



The Best Time to Visit Washington, D.C. Guide – Get The Most Out of Your Trip!



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local destinations and finds new trails for hiking. She shares her travel tips and tricks that suit your needs. In her spare time, she loves hiking and working out.

As the nation's capital, Washington, D.C., is the most educational, historical and political place in the United States, and it's an [ideal destination](#) if you're interested in learning how our country is run and how it got here. On top of that, though, there's so much more to do in and around D.C.

You can sample international cuisine, explore modern art and take advantage of the city's nightlife. You can also explore nearby neighborhoods and their colonial architecture, or get a dose of fresh air on the many hiking trails in the area.

What's so great about visiting Washington, D.C., is that you can head to a monument, memorial or museum practically any day of the year or any time of day. Memorials are open around-the-clock, so you can see what they're like in the bright light of early morning or once the sun has set and they're illuminated with colorful lights. Most of the museums, especially the Smithsonian ones, are open 364 days of the year, all except for Christmas.

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Experiencing the Different Seasons in Washington, D.C.



Since Washington, D.C., has a Mid-Atlantic position, the weather is on the mild side. However, there are still four seasons here to experience, each with its own weather and temperature range. Unlike other parts of the country, though, winters are not unbearably cold and summers don't tend to have temperatures that make it impossible to stay outside. There are temperature extremes, but if you come prepared, you can handle them.

During the winter, there are tons of family-friendly holiday events throughout D.C. Spring and summer are peak travel times, so plan for long lines at attractions and crowds anywhere you go. Visiting during the week may mean crowds thin out a bit. Fall is a perfect time to travel to D.C. – temperatures are mild, there's a lot to do both inside

Keep in mind that the biggest events of each season also mean that's when tourism is at its highest. That may be worth it to you, especially if you've never celebrated any of these happenings in D.C. in the past. Make sure that you plan your trip well in advance so you can [get a hotel room](#).

Winter

Wintertime in D.C. is cold and sometimes snowy. The average temperature ranges from the 30s to 40s. While these temperatures aren't too bad, there are some exceptionally chilly days, making it difficult to do a lot of sightseeing outdoors.

While tourists aren't frequenting D.C. during most of the winter, Christmastime is a popular time for visitors, so plan accordingly. Also, the Downtown Holiday Market is open every day during November and December, with almost 200 vendors who sell crafts, food, and souvenirs. You may catch a holiday-themed music performance, too.

Spring

Springtime in D.C. is just about perfect in terms of weather, but since it's so appealing this time of year, a lot of school groups visit. Monuments and museums will be crowded with visiting school kids. Memorial Day is huge in D.C., so if you want to partake in the festivities, plan your trip for that weekend. Another popular time to visit is around Easter.

The biggest thing happening in D.C. during the spring is the National Cherry Blossom Festival, which attracts more than 1.5 million visitors who gather to honor both American and Japanese cultures. It only lasts for a few weeks, so plan your trip with that in mind if your goal is to see the stunning flowers.

Summer in D.C. is hot and humid, and temperatures range from the 80s to the 90s, and sometimes even higher. Pack a lot of water if you're going to be trekking through the city during the summer. You'll also want to duck into air-conditioned restaurants and museums to get out of the heat.

There's nothing more patriotic than celebrating the Fourth of July in the nation's capital, and there's plenty that will keep you busy from morning to night.

Autumn

Autumn is the best time to visit D.C. Between September and November, the weather isn't too hot while still being warm enough to walk outside comfortably. There are lots of activities and events offered throughout autumn, but since tourism is lower than during the spring and summer, you won't be fighting nearly as many crowds.

Keep in mind that Thanksgiving weekend is particularly busy in D.C., even though autumn is an otherwise tepid month in regards to tourism.



There's not a bad time weather-wise to visit Washington, D.C., but if you want mild, enjoyable weather and the least amount of tourism, plan your trip for September to November. Or, brave the winter weather and celebrate the holidays or Valentine's Day in the capital. The spring months attract a ton of visitors, and summertime weather can be difficult to handle for a full day outside.

Let's go over what you can expect each month so you can perfectly plan your trip to Washington, D.C. (Note that temperatures are in Fahrenheit.)

