

Welcome to Boston

Boston's history recalls revolution and renewal, and it's still among the country's most progressive and barrier-breaking cities.

Art & Architecture

The arts have thrived in Boston ever since the 19th century, when this cultural capital was dubbed the Athens of America. Certainly, the intellectual elite enjoyed their fine paintings and their classical music, but they were also dedicated to spreading the cultural wealth, establishing museums, libraries and symphony orchestras that could be appreciated by the masses. Today the lucky residents of (and visitors to) Boston benefit from such largesse. These venerable institutions play an integral role on Boston's cultural stage, which has significantly expanded to include dynamic contemporary art and music scenes.

Food

A word of advice: when in Boston, eat as much seafood as possible. Local specialties include the 'sacred cod,' fresh steamed lobster, oysters on the half-shell and thick, creamy chowder. You can eat seafood around the city, but especially in the fish-centered Seaport District, where it's accompanied by spectacular harbor views. The creatures of the sea are your top priority, but don't miss the chance to devour delicious plates of pasta in the North End and to sample exotic Asian dishes in Chinatown. Trendy fusion restaurants draw on all of these eclectic influences to present contemporary cuisine that is uniquely Boston.

Sports

'Fanatic' is no idle word here. Boston fans are passionate about sports, and it's easy to understand why. The three-time world-champion Patriots; the long-overdue World Series-winning Red Sox; the winningest basketball team in history, the Celtics; and 2011 Stanley Cup victors the Bruins: there's a lot to be passionate about. Boston's college teams also inspire fierce loyalties and staunch rivalries. No less spirited are the country's oldest and most celebrated running event, the Boston Marathon, and the world's largest two-day rowing event, the Head of the Charles Regatta.

History

For all intents and purposes, Boston is the oldest city in America. And you can hardly walk a step over its cobblestone streets without running into some historic site. The Freedom Trail winds its way around the city, connecting 16 sites of varying historical significance; and that's just the beginning of the history lesson. These are the very places where history unfolded. In effect, Boston is one enormous outdoor history museum, where visitors can remember and relive the events of centuries past.



Why I Love Boston

By Mara Vorhees, Author

Boston is wicked *smaaht*. I love that Boston is motivated not by money or politics, but by learning. The academic institutions are a source of innovative art, architecture and ideas that we all benefit from. The students provide a renewable source of energy and vibrancy that permeates the city. Yet for all the fancy buildings and big ideas, Boston is still a city of neighborhoods and local people. The students may or may not be here in four years, but my neighbors are here for the long haul. They are the cogs that keep the city running, moving, growing, remembering the past and creating the future.

For more about our authors, see p272.