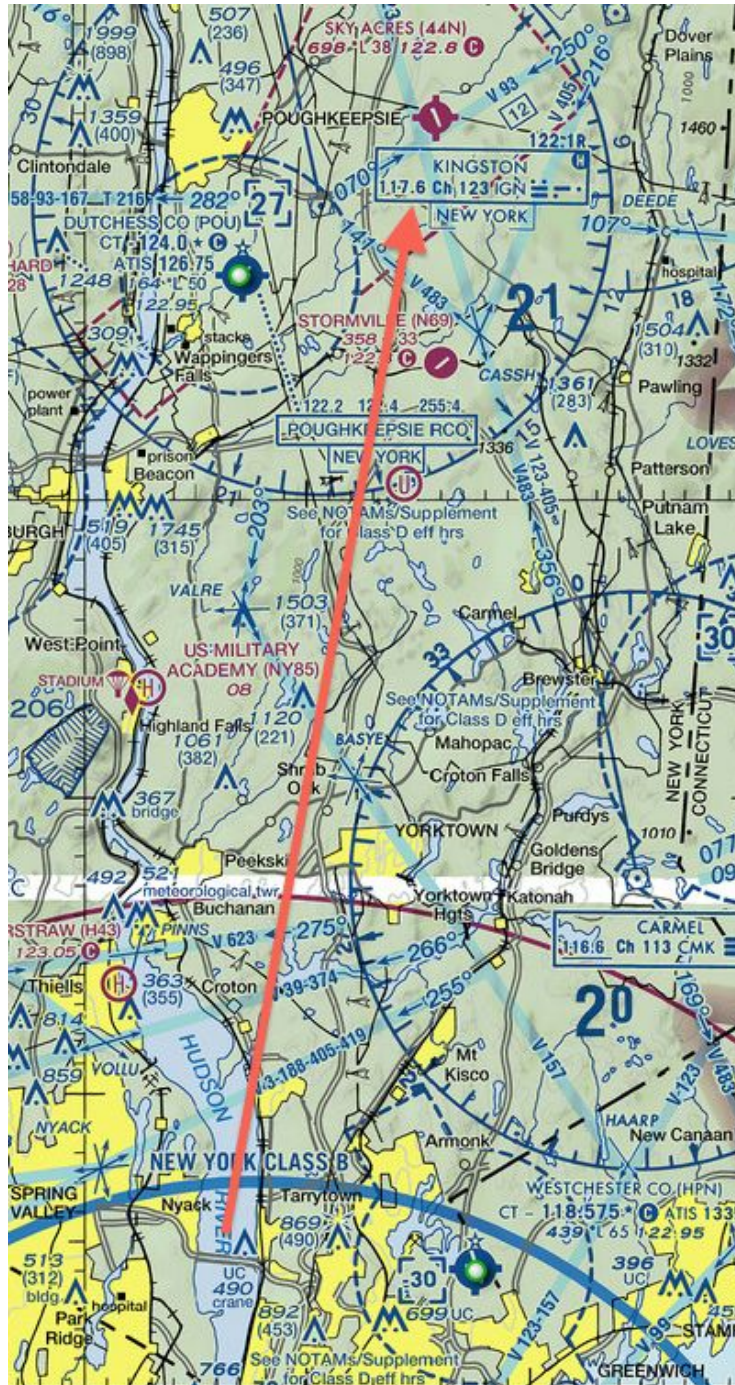


> To this point ~2.5 hours FIT to down the Hudson and now up the Hudson getting ready to depart North to Sky Acres

> Now to Sky Acres (44N - 3,800 RWY) for breakfast or lunch. Head North to the Tappan Zee Bridge and stay under Kennedy's 3.0 msl outer ring. If Sky Acres is not in your GPS database - then navigate to the radial / mileage off Poughkeepsie (POU) ... 070 for 8 miles; or Kingston VOR ... 070 for 4.5 miles)

> Note - before heading to Sky Acres, I have navigated up the Hudson River to West Point (see R5206 on the sectional - min altitude 5,000 msl over West Point). Pretty cool (see picture)





> But if you are hungry and need a potty break ... then get to the Sky Acres “Tail Winds Cafe” (845.663.3190) - open Tuesday through Sunday, 7am - 3pm; taxi to the red barn / silo for the Cafe (see picture - right center); note - go all the way to the barn and that includes a no kidding “up hill” taxiway for a hundred feet until you are there; also, self serve gas in front of the Cafe



Return trip from Sky Acres to FIT is 100 miles (Bradley Control and right over Westfield / BAF to FIT)

What an adventure - DO IT !!!