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Finding the "Lost Symbol": DC for Dan Brown Fans

Washington DC, 2 Days

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Guide Description



contemplate, Langdon-style, the significance of the spots you've visited.

AUTHOR NOTE: Those who have read "The Da Vinci Code" or "Angels and Demons" (in other words, about 85% of us) will know that Dan Brown's third book in the Robert Langdon series, "The Lost Symbol", is set in and around Washington. (Don't worry, there are no spoilers in this guide!)

A key element of the novel's plot revolves around Freemasonry, the fraternal organization that, for many, seems shrouded in secrecy. Brown takes advantage of the Order's rather mysterious reputation to create a page-turning thriller. And those who know a bit about Freemasonry know that DC is chock-full of Masonic symbols, which makes sense considering that the city's namesake, George Washington, was perhaps the most famous Mason of all.

You'll need about two days to see all of the sites that Brown name-checks without tiring yourself out too much. In addition to many notable DC monuments and tourist destinations, Brown also references the wealthy neighborhood of Kalorama Heights, which borders both Adams Morgan and Dupont Circle. Set up camp at the Kalorama Guesthouse before taking off on your adventure through the city.

On the first day, start with the Capitol Building and work your way over to the Library of Congress and finally to the Washington Monument. Stop off in Dupont for dinner at Raku before calling it a night.

The George Washington Masonic Memorial in Alexandria represents, for many, the most striking representation of the Freemasonry Order. So it should come as no surprise that this landmark plays an important part in "The Lost Symbol". You should plan to spend a large chunk of your second day wandering around here, learning about the Memorial's history and all of the things it has to offer (including tours, a gift shop, and a library). Admission is free and the views of the city are beautiful.

You're not too far from the Old Town section of Alexandria here, so wander its cobbled streets and window-shop before hopping back on the Metro and heading back into DC.

Washington National Cathedral, another important landmark in Brown's novel, isn't readily accessible by Metro, but there are several buses that run there from both Tenleytown and Dupont Circle stations, and it's not a long journey. After dinner at popular 2 Amys Pizzeria near the Cathedral, head back to the hotel to

contact:

<http://www.bedandbreakfast.com/district-of-columbia-washington-kaloramaguesthouseatwoodleypark.html>

location:

2700 Cathedral Ave NW
Washington DC 20008-4120

1 Kalorama Guesthouse at Woodley Park

DESCRIPTION: Woodley Park offers a unique blend of a peaceful residential neighborhood with the history, attractions and excitement of DC. The Kalorama Guest House is located just 3 blocks north of the Woodley Park Metro Stop. Woodley Park offers a special blend of restaurants whose side walk cafes are perfect for an evening out experience. The National Zoo is only 3 blocks north of us. The National Zoo, Washington DC's 163-acre zoological park set within the Rock Creek National Park, features more than 400 different species of animals. The National Zoo as a part of the Smithsonian Institution the admission is FREE! Located within a 12 min ride away is the Historic and breath taking National Cathedral. Historic events have occurred here and will continue to in the future. Come be a part of this and explore the wonders and excitement we have to offer.



more at BedandBreakfast.com

contact:

tel: +1 202 387 4062
<http://www.woodrowwilsonhouse.org/>

location:

2340 South Street Northwest
Washington DC 20008

hours:

Hours vary

2 Kalorama House and Embassy Tour

DESCRIPTION: Kalorama remains one of the district's most chic and culturally diverse neighborhoods including ambassadors' homes and elegant private residences. As part of this annual mid-September tour, visitors tour the Woodrow Wilson House. The elegant home is now a museum owned by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of Kalorama House and Embassy Tour

contact:

tel: +1 202 762 1467 / +1 202 762 1438
fax: +1 202 762 1489
<http://www.usno.navy.mil/>

location:

3450 Massachusetts Avenue Northwest
Washington DC 20392

hours:

M 8:30p

3 Naval Observatory

DESCRIPTION: Settled on the hilly lawns of a naval fort in upper northwest Washington, the Observatory measures the times and positions of the stars. Visitors may watch a short movie and view the precision clocks and high-powered telescope. The vice-president's residence is on the grounds as well. Though it is not open to the public, visitors can catch a glimpse of its fine Victorian exterior. Tours are held at 8:30 pm Mondays. Up to 90 people are admitted per tour and prior reservations need to be made either through their website or fax. Admission: Free © wcities.com



contact:

tel: +1 202 789 7000 (Tourist Information)
fax: +1 202 789 7037 (Tourist Information)
<http://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/wash/dc50.htm>

location:

