

baltimore maryland travel guide

Baltimore Maryland Travel Guide

Baltimore, Maryland, is a city rich in history, culture, and charm, making it a prime destination for travelers looking to explore the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. From its iconic waterfront and vibrant neighborhoods to its world-class museums and delicious cuisine, Baltimore offers a little something for everyone. In this travel guide, we will delve into the must-see attractions, culinary delights, and unique experiences that make Baltimore a captivating place to visit.

Getting to Baltimore

Before you embark on your Baltimore adventure, it's essential to know how to get there. The city is conveniently located just 40 miles northeast of Washington, D.C., and is accessible by various modes of transportation.

By Air

Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI) is the primary airport serving the city. It offers numerous domestic and international flights and is a short drive from downtown Baltimore.

By Train

Amtrak services Baltimore with multiple daily trains arriving at the Baltimore Penn Station. This is a convenient option for travelers coming from cities like Philadelphia, New York, or Washington, D.C.

By Car

If you prefer driving, Baltimore is easily accessible via major highways, including I-95 and I-295. There are several parking options available throughout the city, making it easy to explore at your own pace.

Where to Stay in Baltimore

Baltimore boasts a wide range of accommodations, from luxurious hotels to

budget-friendly hostels. Here are some popular neighborhoods to consider for your stay:

- **Inner Harbor:** This bustling waterfront area is home to many hotels, restaurants, and attractions, making it a favorite for tourists.
- **Fells Point:** Known for its cobblestone streets and lively nightlife, this historic neighborhood offers a charming atmosphere with many boutique hotels.
- **Mount Vernon:** A cultural hub, Mount Vernon features elegant hotels and is close to museums, theaters, and parks.
- **Charles Village:** This residential area is home to Johns Hopkins University and offers a more relaxed vibe with quaint accommodations.

Must-See Attractions

Baltimore is home to numerous attractions that showcase its unique history and culture. Here are some of the top places to visit:

1. Inner Harbor

The heart of Baltimore, the Inner Harbor is a picturesque waterfront area filled with shops, restaurants, and attractions. Don't miss the National Aquarium, which features thousands of marine animals and interactive exhibits.

2. Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine

Known for its role in the War of 1812, Fort McHenry is a must-visit for history buffs. Explore the fort, learn about its significance, and enjoy stunning views of the harbor.

3. The Maryland Science Center

Perfect for families, the Maryland Science Center offers hands-on exhibits, an IMAX theater, and a planetarium. It's an educational experience that's fun for all ages.

4. The Walters Art Museum

Located in Mount Vernon, this museum houses a vast collection of art from various periods and cultures, all available for free. It's an excellent spot for art lovers and history enthusiasts alike.

5. Johns Hopkins University

Even if you're not a student, a walk around the beautiful campus of Johns Hopkins is worthwhile. The university boasts stunning architecture and beautiful gardens.

Exploring Baltimore's Neighborhoods

Baltimore is known for its diverse neighborhoods, each with its own unique character and charm. Here are some that you should explore:

1. Fells Point

This historic district is famous for its waterfront views, quaint shops, and lively bars. Take a stroll along the promenade, visit the local boutiques, and enjoy the vibrant nightlife.

2. Hampden

Hampden is a trendy neighborhood known for its quirky shops, vintage stores, and hip eateries. Don't forget to check out the annual Hampden Halloween Parade, one of the largest in the country.

3. Canton

Offering a mix of waterfront parks and trendy dining options, Canton is a great area for those who enjoy outdoor activities. Relax in Canton Waterfront Park or take a bike ride along the waterfront.

4. Preakness Stakes at Pimlico Race Course

If you visit Baltimore in May, consider attending the Preakness Stakes, one of the most famous horse races in the country. The event is part of the

Triple Crown and draws thousands of spectators each year.

Culinary Delights

No trip to Baltimore is complete without indulging in its culinary scene. The city is famous for its seafood, particularly crabs. Here are some local dishes to try:

- **Maryland Crab Cakes:** A must-try, these cakes are made with lump crab meat and seasoned to perfection.
- **Old Bay Seasoning:** This iconic spice blend is used in many dishes, including seafood and fried chicken.
- **Berger Cookies:** A Baltimore classic, these soft cookies are topped with a thick layer of chocolate frosting.
- **Pit Beef:** A local favorite, pit beef is often served as a sandwich with horseradish sauce.

Don't forget to explore the city's vibrant dining scene, which includes everything from fine dining to food trucks.

Festivals and Events

Baltimore hosts numerous festivals and events throughout the year, providing visitors with a taste of local culture. Some notable events include:

1. Artscape

This annual arts festival showcases local artists, musicians, and performers. It's a fantastic opportunity to immerse yourself in the creative spirit of the city.

2. Baltimore Book Festival

Held in the fall, this festival celebrates literature and features author readings, panel discussions, and book signings.

3. Light City

As the first large-scale light festival in the U.S., Light City features stunning light installations and performances throughout the harbor area.

Conclusion

Baltimore, Maryland, is a city that welcomes travelers with open arms, offering a rich tapestry of history, culture, and culinary delights. From exploring the waterfront at the Inner Harbor to savoring delicious crab cakes, your visit to this vibrant city will be filled with unforgettable experiences. Whether you're a history buff, a foodie, or an art lover, Baltimore has something special just for you. So pack your bags and get ready to discover all that this charming city has to offer!

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the must-visit attractions in Baltimore, Maryland?

Some must-visit attractions include the National Aquarium, Fort McHenry, the Baltimore Museum of Art, and the historic Inner Harbor.

What is the best time of year to visit Baltimore?

The best time to visit Baltimore is during the spring (April to June) and fall (September to November) when the weather is mild and there are many festivals.

How can I get around Baltimore without a car?

You can use the Baltimore Light Rail, Metro Subway, and buses. Additionally, rideshare services like Uber and Lyft are widely available.

What local dishes should I try in Baltimore?

Be sure to try Maryland crab cakes, pit beef sandwiches, Berger cookies, and Old Bay-seasoned dishes.

Are there any family-friendly activities in Baltimore?

Yes, families can enjoy the Maryland Science Center, the Baltimore Zoo, and interactive exhibits at the Port Discovery Children's Museum.

What neighborhoods in Baltimore are great for nightlife?

Fells Point, Federal Hill, and Hampden are popular neighborhoods known for their vibrant nightlife, including bars, music venues, and restaurants.

Is Baltimore a safe city for tourists?

While Baltimore has areas with higher crime rates, many tourist areas are safe. It's advisable to stay aware of your surroundings and stick to well-lit areas.

What cultural events should I look out for in Baltimore?

Look out for the Preakness Stakes, Artscape, and the Baltimore Book Festival, which showcase the city's rich cultural heritage.

What are the best places to shop in Baltimore?

Popular shopping areas include Harbor East, the historic Lexington Market, and local boutiques in Hampden and Fells Point.

How can I experience Baltimore's history?

Visit historic sites like the Star-Spangled Banner Flag House, the Baltimore Civil War Museum, and take walking tours of neighborhoods like Mount Vernon.

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