

Overview of Massachusetts

The arrival of the earliest pioneers near Salem in 1630 was the shaping of Massachusetts as a state. Puritans arriving from an England threatened with civil war came to set up a new colony, intended to be an example to the world of a perfect human society, with rigid Protestant discipline and a devout way of life. This was the beginning of New England and today it is made up of six states including Massachusetts.

Boston has been the proud hub of the state since colonial times and is full of fascinating history that can be traced by walking the Freedom Trail and the Black Heritage Trail. Boston also boasts a wealth of culture thanks to the prestigious presence of Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge. To the east lie the beaches of the Cape Cod Peninsula as well as the islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket that together form the region's most popular holiday destination, equipped with historic towns and plenty of walking and cycling opportunities.

Inland Massachusetts is much quieter, with settlements clustered around the fertile river valleys and in the Berkshire Hills to the west. Development of the Berkshires began with the construction of the railway from New York and Boston and it gradually became a favourite summer retreat for wealthy city folk as well as attracting artists and writers. The region is now most famous for its vibrant summer music, dance and theatre festivals, particularly as the Boston Symphony Orchestra has its home at the huge Tanglewood Estate in Lenox.

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 Massachusetts

Climate for Massachusetts

Massachusetts has a humid continental climate, with cold, snowy winters and warm summers, with cooler temperatures in the Berkshires year round, and warmer temperatures along the coast. In general, temperatures in the state reach average highs of 82F (27C) in summer, between June and August, and average lows of 16F (-8C) in winter, between December and February. Winter snowfall in and around Boston is considerable, with higher levels in the Berkshire Hills.

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

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.

Airports in Massachusetts

Boston Logan Airport (BOS)

Boston Logan International Airport

www.massport.com

Location: Boston The airport is situated four miles (6km) northeast of Boston.

Time: GMT -5 (GMT -4 from mid-March to first Sunday in November).

Contacts: Tel: +1 800 235 6426.

Transfer between terminals: A free shuttle bus services the four terminals.

Getting to the city: The Massachusetts Bay Transport Authority provides regular bus services for free, on the Silver Line, and a faster subway connection, on the Blue Line, to and from the city centre, costing about \$2.65. Massport's free water transportation bus connects from all airport terminals to the Logan dock where private water taxis and public commuter boats are available to multiple destinations in the Boston Harbour.

Car rental: Car rental companies include Avis, Budget, Hertz, and National.

Airport Taxis: Taxis are available outside all terminals and a taxi from Logan International Airport to downtown Boston takes between 20 minutes and an hour, depending on traffic. Some companies offer shared vans that provide door-to-door services. Ride-sharing apps like Uber and Lyft both operate from the airport.

Facilities: There are ATMs and bureaux de change in all terminals. Other facilities include restaurants and bars, shops, duty-free shopping, children's entertainment, tourist information, and hotel reservations.

Parking: Parking at Boston Logan starts at \$8 for an hour, \$22 for two hours, and up to \$44 per day. The three parking lots closer to the terminal are more expensive if travellers stay more than a couple of hours, and all lots are serviced by a free shuttle to the terminals.

Boston

As one of the oldest settlements in the USA and the largest city in New England, Boston has a wealth of history and culture to offer. Despite the city's serious academic and historical pedigree, a huge student population ensures a youthful vibrancy that adds a totally different dimension to Boston's bygone charm.

Cambridge lies across the Charles River and is the largest college town in the world, synonymous with Harvard University and founded in 1638. The neat, ivy-covered brick buildings of the university grounds, the labyrinth of twisting streets in the city centre, and the old architecture means Boston is best explored by foot.

Referring to itself as the 'Walking City', it's remarkably compact and centres on the country's oldest public park, Boston Common. The Information Centre in Boston Common is the starting point for two walking tours, two of the city's main attractions. The Freedom Trail explores the city's revolutionary past and the birth of the modern American Republic, while the Black Heritage Trail highlights Boston's place in black American history and its role in anti-slavery.

Boston is an easy blend of historic charm and modern convenience, with a busy street life and beautiful architecture, green parks and gardens, skyscrapers and modern freeways, museums, galleries, and colonial churches. The city is home to the first public library, the first public school, and the first subway system in the US. It's the site of the Boston Tea Party that started the Revolutionary War and is the location of the Cheers bar, made famous by the popular TV sitcom.