Connecticut Avenue
Washington DC 20036

hours:

Call for details

4 Dupont Circle

DESCRIPTION: DuPont circle is one of Washington's hubs of nightlife, shopping, and dining. The circle itself is filled with Washingtonians day and night, relaxing on the benches, snacking, or playing music or a game of chess. Around the circle, the neighborhood is filled with interesting museums, shops, restaurants and bars. DuPont, and more specifically 17th street off of DuPont, is considered the center of Washington DC's gay and lesbian community. The Brickskeller, home of the world largest beer list, according to the Guinness Book of World Records, is located in DuPont. DuPont is also home to a large number of embassies, and one can easily access Embassy Row by simply walking north-west on Massachusetts Avenue, which intersects the circle. DuPont is also home to some of the most important think-tanks in the country, including the Brookings Institution and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and the Johns Hopkins University's Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). © NileGuide



contact:

tel: +1 202 633 4674
<http://www.loc.gov/visit/>

location:

101 Independence Ave. SE
Washington DC 20541

hours:

Tours: M-F 10:30a-4:30p; Sa 10:30a-3:30p

5 Library of Congress

DESCRIPTION: The national library of the United States, this library houses one of the largest and most important collections of books in the world. Among the 130 million items held at the library is one of only four perfect vellum copies of the Gutenberg Bible. For visitors the Library offers tours, in addition to a rotating collection of some of the most interesting exhibits in Washington. Be sure to check online <http://www.loc.gov/loc/events/index.php> for the latest information on the collections and exhibits at the library. Viewing the great halls and spaces of the library is an experience that should not be missed on any visit to Washington, DC. © NileGuide



contact:

tel: 202/225-6827
www.aoc.gov

location:

Washington DC 20576

hours:

Year-round Mon-Sat
9am-4:30pm, with first tour starting at 9:30am and last tour starting at 3:30pm

6 The Capitol

DESCRIPTION: The Capitol is as majestic up close as it is from afar. For 135 years it sheltered not only both houses of Congress, but also the Supreme Court and, for 97 years, the Library of Congress as well. When you tour the Capitol, you'll learn about America's history as you admire the place in which it unfolded. Classical architecture, interior embellishments, and hundreds of paintings, sculptures, and other artworks are integral elements of the Capitol. The 30-minute tour takes you to the Crypt, the Rotunda, and National Statuary Hall. (For an in-depth description and information about the history and art of the Capitol, go to www.aoc.gov and click on the link "Visiting the Capitol.") On the massive bronze doors leading to the **Rotunda** are portrayals of events in the life of Columbus. The Rotunda -- a huge 96-foot-wide circular hall capped by a 180-foot-high dome -- is the hub of the Capitol. The dome was completed, at Lincoln's direction, while the Civil



War was being fought. Ten presidents have lain in state here, with former president Ronald Reagan being the most recent; when Kennedy's casket was displayed, the line of mourners stretched 40 blocks. On rare occasions, someone other than a president, military hero, or member of Congress receives this posthumous recognition. In October 2005, Congress paid tribute to Rosa Parks by allowing her body to lie in state here, the first woman to be so honored. (Parks was the black woman who in 1955 refused to relinquish her seat to a white man on a Montgomery, Alabama, bus, thereby helping to spark a civil rights movement.) Embracing the Rotunda walls are eight immense oil paintings commemorating great moments in American history, such as the presentation of the Declaration of Independence and the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown. In the dome is an allegorical fresco masterpiece by Constantino Brumidi, *The Apotheosis of Washington*, a symbolic portrayal of George Washington surrounded by Roman gods and goddesses watching over the progress of the nation. Brumidi was known as the "Michelangelo of the Capitol" for the many works he created throughout the building. (Take another look at the dome and find the woman directly below Washington; the triumphant *Armed Freedom* figure is said to be modeled after Lola Germon, a beautiful young actress with whom the 60-year-old Brumidi conceived a child.) Beneath the dome is a trompe l'oeil frieze depicting major developments in the life of America, from Columbus's landing in 1492 to the birth of the aviation age in 1903. Don't miss the sculptures in the Rotunda: a pensive Abraham Lincoln, a dignified Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and a ponderous trinity of suffragists Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Lucretia Mott -- these and others are represented here. The **National Statuary Hall** was originally the chamber of the House of Representatives. In 1864, it became Statuary Hall, and the states were invited to send two statues each of native sons and daughters to the hall. There are 100 statues in all, New Mexico completing the collection with its contribution in 2005 of Po'Pay, a Pueblo Indian, who in 1680 led a revolt against the Spanish that helped to save Pueblo culture. (Stay tuned: The District of Columbia hopes to honor two of its own homegrown heroes with statues, despite the fact that Congress, as yet, refuses to recognize D.C. as a state.) Because of space constraints, only 38 statues reside in the Hall, with the remaining scattered throughout the corridors of the Capitol. Statues include Ethan Allen, the Revolutionary War hero who founded the state of Vermont, and Missouri's Thomas Hart Benton -- not the 20th-century artist famous for his rambunctious murals, but his namesake and uncle, who was one of the first two senators from Missouri and whose antislavery stance in 1850 cost him his Senate seat. Eight women are represented, including Montana's Jeannette Rankin, the first woman to serve in Congress. The **Crypt** of the Capitol lies directly below the Rotunda and is used mainly as an exhibit space. Following the tour, you are allowed to linger on the first floor and to wander past the **Old Supreme Court Chamber**, which has been restored to its mid-19th-century appearance. The Supreme Court met here from 1810 to 1860. Busts of the first four chief justices are on display -- John Marshall, John Rutledge, John Jay, and Oliver Ellsworth -- and so are some of their desks, believed to have been purchased in the 1830s. The justices handed down a number of noteworthy