January

January in D.C. can be unpredictable, but it's likely that the weather will be cold and snowy, even if temps vary. Despite the chill, January is a great time to visit because D.C. is so low on tourism. You can roam around museums, get tickets to live entertainment or go for a few spins around an ice skating rink.

January is also when Winter Restaurant Week takes place, with deals at some of D.C.'s

Temperatures in February are still cold. However, with tourism still low, D.C. makes the perfect Valentine's Day destination. Book a room at a top-of-the-line hotel and spend your days at art or history museums, dining on hearty comfort food and checking out the monuments when they're topped with fresh snowfall.

March

Finally, there are hints of warmer, springtime weather in March. Temperatures climb to the 50s and 60s, and you may get lucky enough to have an unseasonably warm day that feels more like summer. It can be rainy in D.C. in March, though, so bring an umbrella.

The Cherry Blossom Festival kicks off in March and continues into April.

April

The weather starts to warm up in April, making it an ideal time to explore D.C. by foot and visit the monuments. Thanks to guided tours, you can visit the sites while learning about them, and you'll also tap into the most sensical way to visit them in order.

During April, the Cherry Blossom Festival is held around the Tidal Basin, complete with food and vendors, live performances and, of course, the gorgeous, blossoming trees. There's also the Easter Egg Roll (i.e., Easter egg hunt) on the lawn of the White House.

May

May means the start of official spring weather in D.C., with temperatures ranging from 50 to 70 degrees, and sometimes even hitting peaks in the 80s. Needless to say, May is a perfect time to spend your days outside. Memorial Day weekend is a big deal in D.C., with celebratory concerts, events, and parades all around the capital.

June

School lets out in June, making this a popular month for families to visit D.C. with kids and teens in tow. Temperatures are hot and humid, which can make those crowds overwhelming, though. If you can avoid visiting during this time of year, do so. However, if you only have a week in June to take your vacation, there'll be plenty to do in D.C. There are a lot of free events, like concerts and movies, during June and throughout the rest of the summer.

June is also when the Smithsonian Folklife Festival is held on the National Mall. The festival honors cultures and traditions from around the globe through art, dance, food and music. There's also the Capital Pride festival and parade, where you can support the LGBTQ community.

July



July in Washington, D.C., is extremely hot and humid. Temperatures range from the 80s to 90s, and it's the capital's hottest month of the year. If you can brave the heat, though, there are lots of outdoor activities and festivals to take advantage of. July is also D.C.'s rainiest month, receiving more than two inches of rain.

For starters, the Folklife Festival will still be going on, and you'll also be able to celebrate Independence Day in the most patriotic part of the country. On the fourth, catch the Independence Day Parade during the daytime, then watch fireworks over the Washington Monument in the evening. There are also concerts and other events throughout the day. For sports fans, July also means the Citi Open Tennis Classic, which will continue into August.

August is slightly cooler than July, but not much so. It's still pretty hot in D.C. during August, with temperatures in the 70s and 80s, and sometimes hotter. However, if you need to visit D.C. during the summer, this is the month to do it – students are getting ready to head back to school, so there isn't as much tourism. Plus, government employees get their break around this time, so even some locals have left town for a bit.

Summer Restaurant Week is in August, and you can get a great deal on a delicious meal at a restaurant you've been dying to check out. There's also D.C. Beer Week, where you can taste your way through numerous brews.

September

September kicks off the fall season, and it's one of the loveliest times to explore D.C., especially if you plan to walk most of the time. Leaves will begin to change in September, giving way to gorgeous fall foliage.

During the National Book Festival from the Library of Congress, you may get the chance to meet some of your favorite authors. There's also the Taste of Georgetown festival, a must-visit for foodies. Additionally, the H Street Festival is held every

October

October temperatures are still mild, so you won't need more than a light sweater or jacket when you head out for the day. Temperatures are usually around 60 to 70 degrees. This is the perfect weather for a hike through Rock Creek Park, where you're bound to see lovely foliage.

In addition to Halloween events, October in D.C. means you can be a spectator and supporter at the Marine Corps Marathon. There's also the High Heel Drag Queen Race, which takes place every year. Don't miss the Washington International Horse Show, either.

November

Temperatures drop in November and days get shorter as winter comes in. Temperatures range from the 30s to the 60s, so you'll need to pack warm clothing.

