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ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



terren in Virginia

# 1 Day Monuments and Memorials in Washington DC

## Washington DC, Arlington, 1 Day

### Table of contents:

Guide Description 2

Itinerary Overview 3

Daily Itineraries 4

Washington DC Snapshot 9

# Guide Description



**AUTHOR NOTE:** This is a one day trip, designed to give those who have never been to DC an opportunity to see some of the nation's most impressive monuments and landmarks in a single day trip. It is designed to start early (9 AM), and should allow enough time to see a good portion of every major monument in the DC area. It is also designed to also keep expenses down. Except for lunch, and potentially a cab ride to and from lunch or Arlington Cemetery, almost everything is free. This should leave you with plenty of money to purchase patriotic paraphernalia. The itinerary should allow individuals to get a flavor of DC, and still make it home for dinner.

# Itinerary Overview

## Day 1 - Washington DC, Arlington

**DAY NOTE:** This is a one day trip designed to start early in the morning and end around dinner. If you live close to DC, you should finish up in time to drive home the same night. The first portion of the trip is designed to keep you in DC all morning, seeing the best monuments DC has to offer. For lunch, head to Old Glory for BBQ, on your way out to Arlington Cemetery, or if you would like a delicious and inexpensive treat, head to Pho 75 on Wilson Blvd in Arlington (Orange Line, Courthouse Stop) for lunch. After lunch head to Arlington National Cemetery for the afternoon.



### Washington Monument

Plan ahead to see the view from atop DC's tallest structure



### Lincoln Memorial

An inspiring and symbolic landmark, with a sweeping view of the Reflecting Pool and Washington Monument.



### Vietnam Veterans Memorial

A powerful war memorial



### Korean War Veterans Memorial

19 soldiers walking



### Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial (FDR)

A poignant monument to FDR, America's leader during World War II



### Thomas Jefferson Memorial

A neo-classical tribute



### Old Glory Barbecue

Finger lickin' good



### Arlington National Cemetery

Powerful, breathtaking US military cemetery on 200 acres

# Day 1 - Washington DC, Arlington

## QUICK NOTE

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### contact:

tel: +1 202 426 6841/ +1  
800 967 2283 (Toll free &  
reservations)  
<http://www.nps.gov/wamo/>

### location:

15th Street South west  
Washington DC 20576

### hours:

Daily 9a-5p

## 1 Washington Monument

**DESCRIPTION:** The idea of a tribute to George Washington first arose 16 years before his death, at the Continental Congress of 1783. But the new nation had more pressing problems and funds were not readily available. It wasn't until the early 1830s, with the 100th anniversary of Washington's birth approaching, that any action was taken. Then there were several fiascoes. A mausoleum was provided for Washington's remains under the Capitol Rotunda, but a grandnephew, citing Washington's will, refused to allow the body to be moved from Mount Vernon. In 1830, Horatio Greenough was commissioned to create a memorial statue for the Rotunda. He came up with a bare-chested Washington, draped in classical Greek garb. A shocked public claimed he looked as if he were "entering or leaving a bath," and so the statue was relegated to the Smithsonian. Finally, in 1833, prominent citizens organized the Washington National Monument Society. Treasury Building architect Robert Mills's design was accepted. The cornerstone was laid on July 4, 1848; and for the next 37 years, watching the monument grow, or not grow, was a local pastime. Declining contributions and the Civil War brought construction to a halt at an awkward 150 feet (you can still see a change in the color of the stone about halfway up). The unsightly stump remained until 1876, when President Grant approved federal moneys to complete the project. Dedicated in 1885, it was opened to the public in 1888. **Visiting the Washington Monument:** A series of security walls encircles the Washington Monument grounds, a barrier to vehicles but not people; the National Park Service has gone to a good bit of trouble to incorporate these 33-inch-high walls into a pleasing landscape design. Please be aware that large backpacks and open containers of food or drink are not allowed inside the monument; small sealed containers are okay. You'll need a ticket, and then you pass through a small screening facility before entering the monument's large elevator, which whisks you upward for 70 seconds. Reaching the top, you'll be standing in the highest tip of the world's tallest free-standing work of masonry. The Washington Monument lies at the very heart of Washington, D.C., landmarks, and its 360-degree views are spectacular. Due east are the Capitol and Smithsonian buildings; due north is the White House; due west are the World War II and Lincoln memorials (with Arlington National Cemetery beyond); due south is the Jefferson Memorial, overlooking the Tidal Basin



