

Overview of Delaware

Delaware is the second smallest state in the country, but its narrow borders hold significant diversity. During the American Civil War, the citizens of Delaware were split in their loyalties, and even today, the state seems to have two distinct identities, one taking its cue from the industrious North, the other following the relaxed pace of the South.

In northern Delaware, the rolling, wooded hills of the Brandywine Valley provide a captivating backdrop to the state's colonial history, refined elegance and industrial prominence. It was here that the du Pont family built its empire, harnessing the river for gunpowder mills in 1802.

But the du Pont legacy includes a commitment to the community as well. It lives on today in the mansions, gardens, museums, libraries, and parks established by the family over the years and now open for visitors to enjoy.

Wilmington is Delaware's largest city, which grew along with the du Ponts' fortunes. Wilmington, and nearby upmarket towns like Hockessin and Greenville, offer stylish shops and boutiques, trendy nightspots, historic pubs, and excellent restaurants (Mediterranean cuisine is a specialty, due to the city's large Italian community). Most residents of Wilmington and its surrounding areas identify with their northern neighbours. It is not unusual to hear them describe themselves as living not in Delaware but 'just south of Philadelphia'.

Central and southern Delaware, on the other hand, have a decidedly different flavour. Small towns are surrounded by farmland. Charming bed and breakfasts take the place of grand hotels. In Dover, the quiet state capital, visitors might see Amish buggies travelling alongside regular traffic. A strong connection with the environment is apparent, as outdoorsmen revel in waterfowl hunting and fishermen take advantage of the many inlets and tidal marshes that crisscross the region.

The sandy beaches along the Atlantic Ocean are popular destinations and cater to all tastes, from sleepy Bethany Beach with its large family homes, to livelier Rehoboth with its boardwalk and outlet shopping malls. Speaking of shopping, Delaware is sales-tax free, making it an exciting destination for bargain hunters.

Key Facts

Language:

English is the most common language spoken but Spanish is often heard in the south-western states.

Passport/Visa:

It is highly recommended that travellers' passports have at least six months' validity remaining after the intended date of departure from their travel destination. A visa is required for short visits unless travellers qualify for entry under the Visa Waiver Program. The Visa Waiver Program (VWP) enables citizens of certain countries to travel to the US for a stay of up to 90 days without a visa. Visitors under the VWP need to register online three days before travel and have an Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA). This allows the US government to screen all visitors before travel. Visitors entering the country under the VWP must have a machine-readable passport (MRP) that has a barcode on the photo page. Travellers under the VWP must have passports that include biometrics if they wish to enter the country without a visa, which means that passports must contain unique personal data such as fingerprints or iris details. All passports must contain a digital photo image in order to travel visa-free. All visitors to the USA have a photograph and two fingerprints taken by an inkless scanner on arrival, including those travelling visa-free under the VWP. As part of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), all travellers travelling between the United States and Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, and the Caribbean region are required to present a passport or other valid travel document to enter or re-enter the United States. If departing from the USA, a valid passport is required by immigration authorities. Immigration officials often apply different rules to those stated by travel agents and official sources.

Currency:

The official currency is the US Dollar (USD), which is divided into 100 cents. Only major banks exchange foreign currency. ATMs are widespread and credit cards are widely accepted. Banking hours are Monday to Friday 9am to 3pm.

Electricity:

Electrical current is 120 volts, 60Hz. Plugs are mainly the type with two flat pins, though three-pin plugs (two flat parallel pins and a rounded pin) are also widely used. European appliances without dual-voltage capabilities will require an adapter.

Travel to Delaware

Climate for Delaware

Delaware has a humid, temperate climate, with hot and humid summers and cold winters. Summer months are also the wettest, with August receiving the most rainfall. Winters are dry, but cold, and snow is likely. Average summer temperature highs are 86F (30C), while winter lows average 23F (-5C) in January, making the temperature range quite large in the state. The southern part of Delaware is generally milder than the north.

Health Notes when travelling to United States of America

There are no specific health risks associated with travel within the USA. Medical facilities are excellent, but expensive. Only emergencies are treated without prior payment and treatment can be refused without evidence of insurance or proof of funds. Good medical insurance is essential. Visitors must be fully vaccinated with the primary series of an accepted COVID-19 vaccine to travel to the United States by plane if they are non-U.S. citizens.