If you're traveling with the family, head to the Kids Euro Festival, a performing arts experience with over 90 free events throughout D.C. Also, November is when the president lights the National Christmas Tree.

December

The weather may be brisk, but December in D.C. is so postcard-pretty. Holiday decorations are everywhere, making the 30-degree temps a bit more bearable. Sometimes, temperatures can rise to the 40s and 50s, too.

More to Do in Washington, D.C.



Most people picture learning about history and the government when they visit D.C., but it's also a prime destination for adventure lovers and outdoor enthusiasts. So long as the weather is nice and mild enough to be outside, you can head to the C&O Canal Towpath, Great Falls Park or Rock Creek Park, all of which have hiking and walking paths. Or, take a canoe, kayak or stand-up paddleboard on the Potomac River, and get a different view of the beautiful city.

Airfare will vary based on where you're traveling from and [the airline you use](#), but in general, holiday weekends and prime vacation times (June and July) will come with pricier airfare. The least expensive flights from Los Angeles and New York to D.C. are during the mid and late summer.

However, if you're coming from Chicago, Dallas or San Francisco, flights are least expensive during September. And if you're flying out of Seattle, you'll get the best airfare during October. Basically, as you move away from high tourist season and into the less popular fall and winter months, airfare should drop, regardless of your point of origin.