decisions here, including that of *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, which denied the citizenship of blacks, whether slaves or free, and in so doing precipitated the nation's Civil War. You will not see them on your tour, but the **south and north wings** of the Capitol hold the House and Senate chambers, respectively. The House of Representatives chamber is the largest legislative chamber in the world, and the setting for the president's annual State of the Union addresses. **Procedures for Touring the Capitol:** All tours of the Capitol start inside the Capitol Visitor Center, where you obtain timed passes for the tour (if you have not already ordered them in advance online). Once you obtain your passes, you're free to tour the visitor center or leave the Capitol for touring elsewhere, returning in time for your designated tour. The guided tours are free, last 30 minutes, and are led by a Capitol Guide Service guide. The Capitol has quite a list of items it prohibits, and the recording that you listen to on the tel. **202/225-6827** number recites them for you, everything from large bags of any kind to food and drink. Leave everything possible back at the hotel. **Procedures for Visiting the House Gallery or Senate Gallery:** Try to visit when both the Senate and House are **in session**. In fact, the Senate Gallery is open to visitors only when it is in session, but the House Gallery is open to visitors whether or not it is in session. (Children 5 and under are not allowed in the Senate gallery.) You must have a separate pass, one for each gallery. Once obtained, the passes are good through the remainder of the Congress. You can obtain visitor passes at the offices of your representative and senator, or in the case of District of Columbia and Puerto Rico residents, from the office of their delegate to Congress. Congressional representatives and delegates have offices on the south side, or Independence Avenue side, of the Capitol, while senators' offices are located on the north side, or Constitution Avenue side, of the Capitol. You should be able to pick up passes to both the Senate and House galleries in one place, at either your representative's office or your senator's office. (**Note:** International visitors can obtain both House and Senate gallery passes by presenting a passport or a valid driver's license with photo ID to the Capitol Guide Service staff in the House of Representative's Gallery line, in the Capitol's South Screening Facility.) Visit the Capitol's website, www.aoc.gov, or call your senator or congressperson's office for more exact information about obtaining passes to the House and Senate galleries, since new procedures involving the Capitol Visitor Center were yet to be defined at the time of this writing. You'll know that the House and/or the Senate is in session if you see flags flying over their respective wings of the Capitol (**remember:** House, south side; Senate, north side), or you can check the weekday "Today in Congress" column in the Washington Post for details on times of the House and Senate sessions and committee hearings. This column also tells you which sessions are open to the public. Or again, access the Capitol's website, **www.aoc.gov**, which helpfully provides information about the history, art, and construction of the Capitol building; an in-depth education on the legislative process; schedules of bill debates in the House and Senate, committee markups, and meetings; and lots of other good stuff. The aoc.gov page has links to the individual Senate (www.senate.gov) and House (www.house.gov) pages, or

you can go directly to those sites to connect to your Senate or House representative's page. © Frommer's

contact:

tel: +1 202 537 6200
<http://www.cathedral.org/cathedral/>

location:

Massachusetts and Wisconsin Avenues, NW
Washington DC 20016

hours:

