

ROOSEVELT ISLAND SUBWAY STATION

The Roosevelt Island Subway Station opened on October 29, 1989. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority first considered this station in the 1960s and began construction in 1971. It is part of the Sixty-Third Street Subway Line, which begins in Long Island City, Queens, and merges with other lines at Rockefeller Center in Manhattan.



The station platform, 100 feet down

that construction workers not only built a tunnel under the river (an extraordinary engineering task in itself), but also penetrated tons upon tons of stubborn bedrock to accommodate the station's eight escalators, two elevators and cavernous platform area.

The lines that Roosevelt Islanders have grown to love are the "Q" train, which runs on weekdays, and the "B" train, on evenings and weekends. They provide quick access to places like Central Park, Rockefeller Center, Times Square, and Coney Island. Ongoing construction is expected to connect this line to existing lines in Queens.

For those just joining the tour: This tour begins with a plaque at the island's southern tip about Strecker Memorial Laboratory. To reach this plaque, follow the island's Queens-facing seawall south (that is, towards the Queensboro Bridge). To join the tour from any point, look for plaques like this one and follow the white and green "Roosevelt Island Historical Walk" signs. The tour ends with the Lighthouse at the island's northern tip.

This line's construction turned out to be a much more massive project than anticipated. While estimated at \$28 million, its final cost amounted to over \$800 million. Bear in mind that New York City's other subway lines just zoom under the East River without stopping. Subways coming to Roosevelt Island, however, must *stop* beneath the river, making this station one of the deepest in the city's system (some 100 feet). This means



*Above, digging the cavernous subway station, 1981.
Below, the station-in-waiting, 1985.*