and the Potomac River. "On a clear day, you can see west probably 60 miles, as far as the Shenandoah Mountains," says National Park Service spokesperson Bill Line. Like being at the center of a compass, the monument provides a marvelous orientation to the city. The glass-walled elevator slows down in its descent, to allow passengers a view of some of the 192 carved stones inserted into the interior walls that are gifts from foreign countries, all 50 states, organizations, and individuals. One stone you usually get to see is the one given by the state of Alaska in 1982 -- it's pure jade and worth millions. There are stones from Siam (now Thailand), the Cherokee Nation, the Vatican, and the Sons of Temperance, to name just a few. Allow half an hour here, plus time spent waiting in line. A concession stand is open at the corner of 15th Street and Madison Drive NW. **Ticket Information:** Admission to the Washington Monument is free, but you still have to get a ticket. The ticket booth is located in the Monument Lodge, at the bottom of the hill from the monument, on 15th Street NW between Madison and Jefferson drives. It opens daily at 8:30am. Tickets are often gone by 9am, so plan to get there by 7:30 or 8am, especially in peak season. The tickets grant admission at half-hour intervals between the stated hours on the day you visit. If you want to get tickets in advance, call the National Park Reservation Service (tel. **877/444-6777**) or go to [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov). The tickets themselves are free, but you'll pay \$1.50 per ticket, plus \$2.85 for shipping and handling, if you're ordering 10 or more days in advance; otherwise, you pick up the tickets at the "will call" window at the ticket kiosk. To make sure that you get tickets for your desired date, reserve these tickets at least 2 weeks in advance. You can order up to six tickets. © Frommer's

**contact:**

tel: +1 202 426 6841  
<http://www.nps.gov/linc/index.htm>

**location:**

900 Ohio Drive Southwest  
Washington DC 20024

**hours:**

24 hrs

**2 Lincoln Memorial**

**DESCRIPTION:** A stunning tribute to the 16th president of the United States, this memorial sits at the western end of the reflecting pool and the national mall. This famous memorial is featured on both the penny and the back of the five dollar bill. The Lincoln Memorial is also the historic site of the famous March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, where Martin Luther King, Jr., delivered his "I have a dream" speech. A true must visit for any trip to Washington, DC. Inside the temple-like structure you will find a 19-foot tall statue of Lincoln seated, with a number of memorable speeches inscribed in the walls that surround him. © NileGuide



**contact:**

tel: +1 202 426 6841 / +1 202 485 9880

<http://www.nps.gov/vive/>

**location:**

900 Ohio Drive, Southwest  
Washington DC 20576

**hours:**

Call for details

**3 Vietnam Veterans Memorial**

**DESCRIPTION:** One of the most powerful and moving sights in the District of Columbia is the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, located near the National Mall and the Lincoln Memorial. The main portion of the memorial, dedicated in 1982, was designed by architect Maya Ying Lin and contains 58,256 names of soldiers who either died or were classified as missing in action as a result of the conflict in Vietnam. The memorial consists of two long black granite walls that are sunk into the ground, inscribed with the names of the fallen. Visitors can walk along a path, viewing both the names on the wall and their own reflection simultaneously. In addition, a smaller bronze statue named The Three Soldiers stands at the end of the wall, looking back on their comrades. This addition was a compromise due to the negative reaction to the original design, and was dedicated in 1984. The final addition came in 1993 in the form of the Vietnam Women's Memorial, dedicated to the women of the United States who served in the Vietnam War. © NileGuide



**contact:**

tel: +1 202 426 6841

<http://www.nps.gov/kwvm/home.htm>

**location:**

French Drive Southwest  
Washington DC 20001

**hours:**

Daily 8a-midnight

**4 Korean War Veterans Memorial**

**DESCRIPTION:** This privately funded memorial, founded in 1995, honors those who served in Korea, a 3-year conflict (1950-53) that produced almost as many casualties as Vietnam. It consists of a circular "Pool of Remembrance" in a grove of trees and a triangular "Field of Service," highlighted by lifelike statues of 19 infantrymen, who appear to be trudging across fields. A 164-foot-long black-granite wall depicts the array of combat and support troops that served in Korea (nurses, chaplains, airmen, gunners, mechanics, cooks, and others); a raised granite curb lists the 22 nations that contributed to the UN's effort there; and a commemorative area honors KIAs, MIAs, and POWs. Plan to spend 15 minutes for viewing. © Frommer's



