Day 1: Boston

Welcome to Boston • Travel by flight or motorcoach to Boston, which was founded in 1630. Upon arrival, you are greeted by your tour director, who will accompany you throughout your stay.

Walking tour of Boston • Your walking tour introduces you to Boston, the largest city in New England and the region’s economic and cultural hub. Pass by Boston Common. Originally a cow pasture, it has also served in centuries past to train militia and hang “witches.” See the Bull & Finch Pub that inspired the hit TV series Cheers. It stands at the base of Beacon Hill, whose rows of genteel brownstones have been home to the Bostonian elite since the city’s founding. Continue along Newbury Street, a popular shopping street lined with sophisticated galleries, restaurants and boutiques. Pass through Copley Square and view the ornate stonework of Trinity Church.

Optional Boston Duck Tour (April-November) • Is it a boat? Is it a truck? It’s a DUCK! See Boston by land and by sea in an authentic renovated amphibious WWII landing vehicle. Your conDUCtor will narrate and navigate a comprehensive tour of the birthplace of freedom in one of the brightly colored “Duck Boats.” Sights include the Hatch Shell, Longfellow Bridge, Bunker Hill, the Old North Church and more. And just when you think you’re nearly done, pass by EF Center Boston and splash into the Charles River for spectacular views of both the Boston and Cambridge skylines.

Quincy Market • Experience the sights and sounds of bustling Quincy Market in the historic Faneuil Hall Marketplace, known as America’s “Cradle of Liberty.” You’ll find a variety of shops and restaurants to explore and could get a glimpse of jugglers and magicians who often perform on the cobblestone promenade. The original Faneuil Hall, where fishermen and merchants once sold their wares, offers a glimpse into the past. Here, colonists protested the Sugar Act of 1764 and created the slogan: “No taxation without representation.” Imagine the voices of the many famous speakers who have taken the podium here, including George Washington, Samuel Adams, Susan B. Anthony and Bill Clinton.

Day 2: Boston ★ Lexington and Concord

Guided sightseeing of Boston and Cambridge • A licensed guide introduces you to Boston’s Freedom Trail. See the Old Granary Burying Ground, final resting place of notable Americans like John Hancock, Crispus Attucks and even Mother Goose. In the Italian North End, pass silversmith Paul Revere’s house and the Old North Church, where the Minutemen who fired the “shot heard ‘round the world” at the Old North Bridge, Concord was the Redcoats’ next stop, but they were confronted by the Minutemen who fired the “shot heard ‘round the world” at the Old North Bridge, which you will see on your tour. Visit either the Olde Manse—Inhabited at various times by American literary giants Nathaniel Hawthorne and Ralph Waldo Emerson—or Orchard House, the historically preserved childhood home of author Louisa May Alcott and the fictional setting for her novel Little Women.

Prudential Skywalk • Take in a bird’s-eye view of the city and surrounding environs from the Prudential Skywalk on the 50th floor of the Prudential Building (known as “the Pru” to Bostonians). The Skywalk provides a 360-degree view of the “Hub”. On a clear day, your view might extend from New Hampshire’s White Mountains all the way to parts of Cape Cod. Learn more about BeanTown on an informative audio tour. Watch a spectacular aerial video of Boston in the film Wings Over Boston or experience Dreams of Freedom, bringing to life the experiences of immigrants.

Optional theater performance • Get a taste of Boston’s performing arts scene with a live theater performance this evening.

Day 3: Boston ★ New York

Transfer to New York City • Travel to New York City, which British explorer Henry Hudson “discovered” in 1609 while searching for a passage to China. Today, the Big Apple is the largest metropolis in the United States. Although it’s known for towering skyscrapers and bustling streets, no place embodies the spirit and history of America quite like New York City.

Guided sightseeing of New York City • A licensed guide leads your sightseeing tour of New York City. Begin among the bright lights of Times Square, home to the Broadway theater scene, MTV’s studios and popular theme restaurants. Make a stop in the 843-acre Central Park, a rectangular oasis in the midst of a concrete jungle.