Safety Notes when travelling to United States of America

Travel within the United States is generally trouble-free, though travellers should be aware that the US shares with the rest of the world, an increased threat from terrorist incidents. Security has been heightened, particularly at airports. Restrictions on hand luggage apply and travellers are advised to check on the latest situation with airlines in advance. Travellers should also be alert to the dangers of car and street crime in cities and should use common sense and take basic precautions. Hurricanes are common between June and November, putting the southern USA, including the Gulf Coast and the eastern US at risk. There is a risk of wildfires in many dry areas in the US, particularly on the West Coast from March to November.

Customs in United States of America

Laws vary from state to state, including speed limit, fines and punishment. The age at which alcohol may be legally bought and consumed is 21 years.

Duty Free in United States of America

Travellers to the United States who are returning residents of the country do not have to pay duty on articles purchased abroad to the value of \$800 provided their stay was longer than 48 hours and their duty-free allowance was not used in the 30-day period prior. For passengers arriving from Samoa, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands, a duty-free allowance of \$1,600 is allowed. The following items are included in this: 50 cigarettes and 10 cigars and 150 millilitres (5 fl. oz.) of alcoholic beverages or 150 millilitres (5 fl. oz.) of perfume containing alcohol. Restrictions may apply to goods from Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Burma (Myanmar), Angola, Liberia and Sudan. It is prohibited to import Cuban cigars from any country.

Travellers to the United States who are non-residents do not have to pay duty on the following items: 50 cigars or 200 cigarettes and gifts to the value of \$100 provided their stay in the USA is not less than 72 hours and that the allowance has not been used in the preceding six-month period.

Prohibited items for residents and non-residents include meat or meat products, poultry, narcotics, absinthe, plants, seeds, vegetables, fruits, soil, live insects and other living plants or animal pests. Fish is prohibited unless it carries disease-free certification. Wildlife and animals or their by-products carry restrictions. Dairy products and eggs from specified countries are not allowed. Firearms and ammunition are not allowed without the necessary license and permit.

Doing Business in United States of America

In such a large country, filled with so many diverse groups, business practices may differ according to each state, however rarely to any large degree. The East Coast is traditionally more formal than the West Coast, though in states such as California, dress code and conservative appearance are as common as they would be in New York. Punctuality is important throughout the country and it is considered rude to be late for a meeting. Gift-giving is uncommon as it may be construed as bribery. Appropriate titles (Mr, Mrs, Ms) are used upon introduction and until otherwise stated. Americans favour politeness and greetings of 'Hello' and 'How are you?' are often expressed with sincerity. Business hours may vary in each state, but an 8am start and 5pm finish Monday to Friday is the most common with an hour over lunch.

Status and age are not necessarily indicative of seniority, nor do they carry much weight in themselves. Those doing business in the States should be mindful of this fact; foreigners should never make assumptions about someone's position or rank. Best practice is to be respectful to all parties. That said, the US upholds a hierarchal business structure, in which 'the boss' is the ultimate decision-maker. Senior leaders have the power of the last word, and can go against the grain just as easily as they can follow popular opinion. Foreigners should concentrate on winning over this individual, even if the greater group seems unsupportive. Americans value a direct style of communication. In this fast-paced, consumer culture 'time is money', and small-talk is viewed as unnecessary and wasteful. It's best for foreigners to get to the point quickly, speak about issues in a frank and open manner, and to avoid taking offence if someone questions or challenges them outright.

Communication in United States of America

The international country dialling code for the United States is +1. Mobile networks cover most of the country, especially all urban areas, and WiFi is widely available.

Tipping in United States of America

A 15 percent tip is expected by taxi drivers, bartenders, hairdressers and waiters, but travellers shouldn't tip in fast-food or self-service restaurants. In expensive restaurants or for large parties, the tip should be 20 percent of the bill. It is normal to tip staff such as valets and porters in hotels; this is discretionary, although a minimum of \$5 is expected. Most services are customarily tipped if the service is good.

Passport/Visa Note

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Wilmington

Wilmington has undergone a revitalisation in recent years, and though doing business is perhaps still the main attraction, it's definitely worth a visit. Visitors can stroll along a waterfront path leading to the Shipyard Shops, the rowing centre, and various restaurants and museums.

The city comprises many distinct neighbourhoods, and for those seeking a less touristy experience, Trolley Square is an excellent option. It's full of sidewalk cafes, cosy bistros, and lively pubs, including Kelly's Logan House which is a local institution since 1864 and by far the best place to be on St Patrick's Day.