**contact:**

tel: +1 202 426 6841

<http://www.nps.gov/fdrm/>

**location:**

900 Ohio Drive Southwest  
Washington DC 20024

**hours:**

Daily 24 hours, Rangers on staff daily 8a-11:45p

**5 Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial (FDR)**

**DESCRIPTION:** Located between the Lincoln and the Jefferson Memorials, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial (FDR) is unlike any other memorial in DC. Commemorative both the life and the times of FDR, the memorial includes four areas, each designed to remind visitors of the key events during each of FDR's terms. Unlike the Jefferson and Lincoln memorials that are confined by buildings, this memorial spreads out over a large, uncovered area. The memorial makes generous use of water and unique lighting techniques to bring to life to each of the outdoor rooms. The original memorial included a statue of FDR in a wheelchair partially covered by a cloak. More recently, a group of disability advocates commissioned an additional statue of FDR, clearly in a wheelchair. This statue now stands at the entrance to the memorial. © NileGuide



**contact:**  
tel: +1 202 426 6841  
<http://www.nps.gov/thje/home.htm>

**location:**  
900 Ohio Drive Southwest  
Washington DC 20024

**hours:**  
24 hours

## 6 Thomas Jefferson Memorial

**DESCRIPTION:** Designed by John Russell Pope, this Roman-style monument to Thomas Jefferson, the nation's third president and author of the Declaration of Independence, is elegant and simple. Jefferson's 19-foot statue stands within, surrounded by some of his most inspirational writings. This is a perfect after-dinner destination. At night, the view of the Washington Monument across the tidal basin is one of the most attractive in Washington, especially when the cherry blossoms are in bloom. Admission is free. © wcities.com



**contact:**  
tel: 1 202 337 3406  
[www.oldglorybbq.com](http://www.oldglorybbq.com)

**location:**  
3139 M St. N.W.  
Washington DC 20007

**hours:**  
Monday - Thursday 11:30am - 2:00am  
Friday & Saturday 11:30am - 3:00am  
Sunday 11:00am - 2:00am (Brunch)  
11:00am - 3:00pm

## 7 Old Glory Barbecue

**DESCRIPTION:** Raised wooden booths flank one side of the restaurant; an imposing, old-fashioned dark-wood bar with saddle-seat stools extends down the other. Background music is recorded swing music during the day, more mainstream music into the night. Old Glory boasts the city's "largest selection of single-barrel and boutique bourbons" and a rooftop deck with outdoor seating and views of Georgetown. After 9pm or so, the two-story restaurant becomes packed with the hard-drinkin' young and restless. In early evening, though, Old Glory is prime for anyone -- singles, families, or an older crowd -- although it's almost always noisy. Come for the messy, tangy, delicious spareribs; hickory-smoked chicken; tender, smoked beef brisket; or marinated, wood-fired shrimp. Six sauces are on the table, the spiciest being the vinegar-based East Carolina and Lexington. The complimentary corn muffins and biscuits; side dishes of collard greens, succotash, and potato salad; and desserts like apple crisp and coconut cherry cobbler all hit the spot. © Frommer's



Photo Courtesy of Old Glory BBQ

**contact:**  
tel: (703) 607-8000  
fax: +1 703 607 8583  
<http://www.arlingtoncemetery.org/>

**location:**  
Arlington National Cemetery  
Arlington VA 22226

**hours:**  
Oct-Mar: daily 8a-5p  
Apr-Sep: daily 8a-7p

## 8 Arlington National Cemetery

**DESCRIPTION:** Arlington National Cemetery sits on the Virginia banks of the Potomac River and overlooks Washington DC and the monuments clustered around Lincoln Memorial. More than 300,000 people are buried on the rolling 200-acre grounds of Arlington Cemetery including veterans from all of America's military conflicts, American explorers, astronauts, literary figures, presidents, Supreme Court Justices, and prominent figures from Black and Hispanic history. Visit the eternal flame of President John F. Kennedy's grave, see the Changing of the Guard ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknowns, or simply walk the grounds and explore the final resting place of so many of America's own. Enjoy quiet pristine views of the Potomac and DC from the front lawn of the Arlington House (also known as Custis-Lee Mansion). Paid parking is available, accessible from Memorial Drive at \$1.75 - \$2.00/hour. The Metro blue line stops at the Arlington National Cemetery station during visitor hours. Tourmobile also services Arlington Cemetery. © NileGuide