Program Fee includes:
- Round-trip transportation
- Air-conditioned motorcoach
- 7 nights hotel accommodations (9 nights on our 10-day tour)
- Breakfast and dinner daily
- Full-time Smithsonian Student Travel Tour Director
- Sightsseeing tours led by licensed guides
- Visits to special attractions as per itinerary
- Prudential Skywalk audio tour
- Evening activities
- Broadway show
- Overnight security
- Educational materials developed by the Smithsonian
- Medical and accident coverage
- Travel ID Badges and student backpacks
- Smithsonian Membership
- Gratuities
Here, you will see Strawberry Fields, a tribute to John Lennon that includes 161 plant species, representing 161 nations of the world. (If you look overhead, you can also see the Dakota apartment building where John Lennon and Yoko Ono lived.) Travel south toward the mosaic of Manhattan neighborhoods that make the city so unique. Drive through Greenwich Village, New York’s eclectic province of bohemians, immigrants and students, and pass the cast-iron architecture of impossibly trendy Soho (from “South of Houston Street”). Finish your tour at the World Trade Center site and pay tribute to the victims of September 11 at Ground Zero. The area will be home to One World Trade Center, designed to reach a height of 1,776 feet.

Empire State Building and Observatory • This evening, view the city from the Empire State Building’s observation deck. Once the world’s tallest building, the Empire State Building remains one of Manhattan’s most elegant symbols. Built in just over a year during the depths of the Depression, this limestone beauty’s iconic status was sealed in 1933, when the building starred in King Kong. Since the 1976 bicentennial celebration, the building’s top stories have glowed at night with seasonal colors.

Day 4: Manhattan

Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island • Ferry to Liberty Island to marvel at the Statue of Liberty. A gift from France in honor of the French-U.S. alliance, the 151-foot-tall statue’s iron skeleton was designed by Alexandre Gustave Eiffel (of Eiffel Tower fame), sculpted by F.A. Bartholdi and modeled on the Colossus of Rhodes. Liberty Enlightening the World, the statue’s full title, was unveiled to much fanfare in 1886. Continue on to Ellis Island, which welcomed millions of immigrants to the New World around the turn of the century. Ellis Island is now the site of a museum chronicling the history of immigration.

Metropolitan Museum of Art (closed Mondays) • With more than 3 million objects in its collection, the Metropolitan Museum of Art is home to one of the most extensive art collections in the world. The galleries include works from the Paleolithic era to the contemporary avant-garde. Among the museum’s most popular exhibits are Egyptian artifacts, Oriental sculpture, ancient glasswork, African art, early European musical instruments and American decorative art.

Broadway show • This evening, enjoy the bright lights and glitz of Broadway! Start by exploring the famous Times Square, where you will be dazzled by a dizzying array of towering, electronic billboards, sounds of street performers and the buzz of the crowds who make this intersection a one-of-a-kind spectacle. Then join New York’s avid theater enthusiasts at a Broadway show, where you will be delighted by talented singers and dancers, extravagant sets and glittering costumes. (Show depends on availability.)


Transfer via Philadelphia • Continue to Washington, D.C., by way of the City of Brotherly Love, a city steeped in the history of America’s Revolutionary past.

Independence National Historic Park • Start your visit with a stop at the Independence Visitor Center and pass historic Independence Hall, the site where the Declaration of Independence was adopted July 4, 1776, and where the U.S. Constitution was drafted in 1787. Explore the Liberty Bell Center, home to the famously cracked Liberty Bell. You’ll have a chance to explore the center’s exhibit hall and view educational materials that shed light on the many stories about the history of the bell. Next, see Congress Hall and Carpenters’ Hall, where the First Continental Congress convened in 1774. Continue on to Franklin’s Court, where Benjamin Franklin’s house once stood. Today, the site features a steel structure outlining the spot where Franklin’s house had been as well as an underground museum.

Arrival in Washington, D.C. • Continue to Washington, D.C., planned by Pierre Charles L’Enfant, Washington has served as the seat of Congress since 1800.

Day 6: Washington, D.C. ★ Mount Vernon

Guided sightseeing of Washington, D.C. • A licensed guide introduces you to the sites where national policies and political reputations are formed and re-formed daily. You’ll observe the quiet dignity of Arlington National Cemetery, the final resting place of more than 200,000 veterans and their families. At JFK’s gravesite, you’ll see the eternal flame that was originally lit by Jacqueline Kennedy at her husband’s funeral. Here, you’ll also witness the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns. Next, visit the United States Marine Corps War Memorial, which depicts U.S. Marines raising an American flag at Iwo Jima. On the grassy National Mall, which extends from the Capitol to the Potomac River and view the Washington Monument. Visit the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial and the newly dedicated Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial. Finish your sightseeing with a photo stop at the White House, home of every U.S. president except George Washington.