Stately old homes and restored townhouses surround the area. Not far away is Little Italy, home to Mrs Robino's, one of the city's oldest and most popular spots for authentic Italian food. During the summer, the best way to cool off is with a treat from one of the historic community's countless Italian water ice stands.

For many visitors, the most appealing attractions lie just outside the city limits, in the beautiful Brandywine Valley. The area is a horticultural delight, with endless gardens and arboretums, as well as the 'American castles' of the du Pont family, including Winterthur and Nemours, magnificently preserved and packed with artwork and antiques.

Climate in Wilmington

Wilmington has a humid subtropical climate, with cool winters and hot, humid summers. Average winter temperatures range between 50°F (10°C) and 65°F (18°C), while summer temperatures average a balmy 80°F (27°C) to 90°F (32°C). Spring is warm and mild, with the many gardens of the Brandywine Valley bursting into bloom, and visitors should note that often rooftops and cars can be turned yellow due to the pollen dusting during the season.

Sightseeing in Wilmington

Wilmington is midway between New York and Washington DC, so it is perfectly situated for a weekend getaway or stop-over. In addition, it is full of undiscovered gems, like the Mt Cuba Center's indigenous gardens, which makes it an ideal setting for a romantic holiday. The Brandywine Valley is lovely for couples, though its many museums cater to children as well. Beer lovers should sample the libations of the Twin Lake Brewery just north of town.

Wilmington holds some treasures for art lovers, with the Delaware Art Museum and the Delaware Contemporary both highly regarded. History buffs should find something of interest in the Hagley Museum and Library, and the Delaware History Museum.

For those keen to discover some of the stately old homes of the region, the Nemours Mansion is in Wilmington and offers tours of the estate and gardens, and the Winterthur Museum, Garden, and Library, another du Pont mansion, is nearby.

Sports fans may want to catch a game at Frawley Stadium, and the Grand Opera House is an impressive venue for the performing arts. Those looking for a taste of Delaware's scenic beauty within the city limits should visit the Alapocas Run State Park or the Brandywine Creek State Park.

Wilmington Attractions

Delaware Museum of Natural History

Featuring some fantastic exhibits, the Delaware Museum of Natural History is a great attraction for visitors of all ages and persuasions. The dinosaur gallery is a favourite with most visitors, with *Tuojiangosaurus* and *Yangchuanosaurus* skeletons towering over awe-inspired visitors. View the Elephant Bird egg in the Hall of Birds; admire animals from around the world in the Hall of Mammals; or explore the Shell Gallery which boasts an impressive collection of two million shells. In addition to the permanent exhibits, there are constantly changing special exhibits on display, tours, and interactive outdoor experiences.

Website: www.delmnh.org

Delaware Art Museum

Holding a collection of more than 12,000 works, the Delaware Art Museum was founded in 1912 by the Wilmington Society of Fine Arts in honour of the artist Howard Pyle, whose painting 'Battle of Bunker Hill' was in the museum's possession until it went missing and was presumed stolen in 2001. Apart from the remaining works of the much-loved local artist Howard Pyle, and some of his American contemporaries, the museum is perhaps best known for its extensive collection of British Pre-Raphaelite art. The urban landscapes of John Sloan can also be viewed here. Temporary exhibitions are hosted regularly and public and group tours of the museum are available.

Website: www.delart.org

The Delaware Contemporary

The state's only museum solely dedicated to contemporary art, the Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts (now usually just called the Delaware Contemporary), features displays of local, regional, and international artists in its seven galleries. It also features about 26 artists' studios, a gift shop, a high-tech auditorium, and a classroom where workshops and lectures are held. The museum is best known for its challenging and intriguing exhibitions, curated to be relevant and topical. The fact that admission is free is an extra incentive for visitors with time to kill in the city, and the quick turnover of art on display ensures that there is always something new to see.

Website: www.thedcca.org

Hagley Museum and Library

The Hagley Museum and Library collects, preserves, and interprets the history of American enterprise and is a non-profit educational institution. With a range of exhibitions, guided tours, walking trails, and demonstrations, there is so much to learn at the Hagley Museum. Visitors can experience 19th-century living on Workers' Hill, visit the Powder Yard, where massive stone mills, storehouses, and a waterwheel echo a time when water was the main source of energy, and tour the Eleutherian Mills, a mansion that has been home to five generations of the famous du Pont family and features breath-taking views over the Brandywine Valley.

