Washington, D.C. --
A Capital City

The National Mall with the Washington Monument in the background

Washington, D.C. is a unique city. Where else can you see Dorothy’s ruby slippers (from The Wizard of Oz) and the Star Spangled Banner (the original flag that flew “by the dawn’s early light” in 1814 and inspired Francis Scott Key to compose our national anthem) in the same building? Or catch a glimpse of the famous giant pandas from China, Ling-Ling and Hsing-Hsing? Or tour the home of the President of the United States? Or visit your Senator or Representative in the halls of Congress?

These are just a few of the many things you can see and do in Washington, and all convention attendees are urged to spend as much time as possible touring the nation’s capital. Many of the sites listed below are free, and all offer a once-in-a-lifetime experience for the visitor.

The following is a brief listing of some sites in Washington, starting from L’Enfant’s “Grand Avenue,” the Mall, which stretches from the Capitol to the Washington Monument.

**On the Mall**

**Thomas Jefferson Memorial**
Southern end of 15th Street, SW on the Tidal Basin. (202) 426-6841. Metro: Smithsonian, six blocks.

Nothing less spectacular, yet so simple, could better commemorate our third president. The Jefferson Memorial’s serene Ionic columns gracefully encircle the 19-foot statue of one of our nation’s greatest leaders. The memorial is modeled after the Pantheon in Rome—the style Jefferson used for the design of his home, Monticello. The stately memorial offers one of the best views of the cherry blossoms surrounding the Tidal Basin in early April.

Inscribed in the rotunda are excerpts from Jefferson’s Declaration of Independence and his Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom. Jefferson’s writings, and the memorial itself, capture his brilliant spirit, as did President Kennedy at a 1962 dinner for Nobel Prize winners. Assembled here, said Kennedy, was “the most extraordinary collection of talent, of human knowledge, that has ever been gathered at the White House, with the possible exception of when Thomas Jefferson dined alone.”

**Washington Monument**
Center of the Mall at Constitution Avenue and 15th Street, NW. (202) 426-6839. Metro: Smithsonian, two blocks. Open daily, 8:00 a.m.–midnight, Tours descending the steps offered frequently; call for times.

Construction of the monument began in 1848, but it was not completed until 1888. A shortage of funds during the Civil War halted building, and when it resumed, the marble used was a different shade—thus the two-tone coloring of this 555-foot cenotaph.

When completed, the monument was the world’s tallest structure, and it still dominates the downtown skyline. Visitors may now ascend only by elevator, though by reservation, they may walk down the monument’s 897 March 1992/Construction Dimensions
steps—perhaps worth the energy to see the 192 decorative memorial stones set in the interior walls.

**Lincoln Memorial**

West end of the Mall at 23rd Street, NW, between Constitution and Independence Avenues. (202) 426-6841. Metro: Federal Triangle (Constitution Avenue exit), then Metrobus #13 to Memorial. Also accessible by Tourmobile.

The dedication inscribed in the Lincoln Memorial captures the essence of perhaps the best-known monument in America: “In this temple as in the hearts of the people for whom he saved the nation, the memory of Abraham Lincoln is enshrined forever.”

Guarded by 36 Doric columns representing the number of states in the Union at the time of his death, the statue of the “War President” presides over the National Mall and serves as the setting for Americans seeking guarantees of their civil rights. More than 1,400 permits are granted each year for public gatherings and peaceful demonstrations at the Lincoln Memorial.

**National Archives**

Constitution Avenue between 7th and 9th Streets, NW. (202) 501-5000 (general information), (202) 501-5205 (guided tours) and (202) 501-5400 (research information). Metro: Archives-Navy Memorial. Exhibit Hall open daily, April 1-Labor Day, 10:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.; September-March, 10:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m. (Research facilities closed Sunday.)

The National Archives houses some of the most important documents that have shaped our country’s history. Each night national treasures such as the original Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Bill of Rights, and the Emancipation Proclamation are lowered into a 21-story vault for safekeeping. The Archives also houses immigration and census records dating back to 1790, and much more. The records are a gold mine for researchers; Alex Haley began his work on *Roots* here.

The Archives’ extensive photo collection captures America’s many triumphs and tragedies.

**National Gallery of Art**

Constitution Avenue at 4th Street, NW. (202) 737-4215. Metro: Archives-Navy Memorial, two blocks. Open June-Labor Day, Monday-Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.; September-May, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; Sundays (year round), 11:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Tours daily.