Mount Vernon • Travel through the Virginia countryside to Mount Vernon, the lovely retreat overlooking the Potomac where George and Martha Washington lived from 1754 to 1799. As you tour the restored Georgian mansion, you’ll see many symbols of the owner’s eminence, including Washington’s presidential chair. You’ll also see the reconstructed slave quarters and Washington’s tomb, as well as the elegant estate’s 500 acres of grounds and gardens. Be sure to explore the comprehensive Ford Orientation Center and Donald W. Reynolds Museum and Education Center. The interactive displays, short films produced by the History Channel and high-tech immersive experiences featured in the center depict Washington at three significant stages in his life.

Evening activity • Join us for a special evening activity. You may take a one-hour Legends of Alexandria tour in Old Town, where an 18th-century costumed guide shows you the way through the streets by lantern and shares ghost stories, legends and folklore about the area!

Day 7: Washington, D.C.

Today is your best opportunity to arrange special visits such as the Library of Congress or a tour of the White House. Please note that these appointments may affect the day’s schedule.

U.S. Capitol • Visit the U.S. Capitol, the city’s epicenter and the heart of the American legislature. George Washington laid the first cornerstone for the building in 1793, but the edifice was set on fire in 1814 when British troops marched through the city. Much of the structure was salvaged, thanks to heavy rains that quelled the flames, and the Capitol remains the symbol of American government today. You’ll also explore the Visitor Center. This underground facility features an exhibition gallery, orientation theaters, a 550-seat cafeteria and gift shops. (Please note: Smithsonian Student Travel will make group appointments for guided tours of the Capitol subject to availability.)

U.S. Supreme Court • See the imposing white-marble Supreme Court building, where the nine justices of the nation’s highest court convene to hear oral arguments and rule on cases that affect the course of law in the United States.

Library of Congress • Marvel at the green-domed Library of Congress, whose collection of 113 million items includes a Gutenberg Bible. (Please note: Smithsonian Student Travel is unable to make group appointments at the Library of Congress. Groups are responsible for arranging their own visit.)

National Archives • This important landmark holds priceless documents that have shaped the history and politics of the United States. Interactive components will give you an appreciation for the role records and archivists play in linking the past to the future. View all four pages of the Constitution simultaneously in the Charters of Freedom Rotunda. The Public Vaults also store important records from the earliest treaties with Native tribes to presidential websites.

Ford’s Theatre and Petersen House • Visit Ford’s Theatre, where, on April 14, 1865, John Wilkes Booth shocked the nation by assassinating President Lincoln during a performance of Our American Cousin. The stricken president was carried across the street to the home of tailor William Petersen. At the historically preserved Petersen House, you’ll see the room where a 23-year-old doctor worked unsuccessfully through the night to save the mortally wounded president.
Introduction to the Smithsonian • The Smithsonian Institution is the world’s largest museum and research complex. Endowed by James Smithson and created by an act of Congress in 1846, it is dedicated to the increase and diffusion of knowledge. The Smithsonian Institution houses more than 136.5 million objects and comprises 17 museums and the National Zoo in Washington, D.C., two museums in New York City and nine research centers around the world. It extends its global outreach through almost 160 Smithsonian Affiliate museums. The Smithsonian is an institution dedicated to discovery, exploration and learning.

The Smithsonian’s museums • Explore all that the Smithsonian’s museums have to offer. On display at the National Air and Space Museum is the 1903 Wright Flyer. You can also see the Apollo 11 command module, Columbia, which orbited the moon while Neil Armstrong and Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin first walked on the surface in 1969. A stroll through the National Museum of Natural History will reveal objects as varied as the 45.52-carat Hope Diamond and dinosaur skeletons. To satisfy your artistic side, duck into the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, where masterpieces by Andy Warhol, Willem de Kooning and Pablo Picasso decorate the halls. (Please note: The museum(s) you visit may vary.)

Washington, D.C., by night • Experience the magic of seeing Washington’s most impressive sights illuminated during your evening scenic tour downtown. Thanks to the foresight of D.C.’s urban planners (who placed strict limits on the height of downtown buildings), you’re assured a view of the Washington Monument from nearly every part of the city. Other points of interest on our tour include the Lincoln Memorial, the WWI Memorial, the Korean War Memorial and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Day 8: Washington, D.C. ★ Departure

Optional International Spy Museum • Opt to enter the world of espionage as you gather intelligence about the tradecraft, history and contemporary role of international spics. Learn the lingo—a ‘shoe’ means a false passport—and view never-before-exhibited artifacts, ranging from a female operative’s lipstick gun to ingenious disguises developed by Hollywood for the CIA. Discover secrets about celebrity spies, Navajo codetalkers and the challenges facing intelligence agencies in the 21st century. Your visit also includes Operation Spy, an action-packed adventure where you’re the spy. Your mission, should you choose to accept it, may be to crack a safe, decode a message or conduct a polygraph test of a suspect agent.