10a-4:30p M-Su, extended hours during summer

7 Washington National Cathedral

DESCRIPTION: Taking eighty-three years to construct, the Washington National Cathedral was for years the longest-running construction project in Washington DC. Envisioned as "a great church for national purposes," the National Cathedral is Washington's crown architectural jewel and is cherished by locals and visitors. Worship services are open to the public, but less known to visitors of DC are the spectacular daily tours. Available tours include: art & architecture, behind the scenes, tour and tea (reservations required, \$25), organ demonstrations, garden tours (April through October except August), and the local favorite: the gargoyle tour! Guides exude passion as they bring the National Cathedral to life. Revel in the cathedral's quirks and the fascinating stories behind them. Some tours are restricted to ages 10 and up, and other tours involve stair climbing and small spaces. Visit the website or call for details. If mobility impaired, ask about accommodations. Requested contributions: \$5 adults, \$3 seniors, \$15 families. Parking garage available via Wisconsin Ave, rates vary from \$4/hr (\$16 max) to \$5 - \$6 flat rate, free Sundays. Public transit accessible via rail then bus, see website for details. © NileGuide



Photo courtesy of Washington National Cathedral

contact:

tel: (202) 885-5700
<http://www.2amyspizza.com/>

location:

3715 Macomb St NW
Washington DC 20016

hours:

Monday: 5-10pm; Tuesday-Thursday: 11am-10pm; Friday & Saturday: 11am-11pm; Sunday: 12pm-10pm

8 2 Amys

DESCRIPTION: 2 Amy's is dedicated to creating pizza according to strict Neapolitan standards. As such, they take their job very seriously; only certain ingredients and toppings are deemed worthy of being used, and their pizza making process is old-fashioned and precise. That's not to say the owners are devoid of a sense of humor, though - their website includes directions to the restaurant by car, bus and helicopter. Reservations aren't accepted here, so be prepared to wait if you want to eat here on the weekend - it gets very, very crowded. Noise level is high, too - making it nice for families but perhaps a little less nice for cozy dinner dates. © NileGuide

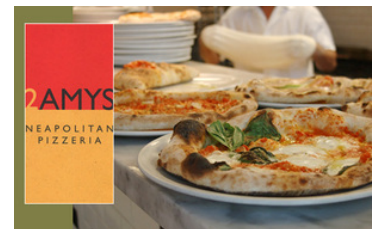


Photo courtesy of 2 Amy's

contact:

tel: 1 202 265 7258

location:

1900 Q St NW
Washington DC 20009

hours:

9 Raku

DESCRIPTION: According to the restaurant's menu, the word "Raku" means, among other things, "pleasure" and "enjoyment. Sit outside and enjoy people-watching on Dupont Circle's busy Connecticut Avenue, or dine inside and admire the restaurant's clean, Eastern-inspired decor. The menu allows for experimentation - sample from a wide array of "Asian tapas" or choose the Ginger Chicken or vegetarian stir fry. © wcities.com

My List - continued...

Su-Th 11.30a-10p, F-Sa
11.30a-midnight

Washington DC Snapshot

Local Info

Politics have helped to shape Washington, but they don't define it. It's the nation's capital, and arguably one of the most powerful places in the world, yet DC is often overlooked in favor of seemingly more glamorous US cities. But scratch the ostensibly dry surface and you'll find a city far more diverse than one might think; not surprising, considering that all of the embassies and consulates are here. It's impossible to list Washington's must-see sights in a paragraph, but certain places simply cannot be missed. The Smithsonian Institution, with its myriad museums and galleries, provides something of interest

for every visitor, from the arts to aerospace engineering and everything in between. Beyond the majesty of the National Mall, plenty of lesser-known DC institutions lie a bit off the beaten track. Washington's music scene has long been lauded for its originality (everything from go-go funk to hardcore punk has heavy DC roots; Fort Reno's outdoor concerts are a summer tradition). Changing administrations make for prevalent transience (it's actually quite difficult to find many people in DC who are born-and-bred natives), yet there are certain venerable city establishments – like Ben's Chili Bowl, where Presidents have been known to dine – that stand the test of time. And Washington continues to grow

and evolve – visitors can sample exquisite Ethiopian cuisine in the city's revitalized U Street Corridor neighborhood, wander through small, privately owned art galleries in Dupont Circle, or sip ale at Columbia Heights' new Commonwealth Pub. One of the many things that DC has in its favor is that it's a very walkable town, so visitors can fill their days with activities in several different neighborhoods without traveling unreasonable distances. And Washington is imminently family-friendly, with plenty of events and activities that will please kids of all ages.

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