

A wickedly interesting peek behind the scenes ... Charitable gift giving ...
Gliding over glare ice ... Battle of the top bananas ...



Curtain Call

What is it like to work on the hit Broadway show *Wicked*? This is just one of the questions answered on a **Behind the Emerald Curtain Tour** (Gershwin Theater, 222 W. 51st St., btw Broadway & Eighth Ave., 1.212.586.6510; \$30), a bewitching insiders' look at the lavish musical production. Held Saturdays at 10 a.m., the 90-minute tour—led by former and current cast members—includes prerecorded interviews with the actors and crew (*above*, Kendra Kassebaum as Glinda and Kerry Ellis as Elphaba), a Q&A session and entry into the Behind the Emerald Curtain Museum, which houses original costumes, wigs, props and a detailed set model.—ESC

GIFTS THAT GIVE BACK

Shoppers can honor a loved one—and, at the same time, help save the planet, feed the hungry and otherwise benefit an important cause—by purchasing Gifts of Compassion, 24 charitable presents offered by the **ABC Home & Planet Foundation** (ABC Home, 888 Broadway, 1st fl., at E. 19th St., 1.212.473.3000). Tucked inside a silk sari envelope, recipients find a certificate noting that a donation has been made in their name that will provide six months of schooling for a child in India (\$100), help build a home for a family displaced by Hurricane Katrina (\$100), defend polar bears' Arctic habitat (\$95), supply prenatal vitamins to a woman in Tibet (\$75) or protect two acres of Peruvian rain forest (\$50).—NM

Sake Samples

Sake (pronounced SAH-kay) is a Japanese rice wine that can be enjoyed hot or cold, mixed or straight up. To demystify the spirit, the knowledgeable sommelier and bartenders at Lower East Side sushi spot **Satsko** (245 Eldridge St., btw Stanton & E. Houston sts., 1.212.358.7773; \$35) teach the ins and outs of selecting a sake that excites the palate, every Wednesday 7 to 11 p.m. Participants sample six types of premium sake, served in wine glasses and selected from over 30 varieties and flavors ranging from dry to sweet and unfiltered to pasteurized, while nibbling complimentary appetizers such as kimchi, pork and beef dumplings and edamame. Suggestions for sake and food pairings are offered, and sake-infused cocktails, including Sakegria, a sake-based sangria (made with pomegranate juice, plum wine, sake and seasonal fruit), are also available, furthering the cause of sake education.—SD



➔ From 1876 to 1882, the arm and torch of the Statue of Liberty were displayed in Madison Square Park to raise funds for construction of the statue and base.