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Scouting Report

Local Guide

NOT FOR TOURISTS
GUIDE TO
MANHATTAN 2000

At area bookstores, giftshops and newsstands.

THE *NFT* GUIDE is one of the handiest little things I've seen in a long time. Creators Jane Pirone and Rob Taltia have boiled down the good stuff from the phone books—the yellow pages, the subway/bus guides, the concert venue, arena and stadium plans, the white business and community yellow and serious blue pages—into this handsome 6-by-4-inch pocket guide.

Twenty-five grid maps cover the different neighborhoods of Manhattan, from the Financial District to those uptown mystery areas (oh *ah*:) where Manhattanville is; each is annotated by a list of local "Essentials," plus "Sandries/Entertainment" and transportation info. Take Grid 7: The East Village; there's a list of ATM locations, farmers' markets, 24-hour diners and police precincts, not to mention the nearest hardware stores, bagel shops and laundromats. Maps point out bus and subway stations, plus gas stations and parking lots.

Thirty New Yorkers will find the list of neighborhood liquor stores handy—invaluable for that late Saturday night wine purchase that'll prevent a Sunday ride on the PATH train—but *NFT* is best for its nuts-and-bolts lists. Six pages run down FedEx locations and include pick-up times, while two more locate virtually every movie house on the island (what do they show in the Tripod Room in the West

Village?). Museums and theaters, tennis courts both public and private, golf courses and driving ranges are addressed and numbered, and the nerve centers of New York's main points of entry (Penn, Port, Grand Central) are digested. Four more pages note essential 24-hour services like locksmiths, gyms, copy shops and billiard halls; the phone numbers of and airports served by every airline in the whole world are offered, with details on the three major area airports themselves.

The most useful information the *NFT* guide offers is "Essential Phone Numbers." Attacked by a dog, thinking of jumping off a bridge, crack a molar at 3 a.m.? Lock inside the back cover for where to call. Other thoughtful numbers will help you report potholes and "evil real estate brokers," or just bitch about noise. Or get it all off your chest at once by calling the Central-Complaint Bureau.

One quibble with the *NFT* guide: the maps don't list Little Italy or Chinatown in lower Manhattan. But that's a minor point, and locals won't have trouble gleaming the information for those neighborhoods from the details for "City Hall" and the "Lower East Side." Remember, the guide's not for tourists. And who wants to say anything bad about a book that lists Milano's as a landmark, anyway?

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