One of the world’s finest collections of paintings, sculpture and graphic art is housed inside the pink Tennessee marble walls of the National Gallery.

The neoclassical West Building, designed by John Russell Pope, contains the most comprehensive survey of Italian painting and sculpture in the western hemisphere, including *Ginevra de’ Benci*, Da Vinci’s only
painting displayed outside Europe. The decor of the galleries reflects their contents, highlighting works by Dutch, Italian, French, American, British, Spanish, German, and Flemish masters.

The interlocking triangles of the East Building were designed by I.M. Pei to house a permanent collection of 20th-century art featuring works by Picasso, Matisse, Miro and others, as well as temporary exhibits.

**U.S. Capitol**

East end of Mall. (202) 225-6827 (tour office) or (202) 224-3121. Metro: Capitol South, one block. Open daily, 9:00 am.-4:30 p.m.; rotunda 9:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. Extended summer hours. Guided tours leave about every 10 minutes from Rotunda until 3:45 p.m. For early morning Congressional tours or gallery passes, contact your Congressional representative in advance. International visitors need a passport to visit the gallery.

The Capitol’s cornerstone was laid by George Washington, who lauded the design as a combination of “grandeur, simplicity and convenience.” Today, Constantino Brumidi’s fresco entitled *The Apotheosis of Washington* welcomes millions of visitors to the central Rotunda. Statuary Hall displays statues of each state’s two most famous citizens. Also of interest are the restored Old Senate and Supreme Court chambers.

**Vietnam Veterans Memorial**

23rd Street and Constitution Avenue, NW, near the Lincoln Memorial. (202) 426-6841. Metro: Federal Triangle (Constitution Avenue exit), then Metrobus #13 to Memorial. Also accessible by Tourmobile.

The polished black granite walls of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial re-
fleet not only the trees and the sky, but also the pensive faces of the millions who visit it each year.

The concept for the memorial was developed by a former Vietnam infantry corporal, Jan Scruggs. Its design had to meet four criteria: 1) it had to be reflective and contemplative in character; 2) it had to harmonize with its surroundings; 3) it had to contain the names of all who died and remained missing in the conflict; and 4) it could make no political statement about the war. Maya Lin, a 21-year old Yale student, fulfilled Scruggs’ concept with her design of a 500-foot wall shaped in a broad “V” with one end of the Memorial pointing toward the Washington monument and the other to the Lincoln Memorial. The names of more than 58,000 casualties of Vietnam are engraved on the wall.

In 1984, Frederick Hart sculpted *The Three Servicemen*, personifying the nation’s multicultural participation in the conflict. The sculpture, adjacent to the memorial, depicts the strength and the vulnerability of those who served in Vietnam.

**Smithsonian Museums**
Smithsonian Information Center in the Castle, 1000 Jefferson Drive SW. Open daily, 9:00 am.-5:30 p.m. Metro: Smithsonian (Mall exit)

Smithsonian Museums, housing the nation’s treasures, are free and open every day except December 25. The museums around the mall include the National Museum of American History (home of the Star Spangled Banner and much more), the National Museum of Natural History (home of the Hope Diamond), the Air and Space Museum (the most visited museum in the world), and the Museum of History and Technology. The National Zoo, across the street from the Washington Sheraton Hotel, is part of the Smithsonian as well.

Learn about the museums at the Information Center in the Castle, the original Smithsonian Institution building. Within the Castle’s Great Hall, two theaters show an excellent 20-minute overview of the museums, and touch-screen video stations provide current information in English and six other languages.

**Off The Mall**

**Arlington National Cemetery**
Across the Memorial Bridge, Arlington, VA; entrance faces Lincoln Memorial. (703) 692-0931. Metro: Arlington Cemetery. Also accessible by Tourmobile Bus. Open daily, 8:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.

At Arlington National Cemetery, symmetrical rows of white stones mark the graves of more than 200,000 veterans and their families at the nation’s most famous military shrine. Perhaps the best-known epitaph here is inscribed on the Tomb of the Unknowns: “Here rests in honored glory an American soldier known but to God.” The site is attended 24 hours a day by a soldier in crisp dress uniform, who paces 21 steps, stops, turns toward the tomb, pauses 21 seconds, then paces back—a ceremony corresponding to America’s highest military honor, the 21-gun salute. The changing of the guard occurs every half hour from April 1 through September 30, and every hour from October 1 through March 31.