Four million people who visit Arlington National Cemetery enjoy very different things. For some, it is a place to walk among headstones that tell of American history; for many, it is an opportunity to remember and honor the heroes; and for others, it is a place to grieve well during funeral services for a loved one or friend.

Photo courtesy of Arlington National Cemetery



# 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 Height's 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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## History

Native American settlements existed in current-day Washington DC for thousands of years before the area was first explored by Europeans in the early 1600s; the Potomac River, on which the city is located,

derived its name from an Algonquin tribe.

While the Native Americans were initially accommodating to the arriving Colonists, relations became strained due to land ownership disputes, and most members of the DC-area tribes eventually sought refuge further afield.

It was not until 1790, with the signing of the Residence Act, that the states of Maryland and Virginia officially ceded the 10-mile square of land (including Alexandria, Virginia) on which DC was to be built. Pierre L'Enfant, a French-born architect, was commissioned to develop a plan for the new city; though L'Enfant was eventually de-commissioned and his plans superseded by the updated engravings of Andrew Ellicott, his is the name most commonly associated with the original planning of Washington.

The 19th century was one of great change in Washington- from the burning of the city by the British during the War of 1812, to Alexandria's "retrocession" from the District and return to Virginia in the mid-century, to the Civil War and Reconstruction. Slavery was abolished in Washington almost a full year before President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in 1863. This paved the way for the growth of a vibrant African-American community in Washington, the benefits of which have played an integral part in shaping the city's cultural and political history.

The last hundred years have witnessed DC's establishment as one of the most powerful cities in the world. It was also one of the foremost cities in the American Civil Rights movement. Washington public schools were the first to integrate in the mid-1950s; the National Mall was the site of Martin Luther King Jr.'s historic 1963 "I have a dream" speech. When King was assassinated in 1968, riots erupted in Washington, among other places; the U Street Corridor in particular was a scene of massive unrest. Forty years later, crowds gathered in this same neighborhood- near U and 14th Streets, NW- in a spontaneous, peaceful celebration of the election of America's first African-American President.

Considering the amount of attention that DC receives every four years during election time, it's quite surprising that Washingtonians themselves were only granted the right to vote in Presidential

elections in the mid-1960s. Washington is not a state, nor is it part of a state; it's a free-standing federal territory, under complete jurisdiction of Congress.

Unsurprisingly, this perceived lack of governing control is cause for much controversy. District residents still lament the lack of Senatorial representation, and the argument for "Home Rule" and distancing from Congressional control has been debated for years.

© NileGuide

## Hotel Insights

There are hundreds of hotels, inns, B&Bs, and other types of accommodation in and around Washington. Any number of these places will suit just about any traveler's needs; since Washington is a thoroughly manageable city (many of the main neighborhoods are walkable and/or accessible by bus or Metro), staying in the most central location isn't too big of a concern. Instead, you can focus on finding a hotel that suits your personal style.

**Hip and trendy** Visitors who like being in the middle of the action have several different hotel options at their disposal. There are lots of funky boutique hotels in Dupont Circle, like Hotel Rouge or the Topaz Hotel; if Georgetown is more your scene, try Hotel Monticello.

**Family-friendly** Convenience is probably at the top of the list of hotel criteria for families traveling with children. In this instance, it might make more sense to choose a location that's a little less chaotic; hotels in nearby Arlington, Virginia or Bethesda, Maryland offer easy access to the center of Washington while also allowing for a slightly quieter (and likely less expensive) home base.

**Old School** The big-name hotels downtown, like the St. Regis or the Renaissance Mayflower, are the best bet for a classic, glamorous hotel experience.