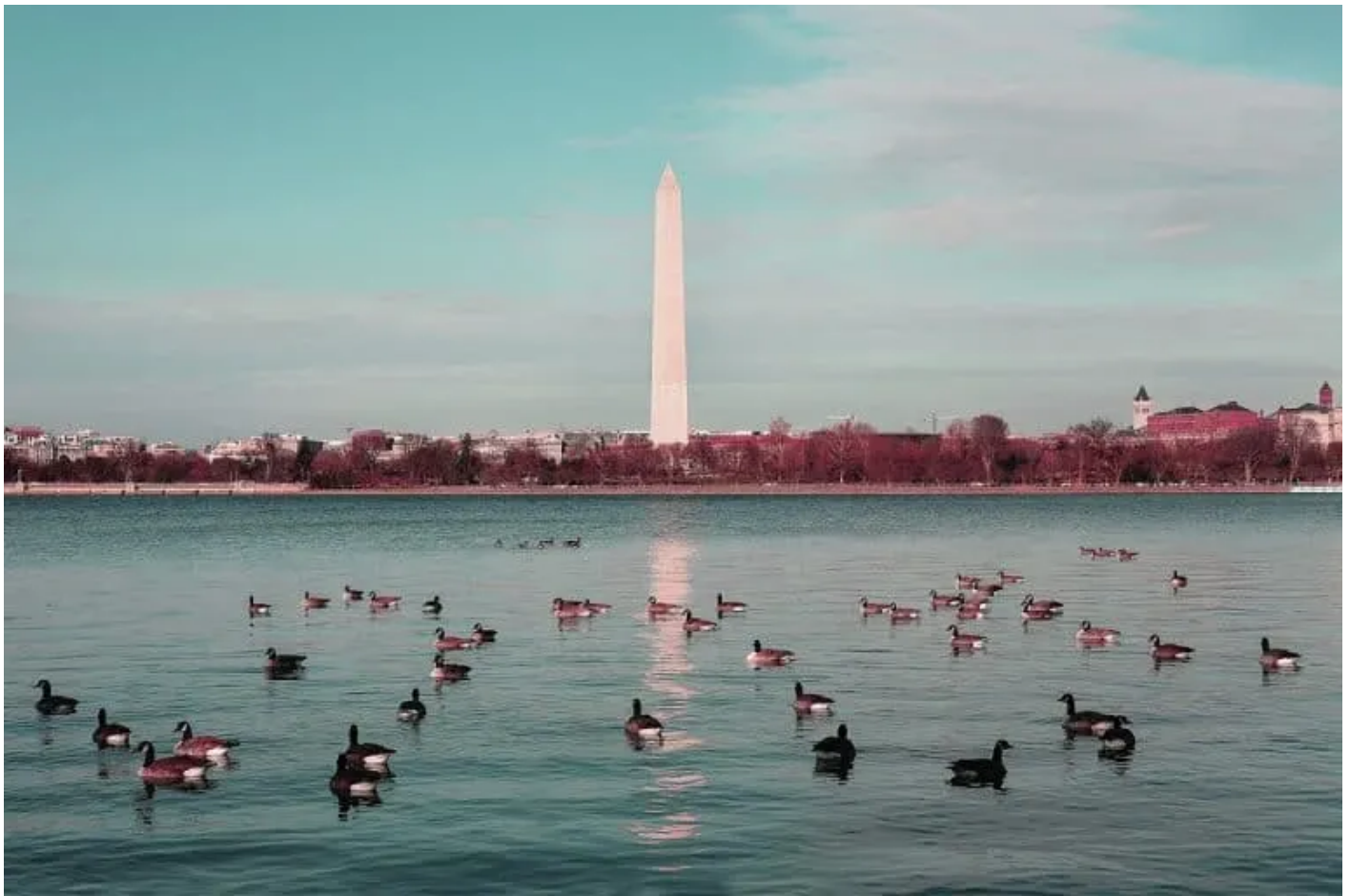
Seasonal Hotel Prices

Tourism is at a high during the Cherry Blossom Festival, so be prepared for high hotel rates from late March to early April. In general, spring and summer keep rates up, since tourism is so high. Throughout the rest of the year, you can take advantage of [lower-priced accommodations](#).

Generally, hotel prices start to climb during January and then hit their highest prices in April. They fall a bit during the summer but are definitely still not at their lowest. In September and October, it's possible they'll rise again before falling as low as they go during December.

Keep in mind that business conferences and conventions happen year-round, and if there's a popular one in town, rates will be high again. Since business events tend to take place during the week, the weekends before and after the events may have lower prices.

Getting Around Washington, D.C.



Washington, D.C., is a highly walkable city, especially since they have a metro that can take you wherever you need to go if it's too far (or hot or cold) to walk. Driving in D.C. means battling with busy, hectic roads, and even if you make it to your destination quickly, finding a parking spot can be difficult.

Try to drive in D.C. as little as possible and walk or take public transportation instead. If you're staying in nearby Old Town Alexandria, Virginia, a popular destination for D.C. visitors, you can hop on the metro and go right into the city.

Crowds and Tourism

While there are times of the year that are lower in tourism than others, it's not possible

frequent D.C., and during the winter, spring and fall, school groups visit. Also, protests, rallies, and government events take place year-round, which can draw crowds and close roads.

Before you visit, check that your travel dates don't coincide with popular events (unless you're specifically visiting for that event, of course). If you'd like to keep away from crowded areas, don't head to the National Mall. Also, as a reminder, the peak tourism season is in the summer, and November through February are the least crowded months.

FAQ's About Washington D.C

Is Washington D.C Safe?

Like with any other places you will visit, there will be zones that you will have to avoid especially if you are traveling solo, so here are some of them – Washington Highlands/Bellevue, NoMA, Brentwood. Historic Anacostia and Trinidad. These zones have a high crime rate, so it's best to be avoided but other than that, Washington is a safe place to be!

Is Washington safe for walking at night?

How many days do I need to stay in Washington to see everything?

There is no right answer to this question as everything depends on your preparation skills, whether you are traveling with friends, family or solo. Usually, it takes 5 to 7 days to check everything in D.C, so that's a start.

Final Thoughts on Visiting Washington, D.C.

The best time to visit Washington, D.C., depends on your plans during your time in the capital. If you want to be in town for major events, you'll have to brave the crowds and accept higher travel prices. If you'd rather avoid heavy tourism, stick to the cooler months of fall and winter, with fall being the distinct winner unless you're in D.C. for a specific holiday.

Winter is hit-or-miss weather-wise, but there's so much to do in D.C. that's indoors that it may not matter to you. Spring is gorgeous in D.C., but busy with visitors. However, the Cherry Blossom Festival may make it worth the crowds, especially if you've never been to it before. Spring is the hottest and most tourist-heavy month, so unless it's the only time of year to visit, consider avoiding D.C. until late August or later. Autumn is practically perfect, and there's still plenty to do outside.

do year-round and experiences all four seasons without too many extreme temperatures, there's no bad time to book your trip.

Recommended Reads:

- [The Best Time To Visit Lake Tahoe – Find the Best Season!](#)
- [The Best Time to Visit Boston – A Full Guide for Your Trip!](#)
- [The Top Things to do in Iowa City – Complete Travel Guide!](#)

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