Among those buried at Arlington are President Kennedy, whose grave is lit by the eternal flame; two of the seven *Challenger* astronauts; and Pierre L’Enfant, the Federal City’s planner.

**The White House**
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW. (202) 456-7041 (tape) or (202) 456-2200. Metro: McPherson Square, 1-1/2 blocks Tours: Tuesday-Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon. In summer, pick up tickets at booth on the Ellipse after 8:00 a.m. (arrive early, limited availability). From September-May, wait at the Ellipse (line begins to form around
9:00 a.m.; all in line before noon will see the mansion).

“The president’s house should have the sumptuousness of a palace... and the agreeableness of a county seat,” thought city planner Pierre L’Enfant. Although George Washington helped select the site, he was the only president who did not live in the White House.

In 1992, the White House celebrates the 200 anniversary of the laying of its cornerstone. Two centuries have witnessed substantial changes in the presidential home, beginning with the first addition during Jefferson’s administration. It was burned by the British during the War of 1812, and completely gutted and restored under President Truman. Jacqueline Kennedy began renovating the state rooms to their prior grandeur with priceless Americana similar to the original furnishings. Perhaps the most noticeable change is the recent stripping of 28 layers of paint from the front section’s exterior, revealing long-hidden architectural detail and elegant scrollwork.

Of the 132 rooms in the oldest public building in America, the following are open to visitors: the Green Room, the Red Room, the State Dining Room, the Blue Room and the East Room where Gilbert Stuart’s famous painting of George Washington hangs, and where press conferences, presidential weddings and funerals are held. The Bureau of Engraving and Printing 14th and C Streets, SW. (202) 447-9709. Metro: Smithsonian, 2-1/2 blocks. Open weekdays, except legal holidays; closed between Christmas and New Year’s Day. Self-guided tours 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Arrive early during peak tourist season.

Making money is literally big business in Washington. Every “greenback” in circulation (more than 7 billion notes last year) is printed at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, and has been since 1872. At the only security printing plant in the world that is open to the public, visitors can glimpse the production of every dollar of U.S. currency—from inking and cutting to examining for defects. The Bureau also prints postage stamps, White House invitations and many other items.

The visitor’s center displays one million dollars and sells bags of shredded currency and sheets of uncut money as souvenirs.

Federal Bureau of Investigation
J. Edgar Hoover Building, Pennsylvania Avenue and 10th Street, NW. (202) 324-3447. Metro: Metro Center or Gallery Place-Chinatown, three blocks. Tours: weekdays only, 8:45 a.m.-4:15 p.m. every 20 minutes. Picture taking prohibited.

Founded under Theodore Roosevelt in 1898 and dedicated to solving the nation’s interstate crimes, the FBI is one of the most popular stops in Washington. Arrive early for tours or write your Congressional representa-
tive for advance reservations.

Visitors can view weapons used by big-time gangsters, learn how much can be deciphered from a single strand of hair, and see a presentation about the six major priorities among the Bureau’s 200 jurisdictions. On several occasions, visitors have recognized faces from mug shots of the 10 most wanted fugitives, who were then captured. Tour ends with a bang: a real live firearms demonstration.

**Frederick Douglass National Historic Site**

1411 W Street, SE (Anacostia). (202) 426-5960. Metro: Potomac Avenue, then Metrobus B2. Open daily, April-September, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; October-March, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Group reservations required.

Cedar Hill, the restored home of black abolitionist Frederick Douglass, is a rare historic site—90% of the original possessions of Douglass and his family are on display. Douglass lived in this Victorian home from 1877 until his death in 1895. His books, paintings, and furnishings, supplemented by two films, tell the story of this self-educated man who was born a slave and escaped to freedom at age 21 to become a spokesman for his people and an advisor to four presidents.

**Library of Congress**

1st Street and Independence Avenue, SE. (202) 707-8000 (tape) or (202) 707-5458. Metro: Capitol South, one block Open daily, but some sections undergoing renovation. Call for updated information. Tours at 10:00 am., 1:00 p.m., and 3:00 p.m.; reservations required for groups of 10 or more.