A few blocks north, the stately Watergate Hotel benefits from a super-central location in addition to its famous historical connotations. Smaller inns like the Latham Hotel in Georgetown, the Henley Park Hotel near the Verizon Center, or the Hay-Adams near the White House provide more intimate (but equally sophisticated) settings.

## Washington DC Snapshot continued

**Star spotting** Those hoping to see a famous face will have the most luck at The Ritz Carlton in Georgetown. Hollywood types often bunk there when they're in town for special events. On a more local note, politicians can often be seen in and around the Omni Shoreham in Woodley Park- notable also because of its proximity to Adams Morgan.

**On the Cheap** For many, vacation accommodations don't need to be more than a nice, clean place to crash after a long day of sightseeing and exploring.

Thankfully, it's not too difficult to find perfectly adequate, cheap lodging in Washington. The Quincy is centrally located in Foggy Bottom, and its prices are tough to beat. If you don't mind sharing your room with other travelers, check out some of DC's hostels, such as the Gallery Inn.

© NileGuide

### Restaurants Insights

Washington has always had a lively dining scene, but a recent, steady influx of exciting new restaurants has forced some of the old standbys to take notice and stop resting on their laurels. As specific neighborhoods change and grow, so do their culinary offerings. As a result, areas that were virtually bereft of dining options as little as ten years ago are now crammed with restaurants and cafes catering to all tastes and budgets.

Many of DC's traditionally fancy restaurants are located downtown, presumably because they cater to the lawyers, politicians, and various other movers and shakers who work around there. Stalwarts like Old Ebbitt Grill and The Prime Rib are still solid establishments; they've been joined by stylish newer spots like Cafe Atlantico and The Source, Wolfgang Puck's gorgeous bistro in the Newseum building. Rasika is consistently included among the top Indian restaurants in the city. And Obelisk has been known to host a political dignitary or two, given its closeness to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

Adams Morgan offers wide-ranging and eclectic food choices befitting its funky atmosphere. Among the many options are Ethiopian, South American, and even Cajun restaurants. You can dine on the cheap at Mixtec, gorge on delicious vegetarian food at Amsterdam Falafelshop (bonus:

they're open late on weekends!), or sip whiskey at Bourbon. The neighborhood's main thoroughfare provides lots of lazy Sunday brunch options as well.

The revitalized U Street Corridor is constantly adding new culinary feathers in its cap. And patrons benefit from the neighborhood's dense concentration of outstanding restaurants- with so many choices, everyone is bound to find something to satisfy his or her appetite.

Eatonville serves funky Southern cooking; Cork has a great wine list and tasty small plates to balance it.

Dupont Circle is a perennial dining favorite, and nearby Logan Circle is fast becoming a go-to restaurant destination as well. Dupont is host to Komi, arguably one of the most spectacular restaurants in the city; appealing and less expensive options like Circa, Zorba's and Pizzeria Paradiso abound as well. In Logan, stop by Posto for traditional Florentine fare in a modern atmosphere. Just down the road, Rice serves up Asian-inspired food that both vegetarians and meat-eaters can enjoy.

Georgetown's moneyed streets are home to posh restaurants like the venerable 1789 and chic Citronelle. Newer restaurants like Agraria, which specializes in organic and locally grown food, are a nice addition to the Waterfront.

Depending on where you are in Capitol Hill, there are some great restaurant choices worth exploring. In Southeast, check out Montmartre or Park Cafe for a romantic meal or Good Stuff Eatery for heavenly burgers. On the Southwest Waterfront, the Mandarin Oriental Hotel offers both swanky CityZen and laid-back Sou'Wester. In Northeast, head to Union Pub to watch college football or sip a beer on the outdoor patio.

DC's top restaurants aren't limited to within the city limits. In the Maryland and Virginia suburbs, there's a huge array of great eateries from which to choose. The area's diverse demographics are reflected in its vast array of cuisines (everything from Vietnamese to Afghan to Austrian).

Try Vermilion in Old Town Alexandria, or Cafe Asia in the Rosslyn section of Arlington. Further afield, restaurants like L'Auberge Chez Francois and The Inn at Little Washington are great "special event" locations (though your wallet will feel a lot lighter after dining there).

