



# Washington, DC

**Washington, D.C.** is the capital of the United States of America, and houses all three branches of government. Founded in July 16, 1790, Washington, D.C., formally known as the District of Columbia and commonly referred to as "the District" is carved from south-central Maryland. Washington, D.C. is bordered on three sides by Maryland and sits across the Potomac River from Virginia on its fourth side, the capital city is composed of 68.3 sq. miles (176.9 km), and with a population of 632,323 (2012).

The capital city has a collection of free-admission public museums, more than 100 memorials, an abundance of historic houses and federal buildings, and acres of gorgeous parkland. The Nation's most treasured monuments and memorials such as the US Capitol, Washington Monument, White House, and Lincoln Memorial are famous throughout the world as icons of the world's wealthiest and most powerful nation.

The District of Columbia welcomed a record 19.9 million visitors in 2013, about a million more than the year before. The study shows that most of those tourists were from the US, and about two million were international visitors.

There is always something big happening in Washington, D.C. The "**Inside the Beltway**" is a term, an American idiom, used to characterize matters that are important primarily to government officials, corporations and media, are worthy of news buzz. Geographically, *Inside the Beltway* describes Washington, D.C. and those sections of Maryland and Virginia that lie within the perimeter of the Capital Beltway (Interstate 495).

The famous "**Taxation Without Representation**" phrase is used in Washington, D.C. vehicle baseplate as part of the campaign for a vote in Congress, to publicize the fact that *Washington residents* pay Federal taxes, but do not have *representation* in Congress.

**Climate:** Washington, D.C. tends to have a warmer climate in the July/August months. Average temperatures for August vary from the mid-sixties (Fahrenheit) at night through the mid-eighties during the day. Overall, the summer weather in Washington, D.C. tends to be warm and humid.

**Things to See and Do:** Besides being a great meeting destination, Washington, D.C. offers an assortment of entertainment, outdoor activities and sightseeing opportunities.

- **The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial** is one of the most popular of the presidential memorials since its opening in 1997. It includes waterfalls, sculptures, and Roosevelt's own words carved into the stone.
- **The Lincoln Memorial** is a beautiful and moving tribute to the nation's 16th president. It attracts millions of visitors annually. Lincoln's legacy has made his memorial the site of numerous demonstrations by those seeking justice and where the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., once proclaimed, "I have a dream."

- **The National Air and Space Museum** holds the largest collection of historic aircraft and spacecraft in the world. It is now in its 32nd year and chronicles the story of the mastery of flight, from Kitty Hawk to outer space.
- **The National Gallery of Art** houses one of the world's foremost collections of Western paintings, sculpture, and graphic arts, from the Middle Ages into the 21st century.
- **The National Museum of American History** is a treasure for US culture and history. It tells America's story of everyday life and is the most varied. You will for instance see the original Star-Spangled Banner, Abraham Lincoln's top hat and more.
- **The Smithsonian American Art Museum** and **National Portrait Gallery** is the third oldest federal building in the capital. With immense porticoes and columns on the outside, and colonnades, double staircases, vaulted galleries, and skylights inside, the museum captures your attention, no matter how or where you stand to look at it. The building occupies an entire city block.
- **The Supreme Court of the United States** is the highest tribunal in the nation with the most powerful people in the nation. When the Court is not in session, you can tour the building and attend a free lecture in the courtroom about Court procedure and the building's architecture. Lectures are given every hour on the half-hour from 9:30am to 3:30pm.
- **The US Capitol** is majestic up close as from afar. It sheltered both houses of Congress, the Supreme Court and the Library of Congress. You will learn about America's history as you discover the classical architecture, interior embellishments, and hundreds of paintings, sculptures, and other artworks.
- **The Washington Monument** (due to re-open on May 12, 2014) is a tribute to George Washington. At the top, you'll be standing on the highest tip of the world's tallest freestanding work of masonry. The Washington Monument lies at the very heart of Washington, D.C., landmarks, and its 360-degree views are spectacular.
- **The White House** has served as residence, office, reception site, and world embassy for every US president since John Adams. The White House is the only private residence of a head of state that has opened its doors to the public for tours. Thomas Jefferson started this practice, which is stopped only during wartime.