With more than 500 miles of shelving for nearly 100 million items, this library is the world’s largest. Acquisitions increase at the rate of one every five seconds of each workday—totaling 1.6 million items a year.

The Library’s first priority is to serve the U.S. Congress, but the public is welcome seven days a week and books are only part of the treasures. The vast holdings include the first draft of the *Declaration of Independence*, with Jefferson’s handwritten changes; a *Gutenberg Bible*, the first book printed with movable type; collections of papers by notables as diverse as Freud and Groucho Marx; the contents of Lincoln’s pockets the night he died; and the world’s largest collection of comic books.

The library comprises three buildings. Although the Thomas Jefferson Building is closed for renovation at least through 1993, its magnificent Main Reading Room has reopened after extensive restoration. Signified by its 160-foot dome and concentric arrangement of oak reading tables, the room is open to researchers with proper identification and to the public on a limited, reserved tour basis (call (202) 707-5458 for more information). The John Adams Building specializes in science and technology collections, and the James Madison
Building houses multi-media collections, the law library, the copyright office and congressional research services.

**National Building Museum**
Pension Building in Judiciary Square, on F Street Between 4th and 5th Street, NW. (202) 272-2448. Metro: Judiciary Square. Open Monday-Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.; Sunday, 12:00 noon-4:00 p.m.

Eight of the largest Corinthian columns in the world inspire awe as visitors enter the 15-story Great Hall of the Old Pension Building. Often referred to as “the most astonishing interior space in America,” the building was once the site of veterans’ pension check disbursements and Presidential inaugural balls.

Today the structure serves as the National Building Museum--a privately funded institution that celebrates American achievements in building and encourages excellence in the building arts through exhibits, educational programs and special construction site tours.

**National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial**
Judiciary Square, between E and F Streets and 4th and 5th Streets. (703) 827-0518. Metro: Judiciary Square.

Authorized by Congress in 1984 and completed in October 1991, the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial is one of Washington’s newest additions. Local architect Davis Buckley designed the memorial to feature an oval, tree-lined “pathway of remembrance” displaying the names of fallen officers on a granite wall. The names date back to 1794 when the first law enforcement officer was killed in the line of duty. New names will be added annually.

**U.S. National Arboretum**
3501 New York Avenue, NE. (202) 475-4815. Metro: Stadium Armory, then Metrobus B2, B4 or B5. Grounds are open Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; Saturday, Sunday and holidays, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. (National Bonsai Collection open daily, 10:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.).

Nothing is more breathtaking than the site of 70,000 azaleas (the most extensive collection in the country), rhododendrons, day lilies, hollies, cherry trees, boxwoods, dogwoods and other flora that fill the 444 acres of the National Arboretum. The Bonsai Collection, a gift from Japan, includes 53 trees from 30 to 350 years old. The National Herb Garden is also on the grounds.

**U.S. Navy Memorial**
Pennsylvania Avenue, between 7th and 9th Streets, NW. (202) 737-2300. Metro: Archives-Navy Memorial.

Visitor Center open Monday-Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.; Sunday, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Opened in the late spring of 1991, the Navy Memorial honors all men and women of the United States Navy --past, present and future. This “living memorial” boasts an amphitheater on a 1000-foot diameter circular plaza where the bronze Lone Sailor statue towers above the largest granite map of the world.

The Visitors Center houses a motion picture theater, reception room, Ship’s Store, and a Log Room documenting the contributions on behalf of former and present Navy members.

**U.S. Supreme Court**
1st and East Capitol Streets, NE. (202) 479-3499 or 479-3211. Metro: Capitol South, three blocks. Open weekdays, 9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m., with self-guided tours. Congressional tours arranged in advance through Congressional offices. When court is in session (first two weeks each month, October through April), the public may attend oral arguments (10:00 am. and 1:00 p.m.) on a first-come, first-seated basis.

“Equal Justice Under Law” is etched on the frieze above the entrance to the highest court in the land. The Great Hall, lines with busts of previous chief justices, leads to the imposing court chamber.

Within the Chamber that is draped in deep red velvet and paneled in mahogany, the nine justices exercise their responsibility to protect and interpret the Constitution of the United States.

Each justice sits in a custom-made chair, which the other justices buy for the departing member upon retirement.

Two more memorials are not open yet, but information on them is available:

**The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum**

**Women in Military Service Memorial**
(opening date not projected) (703) 533-1155.