

Things to do around DC

All within the Mall

- Marvel at the **U. S. Capitol**, one of the most symbolically important and architecturally impressive buildings in the nation. It has housed the meeting chambers of the House of Representatives and the Senate for two centuries.
- Ponder on the words on the pediment of **US Supreme Court** building: Equal Justice Under Law. If you are lucky stick around and watch history being made by sitting in on a ground-breaking Supreme Court ruling.
- Check out the **Library of Congress'** interactive elements, like the re-creation of Thomas Jefferson's original library. While you're there, see if you come across one of the free lectures, concerts, exhibits, and poetry readings that are held regularly.
- See the original Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights at the **National Archives**, then stick around to research your own family's immigration records if you are from the US.
- Browse through the National Gallery of Art's Sculpture Garden and cool down at the garden's sitting area at the same time. Then view French paintings of modest size but high-quality in the **National Gallery of Art**'s permanent exhibition, Small French Paintings, on view on the ground level of NGA's East Building.
- Peek through the gates to get a glimpse of **The White House** at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, the best-known address in the United States. Every president but George Washington has lived here, and many heads of state have passed through its hallowed halls.
- Sit in the lobby of the **Willard InterContinental Hotel** and imagine history unfolding. The hotel is where President Ulysses S. Grant popularized the term "lobbyist" and where Rev. Dr. Martin, Jr. wrote his renowned, "I Have a Dream" speech.
- Stop, stand, and read the writing on the walls of the **Lincoln Memorial**. There's nothing quite like reading the Gettysburg Address while the massive marble statue of Lincoln broods behind you.
- Trace the names of loved ones lost at the **Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Wall**, a place of deep reflection for many visitors. Then walk along the Reflecting Pool to remember and honor the U.S. soldiers at the **WWII Memorial**.
- Ponder the first lines of the Declaration of Independence at **The Jefferson Memorial**, and remember the line "We have nothing to fear but fear itself" as you encounter the stark monuments to poverty and war at the **FDR Memorial**.
- Ride to the top of the **Washington Monument** to see views of the District, Maryland, and Virginia. This 555-foot, 5-inch obelisk is the epitome of a landmark attraction and is visible from nearly everywhere in the city.

Around town for an adventurous visitor

- Stroll up **Embassy Row** on Massachusetts Avenue to get a first-hand look at the architecture of embassies from around the world.
- Explore the **National Cathedral** and then take a Gargoyle Tour (April through October, \$10/adult, \$5/child, or \$30/family) to see how these whimsical creatures reflect history in stone. There's even one fashioned after Darth Vader.

- Test your knowledge of who's who in US history at the **National Portrait Gallery**, where the nation's only complete collection of presidential portraits outside the White House is located.
- Learn about the Civil War and the story of Abraham Lincoln's life and presidency at the **Ford's Theater**. Explore them to understand more about the man and his impact on our lives today.
- See America's story told through stamps at the **National Postal Museum**. Then walk across the street to 102-year-old **Union Station** to get inspired by its beautiful architecture.
- Ride a glass elevator inside the tower of the **Old Post Office Pavilion** on Pennsylvania Avenue and get an inspiring aerial view of the city for free.
- Make money (or see money made) with a free tour of the **Bureau of Engraving and Printing**.
- Take a sobering and moving visit to the serene hills of the **Arlington National Cemetery** across the Potomac. This the final resting place for some 340,000 members of the armed services, from Civil War casualties to fallen soldiers of the Iraq War. See the Changing of the Guard ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknowns and the Eternal Flame on the tomb of JFK.
- Enjoy in a free performance at **The Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage** every evening at 6pm. Acts include everything from performances by the National Symphony Orchestra to gospel groups to jazz musicians to poetry slams.

Nature Lovers

- Take a hike at the **Chesapeake & Ohio Canal (C & O Canal)**. This national park provides a great place to enjoy the outdoors in Washington, DC, Maryland and Virginia. Start at the **Georgetown Visitor Center** (1057 T. Jefferson St. NW, Washington D.C., DC 20007)(202) 653-5844; Subway: Foggy Bottom-GWU Station) so you can get a map and take a tour on foot, by bike or by mule-drawn boat. There are a number of attractions along the tow path including **Fletcher's Boat House**, a great gathering spot where you can rent a rowboat, canoe or a bike, **Chain Bridge**, the Virginia side of the bridge is known for good fishing, **Glen Echo Park**, which houses a children's museum, two children's theatres, art galleries, demonstrations and workshops and a 1921 carousel, and **Clara Barton National Historic Site**, a memorial to the founder of the American Red Cross. For more information, visit this link <http://www.nps.gov/choh/index.htm>.
- Ride a bike on the scenic **Mt Vernon Trail** that starts from **Roosevelt Island** in Washington, DC and runs along the Potomac River to George Washington's estate at Mount Vernon. The trail passes through **Gravelly Point**, a park area popular for watching the planes take off from Reagan National Airport, **Old Town Alexandria**, **Sailing Marinas** and **Fort Hunt Park**. For more information, visit the link <http://bikewashington.org/trails/vernon/index.php>.
- Consider an outing at the **Great Falls Park**, an 800-acre park located along the Potomac River. Here you can follow trails past the old **Patowmack Canal** and among the boulders and forests lining the edge of the falls. Beginning just downstream of the falls, and you will see spectacular views of the **Mather Gorge**. Above the Great Falls Park Visitor Center, you can follow the **upper Canal Trail** and view the head of the

falls and the **Aqueduct Dam**. See a trail map to help you plan your hike. The park also offers a variety of activities including hiking, picnicking, kayaking, rock climbing, bicycling, and horseback riding. You can view the falls from several observation areas. The falls cascade into 20 foot waterfalls displaying the steepest fall line rapids of any eastern river.

Great Falls Park is accessible from both sides of the Potomac River. The Virginia park is located at 9200 Old Dominion Drive, McLean, Virginia. It is open from 7 a.m. until dark every day except December 25th. The Visitor Center is open from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. daily, with extended hours during the spring and summer. There is a \$5.00 per vehicle entrance fee and a \$3.00 fee for visitors entering the park on foot, horseback, bicycle, or motorcycle. For more information, visit the website www.nps.gov/grfa.

Getting around: The attractions within the city are easily accessible by the Metrorail and Metrobus provides connections for locations not serviced directly by Metrorail. From the metro stop, the best way to experience DC is on foot. The city's wide sidewalks meander past the inspiring monuments and museums found on the National Mall as well as the museums, theatres and neighbourhood gardens. There are also hop-on-hop-off buses that pick and drop off tourists at strategic tourist stops around the city. You can get more information at the following link: <http://www.dctours.us/>, <http://www.trolleytours.com/washington-dc/>, and <http://www.tourmobile.com/>.

Two of the parks mentioned above are also accessible by Metrorail. The C&O Canal is walking distance away from Foggy Bottom-GWU Station. The Mt. Vernon trail is two blocks away from the Rosslyn Metro Station.