Website: www.hagley.org

Currency

The official currency is the US Dollar (USD), which is divided into 100 cents. Only major banks exchange foreign currency. ATMs are widespread and credit cards are widely accepted. Banking hours are Monday to Friday 9am to 3pm.

Exchange rate for 1 USD - U.S. Dollar

0.00 BMD Bermudan Dollar	0.93 EUR Euro	0.80 GBP U.K. Pound Sterling	152.99 JPY Japanese Yen	1.37 CAD Canadian Dollar	0.91 CHF Swiss Franc
1.52 AUD Australian Dollar	39.40 UAH Ukrainian Hryvnia	443.91 KZT Kazakhstani Tenge	93,075.00 LBP Lebanese Pound	4.86 LYD Libyan Dinar	6.86 BOB Bolivian Boliviano
0.00 NPR Nepalese Rupee	0.00 OMR Omani Rial	0.00 QAR Qatari Rial	1.35 SGD Singapore Dollar	10.82 SEK Swedish Krona	0.00 TTD Trinidad Tobago Dollar
0.00 VEF Venezuelan Bolivar	58.11 DOP Dominican Peso	0.00 HRK Croatian Kuna	16.95 MXN Mexican Peso	610.53 XOF West African CFA Franc	0.00 PGK Papua New Guinean kina
0.00 BSD Bahamian Dollar	0.00 FJD Fiji Dollar	0.00 HNL Honduran Lempira	133.87 DZD Algerian Dinar	0.00 MMK Myanma Kyat	0.00 BWP Botswana Pula
3.72 PEN Peruvian Nuevo Sol	938.44 CLP Chilean Peso	386.84 AMD Armenia Dram	23.29 CZK Czech Koruna	17.63 MDL Moldova Lei	139.89 ISK Icelandic Krona
12,582.40 UZS Uzbekistan Sum	3.72 ILS Israeli New Sheqel	0.71 JOD Jordanian Dinar	0.00 KWD Kuwaiti Dinar	38.15 UYU Uruguayan Peso	0.00 MUR Mauritian Rupee
0.00 NIO Nicaraguan Córdoba	10.88 NOK Norwegian Krone	4.03 PLN Polish Zloty	3.75 SAR Saudi Riyal	0.00 LKR Sri Lanka Rupee	36.79 THB Thai Baht
3.66 AED U.A.E Dirham	5.09 BRL Brazilian Real	4.63 RON Romanian New Leu	7.81 HKD Hong Kong Dollar	610.53 XAF Central African CFA Franc	25,405.70 VND Vietnamese Dong
878.36 ARS Argentine Peso	0.00 XCD East Caribbean Dollar	0.00 GTQ Guatemalan Quetzal	10.06 MAD Moroccan Dirham	0.00 BHD Bahrain Dinar	1.00 PAB Panamanian Balboa
1.70 AZN Azerbaijan Manat	3,920.00 COP Colombian Peso	88.42 KGS Kyrgyzstan Som	362.00 HUF Hungarian Forint	10.89 TJS Tajikistan Ruble	16,073.70 IDR Indonesian Rupiah
47.95 EGP Egyptian Pound	1,358.84 KRW South Korean Won	7,456.52 PYG Paraguayan Guaraní	4.74 MYR Malaysian Ringgit	508.31 CRC Costa Rican Colón	1.67 NZD New Zealand Dollar
277.87 PKR Pakistani Rupee	91.39 RUB Russian Rouble	18.51 ZAR South African Rand	3.13 TND Tunisian Dinar	0.00 BBD Barbadian Dollar	1.82 BGN Bulgarian Lev
32.33 TRY Turkish Lira	57.28 PHP Philippine Peso	32.31 TWD New Taiwan Dollar	1,164.84 NGN Nigerian Naira	0.00 XPF CFP Franc	0.00 GHS Ghanaian Cedi
0.00 JMD Jamaican Dollar	0.00 ANG Neth. Antillean Guilder	0.00 BND Brunei Dollar	108.90 RSD Serbian Dinar	7.24 CNY Chinese Yuan	6.94 DKK Danish Krone
3.49 TMT New Turkmenistan Manat	83.42 INR Indian Rupee				