

PICK-YOUR-PATH ITINERARIES

CRUISE THE COAST

Discover the beauty and heritage of the Capital Region's beaches and bays.

DAY 1

■ Start in **Annapolis, Maryland**, whose location on the Chesapeake Bay lends itself to the city's maritime history. After admiring the **Maryland State House** and colourful houses on Pinkney Street, take a tour of the **US Naval Academy**.

■ Cross the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and head south to **Cambridge** on **Maryland's Eastern Shore**, where you can go for a sail aboard the skipjack **Nathan of Dorchester**. After a seafood dinner downtown, tuck in for the night at one of the town's charming inns.

DAY 2

■ Make your way to **Ocean City, Maryland**, which stretches for 10 miles along the Atlantic coastline. The wooden boardwalk is a nostalgic focal point, with a vintage carousel and street performers of every kind. Explore sandy shores and catch an unparalleled sunset over the bay side before an evening enjoying the nightlife.

DAY 3

■ Next up is **Virginia Beach**, the world's longest pleasure beach, sitting on the Atlantic Ocean at the mouth of Chesapeake Bay. It too features a boardwalk, dotted with crab shacks and nautical-themed shops. For the adventure-seeker, try surfing, parasailing or kayaking with dolphins.

Follow your passion throughout the entire Capital Region with these themed journeys linking Washington, DC, Maryland and Virginia.

DAY 4

■ You'll wrap up your journey in **Norfolk, Virginia**, whose sprawling **Ocean View Beach Park** is considered one of the best swimming spots in the region and draws crowds in the summer with its large bandstand for concerts.

PARKS & TRAILS

Green spaces and wide-open public lands are prime for exploration.

DAY 1

■ In **Washington, DC**, the 20-mile **Anacostia Riverwalk Trail** is designed for walkers, runners, cyclists and skaters. Traversing both sides of the river, the trail passes through **Anacostia Park** and the **Navy Yard** district.

■ Beyond the trail, the **National Arboretum** is a 445-acre living museum featuring gardens, a bonsai museum and the original columns from the Capitol Building.

DAY 2

■ Drive to **South Mountain State Park** near **Boonsboro, Maryland**, through which the **Appalachian National Scenic Trail** passes, serving as a day-hike option with several impressive scenic vistas. Make nearby **Hagerstown** your base for the night.



This page from top: Chesapeake Bay Bridge. Visit Maryland/Jay Fleming: Kayaking with dolphins. Virginia Beach: US National Arboretum, Adam Fagen: Shenandoah National Park, Virginia Tourism Corporation. Opposite page from top: Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia Tourism Corporation; Lincoln Memorial.

DAY 3

■ Drive to the **Front Royal, Virginia** entrance to **Shenandoah National Park**, where you can pick up **Skyline Drive**, which spans the length of the park along the Blue Ridge Mountains. Roll down your window and feel the breeze as you look for wildlife and views around every curve.

■ Within the park, stop for the night at **Big Meadows Lodge** — accommodations range from main lodge rooms to small, rustic cabins.

INTO THE PAST

Step back in time to revisit some of the most pivotal moments in American history.

DAY 1

■ Begin in **Washington, DC**, where the new **Fossil Hall** at the **National Museum of Natural History** explores the story of Earth's past through interactive and multimedia experiences and nearly 700 fossil specimens, including a *Tyrannosaurus rex* skeleton.

■ A stroll on the **National Mall** reveals monuments and memorials to former presidents Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Franklin D. Roosevelt, as well as veterans of the Vietnam and Korean wars and World War II.

■ To see the original copies of the US Declaration of Independence, Constitution and Bill of Rights, visit the **National Archives Museum**, located just north of the Mall.

DAY 2

■ Moving northward to **Baltimore, Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine** is where the Battle of Baltimore took place during the War of 1812 — inspiring Francis Scott Key to pen the US national anthem.

■ Drive to **Antietam National Battlefield** near **Sharpsburg, Maryland**, a solemn reminder of the bloodiest single-day battle in American history, with more than 23,000 casualties, which occurred during the American Civil War.

■ Spend the night in **Frederick, Maryland**, a picturesque city with a 50-block historic district filled with parks, churches and centuries-old structures.

DAY 3

■ Your next stop is **George Washington's Mount Vernon** in **Virginia**, the former home of the country's first president. This riverside estate encompasses the mansion, a distillery and gristmill, gardens, tombs, museums and more.

■ Next, **Manassas National Battlefield Park** preserves the site of two major American Civil War battles through guided tours and living-history demonstrations. Find overnight lodging in the town of **Manassas, Virginia**.



DAY 4

■ On your way south, stop in **Richmond** for a tour of the **American Civil War Museum**, housed in a historic gun foundry.

■ Head to **Colonial Williamsburg** in **Virginia** to behold 18th-century life at the world's largest living-history museum. Historic taverns, carriage rides, art museums, reenactments and drum marches are all part of the immersive experience.

■ Colonial Williamsburg is part of **America's Historic Triangle** — and the other two corners are also worthy of a visit. **Historic Jamestowne** is the original site of the first permanent colony in North America, whilst **Jamestown Settlement** is a museum featuring a re-created fort and Powhatan Indian village. Yorktown is where you'll find the **American Revolution Museum** and **Yorktown Battlefield** — the stage of the last battle in the Revolutionary War.





