

# URBANSWIM

YOUR CITY. YOUR WATER.

Media Contact: [deanne@urbanswim.org](mailto:deanne@urbanswim.org) | 646-408-5943

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### SWIMMING FROM LIBERTY TO FREEDOM: URBANSWIM RETURNS TO NEW YORK HARBOR THIS SATURDAY

**Experienced swimmers will cross 2.2 miles of New York Harbor between the Statue of Liberty and Lower Manhattan in an annual swim created in remembrance of 9/11.**

**NEW YORK, NY — September 17, 2026** — This Saturday, September 19, swimmers will take to New York Harbor for the **Liberty to Freedom Swim**, a 2.2-mile open-water challenge connecting two of New York City's most powerful landmarks: **Lower Manhattan and the Statue of Liberty**.

Organized by **URBANSWIM**, the swim gives experienced open-water swimmers the rare opportunity to experience New York from the water, crossing the Hudson River channel with the Manhattan skyline, One World Trade Center and the Statue of Liberty as their reference points.

The swim was established in **2012 in remembrance of September 11** and as a celebration of the resilience possible in the aftermath of adversity. The inaugural swim took place on September 5, 2012, featuring renowned long-distance swimmer Martin Strel, who swam from the Statue of Liberty to North Cove in Manhattan. The original event was dedicated to peace, freedom and remembrance of those affected by 9/11. ([Urban Swim](#))

Over the years, the event has become an annual URBANSWIM tradition, bringing swimmers into the heart of New York Harbor for a perspective of the city that is impossible to experience from land. ([PRWeb](#))

#### **A route connecting Liberty and Freedom**

The 2026 swim covers approximately **2.2 miles (3.5 kilometers)** between **South Cove in Lower Manhattan and the Statue of Liberty**. Swimmers are transported by motorboat to their respective starting points and are accompanied on the water by safety support, including a motorboat escort and individual kayak support. ([Urban Swim](#))

There are two swim directions:

#### **Freedom to Liberty (F2L)**

Swimmers begin at South Cove, Manhattan, and swim toward the Statue of Liberty.

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## **Liberty to Freedom (L2F)**

Swimmers begin near the Statue of Liberty and swim toward South Cove and Lower Manhattan.

The crossing takes place in the Hudson River, where currents, boat traffic, wind and changing conditions make the course a challenging open-water experience. Participants are required to have recent comparable open-water experience and to demonstrate the ability to maintain a pace of approximately 25 minutes per mile or faster. ([RunSignup](#))

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## **September 19, 2026 Schedule**

### **Freedom to Liberty (F2L)**

**9:50 AM** — Meet at Pier 25

**10:30 AM** — Motorboat boarding

**11:18 AM** — **Swim Start: South Cove**

**12:12 PM** — **Swim Finish: Statue of Liberty**

**1:00 PM** — Back at Pier 25

### **Liberty to Freedom (L2F)**

**10:50 AM** — Meet at Pier 25

**11:30 AM** — Motorboat boarding

**12:28 PM** — **Swim Start: Statue of Liberty**

**1:19 PM** — **Swim Finish: South Cove**

**1:55 PM** — Back at Pier 25

*Times are approximate and may be affected by conditions on the water.*

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## **More Than a Swim**

For URBANSWIM, the Liberty to Freedom Swim represents the connection between people and the waterways that surround them.

The organization was founded to create opportunities for people to experience New York City from the water and to build a community around urban swimming. Today, URBANSWIM stages open-water swims ranging from short landmark swims to the **28.5-mile Swim Around Manhattan**, while also supporting greater awareness of the city's waterways.

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“New York is surrounded by water, but most New Yorkers experience the city from the streets and sidewalks,” said **Deanne Draeger, founder of URBANSWIM**. “When you get in the water, you see the city completely differently. Liberty to Freedom is a powerful reminder of what these waterways mean to New York—and of the resilience represented by the landmarks along this route.”

URBANSWIM's broader mission is to **make urban waterways swimmable for everyone**, connecting people to the water through swimming, community building, education and engagement with the health of local waterways. ([Urban Swim](#))

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## Experience New York From the Water

From the Statue of Liberty, swimmers look north toward Lower Manhattan and One World Trade Center. From South Cove, the Statue of Liberty becomes the destination.

The route transforms familiar landmarks into navigational points in an open-water adventure—and places swimmers directly in the harbor that helped make New York a global city.

For URBANSWIM, that is the point.

**Your city. Your water.**

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## Photos

Photos from previous Liberty to Freedom Swims are available through the event's RunSignup photo gallery:

[Liberty to Freedom Swim Photos](#)

**Photos in Press Release by Paul Frangipane. Drone Stills by Xizomedia.**

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## About URBANSWIM

**URBANSWIM** creates open-water swimming experiences that connect people to the waterways surrounding their cities. Founded in New York, the organization stages swims at iconic locations throughout the harbor and along the city's waterfront, from the Brooklyn Bridge and Statue of Liberty to the 28.5-mile Swim Around Manhattan.

URBANSWIM's mission is to **make urban waterways swimmable for everyone** by creating opportunities for swimming, community building, education and engagement with the water.

**URBANSWIM — Your City. Your Water.** ([Urban Swim](#))

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URBANSWIM

New York, NY

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**Event Information:**

[Liberty to Freedom Swim](#)