© NileGuide

### Nightlife Insights

Everyone has an opinion when it comes to the "perfect night out". A few quiet drinks somewhere off the beaten track, perhaps? Clubbing until the daylight hours? Getting a dose of culture at the theater? All of these things are on offer in Washington- you just need to know where to look.

New York might be known as "the city that never sleeps", but clubbers can indulge their inner insomniacs in DC as well, at one-named clubs like Policy, Ultra, Fur and Glow- all of which offer R&B, house, hip hop, salsa, trance and other dance-worthy music. Patrons need to "dress to impress", and call in advance to reserve a table with bottle service (in order to people-watch in style).

For those craving something a little more low-key, there are many bars, pubs and lounges to suit their mood. Swanky hotels like The Ritz Carlton in Georgetown offer appropriately chic cocktail lounges. Or stop by Russia House near Dupont Circle to drink (strong) vodka martinis and chat with the eclectic clientele. RFD, in Chinatown, has one of the largest beer selections in the city; Dr. Granville Moore's, in the Atlas District, offers great Belgian ales.

There's an active theater and dance community here; depending on the show, it's not too difficult to secure a ticket to see a performance at Arena Stage, Woolly Mammoth, the Shakespeare Theatre, or the Kennedy Center (to name a very few).

Washington has dozens of live music venues, ranging from intimate nightclubs to large stadiums. Nightclub 9:30 is a DC institution, as is the Black Cat; both places skew a bit more heavily toward indie, punk and alternative music, although pop acts have been known to play there as well. Bigger-name acts tend to play at Verizon Center, Nissan Pavilion, or Wolf Trap. In the summertime, visitors bring a picnic to some of these places and camp out on the lawn while listening to the music.

For a family-friendly evening alternative, the Kennedy Center's Family Theater always has great performances geared for kids of all ages. If the weather is nice, book a family walk through Washington Walks; kids will learn cool facts about the

## Washington DC Snapshot continued

city (and get a little exercise as well). Or catch a movie at one of the several IMAX movie theaters in the area, including one on Independence Avenue on the Mall.

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### Things to Do Insights

As befitting a diverse place, Washington offers different activities for different tastes.

And while seasonally varied, DC weather is not overly extreme; it gets very hot in the summer and quite cold in the winter, but neither end of the weather spectrum is so severe that it forces people inside for extended periods.

You probably already know that DC is full of tourist-worthy attractions. Those planning to do the whole sightseeing shebang won't run out of things on their itinerary. Indeed, many of the world's iconic statues, monuments and museums reside in the Nation's Capital and its surrounding areas.

Spend a few hours in quiet reflection at Arlington Cemetery or the various war memorials (Korea, Vietnam, World War II and more) on the Mall. Catch a glimpse of the building that inspired the Watergate scandal.

Take your pick of one of the Smithsonian Institution's many different galleries, or visit some of the lesser-known museums (why not check out the Octagon Museum, for example?). And of course, no first-time visit to Washington is complete without a photo or two of the White House; seeing more of the President's residence, however, requires a fair bit of planning in advance.

People who like the great outdoors love Washington - it's loaded with parks, trails, and gardens, most of which are open to the public. Walking along the quiet, tree-lined paths of Rock Creek Park, you might just forget that you're in the middle of a vibrant city. Wander down from Georgetown's crowded streets to the C&O Canal, which is perfect for jogging, cycling, or strolling with the family. The National Zoo is easily accessible by metro, and always a crowd-pleaser (check the zoo's website to find out about special events, which take place fairly frequently throughout the year). If you have a car, drive out to Glen Echo Park in Maryland and enjoy family-friendly entertainment like puppet shows and story telling, or head down to the United States Arboretum to truly immerse yourself in nature.

Foodies have an ever-increasing array of cafes, restaurants and bistros from which to choose, from critical darlings like Central Michel Richard to up-and-comers like Founding Farmers. The Kennedy Center is perhaps the best known performing arts center in the city, but it's by no means the only one; depending on what you're interested in seeing or hearing, there is always a theater, club or concert hall to fit the bill. Balance steamy days in July with cool performances at the city's annual Capital Fringe Festival, or watch the holiday favorite Nutcracker at The Washington Ballet.

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### Travel Tips

#### Getting Here

Situated more or less in the middle of the east coast, Washington is accessible by pretty much any mode of transport.