Departure • Head home today, or extend your tour.

★10-DAY TOUR★

Day 8: Washington, D.C. (continued) ★ Williamsburg

Embassy Row • Drive through one of Washington’s most cosmopolitan neighborhoods as you pass Embassy Row. This area of grand houses and more than 130 foreign embassies boasts a range of architecture as diverse as its international denizens.

The Smithsonian’s National Zoological Park • The National Zoological Park is home to some of Washington’s most beloved citizens: the giant pandas. The Zoo has successfully bred a variety of exotic species, including red pandas, golden lion tamarins and pygmy hippopotamuses. It was also the first zoo outside Indonesia to successfully breed Komodo dragons. Visit the walk-in aviary, the octopi and giant crabs of the invertebrate exhibit, the Cheetah Conservation Area and Amazonia, a re-created South American rainforest. Be sure to also wander the Asia Trail, the Zoo’s most recent addition, which boasts sloth bears, Asian elephants, clouded leopards and giant salamanders.

Transfer to Williamsburg • Travel south to Williamsburg, an authentically re-created 18th-century village. In 1699, a year after mosquito-ridden Jamestown burned down, the colonial capital moved to a small village known as Middle Kingdom, which the English settlers soon renamed Williamsburg (after King William III). Once the largest city in Virginia—then the most prosperous colony—Williamsburg remained the seat of colonial government and an important center of revolutionary thought for nearly 80 years.

Evening activity • Join us for a special evening activity in Colonial Williamsburg.

Day 9: Williamsburg ★ Jamestown

Guided sightseeing of Williamsburg • A licensed guide leads today’s tour of Colonial Williamsburg. After slowly fading from American historical memory following the Revolutionary War, Williamsburg received its first major face-lift in the 1920s, when oil tycoon John D. Rockefeller answered the plea of a local priest to bankroll Williamsburg’s restoration. In 1934, Colonial Williamsburg opened as the first U.S. park to use American revolutionary history for entertainment. Touring this working colonial village, you’ll visit the Capitol, where Virginia legislators like Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry cut their political teeth; Market Square’s Courthouse; and the Public Gaol (jail). Offenders seldom returned here after being found guilty, since the colonials were a less-than-forgiving bunch: more likely than not, sentences involved flogging, hanging, or, at the very least, public ridicule! You might also visit either of two 18th-century taverns: the Raleigh, where colonial upstarts like George Washington and Thomas Jefferson toasted the Revolution; or Wetherburn’s, which was also the raucous site of auctions, lectures, balls and gambling. As you stroll through the town, you’ll see tradespeople performing colonial vocations, including construction, blacksmithing, bookbinding, shoemaking and foundry work.

Guided visit to the Jamestown Settlement • Even older than Williamsburg, Jamestown—sponsored by King James I, but owned by the Virginia Company—was the first successful English colony in the New World. The settlement was constantly troubled by territorial disputes with the Powhatan Confederacy, who were indigenous to that region. But it was the colonists themselves who sealed the fate of Jamestown when, in 1675, they burned their fort to the ground to protest the lack of protection offered to them by the Crown. On your guided visit to Jamestown Settlement, join Captain John Smith and other costumed interpreters who take you back to 1607, when these Englishmen first landed on the banks of the James River. Explore reproductions of the three boats that originally carried the men over to Virginia, wander through a re-creation of a Powhatan village or marvel at a 17th-century colonial fort.

Optional excursion to Busch Gardens (mid-May to August) • Opt for an exciting excursion to Busch Gardens Williamsburg theme park. More than 100 attractions showcase the cultures of 17th-century France, England, Germany and Italy. Highlights include a vaudeville show, the German Festhaus, the Enchanted Laboratory and dozens of thrilling rides!

Day 10: Washington, D.C. ★ Departure

Transfer to Washington, D.C. • Return north to Washington, D.C., where, if time permits, you’ll enjoy free time to return to the Smithsonian.

Departure • Your tour director assists with your return home.

Itinerary subject to change. For complete financial and registration details, please refer to the Booking Conditions.

*Smithsonian Affiliates are institutional partners that showcase the Smithsonian’s vast collection and resources in local communities across the country.