■ Venture up to **Washington, DC**, which brims with cultural institutions. The **Phillips Collection** boasts superb works of modern art in **Dupont Circle**; the neighbourhood is also home to **First Friday Dupont**, a monthly gallery walk.

■ Thanks to the **MuralsDC** project, more than 85 murals have been painted across the city, making for the perfect Instagram photo op. Scope them out in neighbourhoods like **Adams Morgan** and **U Street**.

CULTURE TRIP

Take a lap around some of the Capital Region's top stops for art and culture.

DAY 1

■ Begin your journey in **Richmond, Virginia's** capital city. The city itself is a living canvas with more than 100 murals painted by artists around the world adorning the city's buildings. Indoors, visitors can tour the **Virginia Museum of Fine Arts** and the **Institute for Contemporary Art**.

■ Head north to the **Workhouse Arts Center** in **Lorton, Virginia**, home to more than 60 artists in addition to performing-arts events. Formerly a prison, the past is also on display in the Center's fascinating museum.

■ To the northwest, **Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts** is a majestic natural setting for outdoor and indoor concerts in **Fairfax County, Virginia**. Later, spend the night in the city of **Fairfax**.

DAY 2

■ Kick off at the **Arlington Arts Center** in **Virginia**, a collection of contemporary works from regional artists in the mid-Atlantic states. It also hosts events and art classes throughout the year.

DAY 3

■ On your second day in **DC**, turn attention to the museums on the National Mall. The circular **Hirshhorn Museum** is a standout for contemporary and modern art (don't miss the sculpture garden on the other side of Jefferson Drive SW), whilst the **National Gallery of Art** fills two buildings with American and European works.

■ For the evening, book a seat at **Blues Alley** in **Georgetown**, the nation's oldest operating jazz and supper club.

DAY 4

■ On your way north, visit **Glen Echo Park** in **Maryland** for its galleries and studios, free summer concerts and classes in ceramics, photography and other subjects.

■ Continue on to **Frederick, Maryland** to traverse the **Public Art Trail** downtown, a walking route linking more than a dozen pieces. The **Weinberg Center for the Arts** hosts live events and performances in addition to film screenings. **Frederick** is also an ideal stop for the night.



This page from top: Hirshhorn Museum, Flickr/anokarina: Dupont Circle, Washington, org: MuralsDC: Baltimore Museum of Art, Visit Baltimore. Opposite page from top: Capital Wheel at National Harbor, MamaGeek/Wikimedia Commons: Water taxi to DC, K Summerer/Visit Alexandria.

DAY 5

■ Finally, **Baltimore** is a can't-miss cultural destination. First up is the **Baltimore Museum of Art**, which lays claim to the largest holding of works by Henri Matisse in the world. Check out a live show in the **Stoop Storytelling Series**, which aims to build community through the telling of personal stories. Catch an evening show at the **Chesapeake Shakespeare Company**, then wrap up with an overnight stay in Baltimore.

URBAN WATERFRONTS

Easily visit three riverfront locations by jumping aboard the Potomac Riverboat Company's water taxis.

DAY 1

■ After a leisurely lunch of fresh bivalves at **Rappahannock Oyster Bar** in **Washington, DC**, spend time exploring the rest of what **The Wharf** has to offer — from shopping to parks.

■ Later, board a water taxi for the 45-minute ride to **Alexandria, Virginia**. Walk up King Street for a delectable dinner at **Vermilion**, a long-time favourite known for its farm-to-table ethos. Go for a nightcap at intimate speakeasy **Captain Gregory's**, housed within Sugar Shack Donuts. Pull the raised whiskey flag to open the false door to the bar.



DAY 2

■ Take a ride down King Street toward the waterfront aboard the free trolley. After visiting the **Torpedo Factory Art Center** — home to a large collection of artists' studios, seven galleries and two workshops — grab lunch at **Virtue Feed & Grain**, an 1800s feed house repurposed into an American tavern.

■ In the afternoon, take the water taxi to **National Harbor, Maryland**, an exciting destination teeming with entertainment, dining and more. As evening falls, marvel at the views from the **Capital Wheel**, which spins right on the waterfront. Then make a night of it at the **MGM National Harbor**, a resort that boasts Las Vegas-style gaming, a 3,000-seat theatre and dining options from acclaimed chefs like José Andrés.

DAY 3

■ This morning, score bargains at the **Tanger Outlets National Harbor**. After you've indulged in retail therapy, take advantage of the National Harbor circulator bus to return to the waterfront.

■ For your mid-day meal, snag a seat on the patio at the **Crab Cake Cafe** — whose star menu item comes in traditional, Hawaiian, Tex-Mex and other varieties.

■ Walk off lunch with a stroll on the boardwalk whilst admiring outdoor murals, statues and other public art — including **"The Awakening"**, a dramatic metal sculpture of a giant emerging from the ground.

■ Catch a boat back to **DC**, where you can soak up more of **The Wharf's** activities on your final night — perhaps catching a concert at **The Anthem** or savouring the Afro-Caribbean fare at **Kith/Kin**.