For visitors traveling to DC from within the US, Canada, or Mexico, Ronald Reagan National Airport (or "National Airport", as the locals who remember its original name still call it) is the most convenient option. In addition to the standard airport transportation services (cab, Super Shuttle, rental car facilities and bus), Reagan also boasts a Metro station, making it imminently easy (and inexpensive) to travel to and from there.

International flights (and certain airline carriers like JetBlue) come through Washington Dulles International Airport. It's farther away from the center of town, and there is no direct Metro service, but the aforementioned Super Shuttle runs to and from here, and there are several bus services from which to choose, including one operated by the Washington Flyer that travels to Dulles from West Falls Church Metro station.

Baltimore-Washington International Airport is the farthest of the three airports from the center of town; travelers willing to deal with the 30+ mile commute (via a number of options, including buses, trains, cabs, and car services) might get a slightly cheaper fare here than at the other two airports.

All three airports have the prerequisite coffee chains, souvenir stores and news agents; more substantial shopping or

dining options, aside from Duty-Free, are pretty limited.

Amtrak and MARC trains run directly into Union Station, near the Capitol; Greyhound and Peter Pan share a bus terminal close by. Offshoots of these and other large bus companies (like Bolt Bus or Megabus) are generally cheap, clean and reliable; they pick up and drop off their passengers in or near the center of the city.

Finally, anyone up to the challenge of navigating the Capital Beltway (the Washington area's interstate highway, which intersects in the north and the south with I-95) will find several modes of entry into the city via car.

#### Once You've Arrived

Washington is surprisingly navigable.

Divided into four quadrants (NW, NE, SW and SE), the city is planned on a grid (though perhaps not quite as straightforward as, say, New York's). For the most part, lettered streets run east to west, and numbered streets run north to south. The streets are crisscrossed by avenues, named after the country's 50 states. That said, you should certainly invest in a map to get your bearings and prepare yourself for some of the odd streets, alleys and parks that prove exceptions to the grid rule.

The Metro is a fantastic way to get to all of the city's major neighborhoods without the hassle of driving, parking, or spending too much money. WMATA (the overarching transit authority that includes Metrorail and Metrobuses) are generally very reliable.

Cabs are plentiful, and meter-based (a recent change from the zoned system that caused many tourist confusion and frustration).

If driving is a necessity, it's easy to rent a car in DC from any of the major rental agencies - check their individual websites for more information about rates and location. Bear in mind, though, that parking in central Washington can be pricey.

#### Helpful links:

WMATA - <http://www.wmata.com>  
Amtrak - 1-800-872-7245, <http://www.amtrak.com>  
MARC - 1-800-325-7245, <http://www.mtmaryland.com>  
Greyhound - 1-800-231-2222, <http://www.greyhound.com>  
Peter

## Washington DC Snapshot continued

Pan- 1-800-343-9999, <http://www.peterpanbus.com>

Ronald Reagan National Airport- 703-417-8600, <http://www.mwaa.com/national>  
Dulles International Airport- 703-417-8600, <http://www.metwashairports.com/dulles>  
Baltimore-Washington International Airport- 1-800-435-9294, <http://www.bwiairport.com>

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### Fun Facts

#### Washington Stats:

Coordinates: 38°53'42.4"N 77°02'12.0"W

Population: 591,833

Size: 68.3 sq miles

Time Zone: EST(UTC-5)

Temperature averages: 35° F winter, 80° F summer

Rainiest month(on average): May

Did You Know?

The Washington Monument is DC's largest building- it's roughly a tenth of a mile high.

The "DC" in Washington DC stands for "District of Columbia". The phrase "taxation without representation", often heard here, is based on the fact that DC, not being a state, doesn't have any representation in Congress.

Washington was ranked the #1 Most Walkable City in the U.S. by The Brookings Institution in 2007.

DC's area code is 202, but you're also likely to see area codes like 301 and 240 (for nearby Maryland suburbs) and 703 (for Northern Virginia).

L'Enfant Plaza, in the SW quadrant of the city, is named after Pierre L'Enfant, who is credited with creating Washington's first planned street layout in the late 18th century.

DC's current Mayor, Adrian Fenty, was the youngest person ever to assume the post (at age 36). He is also an avid runner who competes regularly in local road races.

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