Getting around in Boston

Boston's transport network consists of the country's oldest subway system, buses, trams, ferries around the harbour, and the commuter rail. For getting around the Boston-Cambridge area, the subway is the best as it's easy to use, fast, and safe.

It serves most of the city and on the whole visitors will have little use for the bus network, which is cheaper but more confusing for newcomers. Buses operate from 5am to 11.30pm and the subway until around 1am. A 'Night Owl' bus service has been introduced to provide transport along main bus routes and parallel to subway lines on Friday and Saturday nights until 2.30am.

Taxis are plentiful but expensive, with water taxis a novel way to explore the city. Licensed metre cabs park at cabstands, usually near hotels, but can also be reserved by phone; rideshare options include Lyft and Uber. Boston is a motorist's nightmare and there's no need to rent a car while in the city, unless planning excursions.

Nightlife in Boston

Surprisingly, considering the huge student population, Bostonians don't take their nightlife too seriously. Most clubs close by 2am and Massachusetts state law forbids smoking in all bars, nightclubs, and restaurants.

That said, Boston's entertainment and nightlife scene is still thriving with live bands, comedy acts, and shows taking centre stage in the Theater District. Contrary to popular belief, not everybody knows your name in Boston's bar scene, but a beer at the Cheers bar on 84 Beacon Street is a must for fans of the 80s TV show.

Don't be disappointed though if you don't find your friends here, they're probably hitting some of Boston's hipper nightspots. Boston's nightlife has a sophisticated edge, with a good dose of culture in the entertainment.

Popular spots to drink and mingle include venues like the Museum of Fine Arts, which often features live music, and a cash bar on summer evenings. Crowds of classy 20- to 30-somethings mingle and socialise in the galleries and museums while sipping on cocktails and wine.

Many Bostonians prefer to start off an evening with drinks in hotel lounges and bars, as patrons are able to chat more easily than in many clubs and bars. Once warmed up, the clubs are the place to be and Bostonians can party hard.

Pool and bowling are popular pastimes in Boston and visitors are spoilt for choice with the amount of bowling alleys and pool halls to choose from. Couple these activities with a few beers and you've got yourself a recipe for a more relaxed evening out.

Those looking for theatre or classical music will love the city. Both the renowned Boston Pops Orchestra and the Boston Symphony Orchestra have regular performances at Symphony Hall. The New England Conservatory is also nearby, offering top-notch student performances for no admission charge.

Dining in Boston

Due to its shared cultural roots with greater New England, fresh local seafood dominates Boston's regional cuisine, along with a large emphasis on rum, salt, and dairy products. Tourists eating out in Boston will want to try a cannoli before leaving, with some of the best found at Mike's Pastry and Modern Pastry. Ideal for a takeaway lunch by the harbour or a quick bite to eat, Faneuil Hall still comes out tops with a fantastic cross-section of the city's cosmopolitan cuisine and manages to simultaneously be a wonderful tourist attraction.

The North End is a firm favourite with locals and features wonderfully intimate cafes, bakeries, and eateries with enough gastronomic treats to get just about everybody's mouth watering. Hanover Street also offers many good restaurant choices. The South End boasts some of the most elegant restaurants in Boston's dining scene, with bookings a priority.

Most restaurants in Boston close by 10pm or 11pm; however, those looking for late-night dining can head to Chinatown, where some eateries stay open as late as 2am.

Pomodoro — \$\$

Italian

A tiny, unpretentious Italian restaurant with hard working staff and authentic Italian cuisine, Pomodoro is one of those neighbourhood restaurants frequented by locals and foreigners who keep coming back for more. Situated in the Northend, Pomodoro serves a wide range of Italian cuisine from traditional linguine marinara with lots of garlic and fresh herbs to seafood wonders like blackened swordfish, shrimp fradiavolo, and baked haddock. The affordable prices and quality of food make up for the simple decor, with most patrons being mesmerised by the activity and aroma escaping from the open kitchen and the food on their plate. Reservation recommended. Open Tuesday to Sunday for lunch and dinner.

120 Salem Street
Boston, United States of America

www.pastapomodoronorthend.com

Mistral — \$\$\$\$

French

Located in Boston's trendy South End, Mistral promises uncomplicated and stylish fine dining. This upmarket restaurant specialises in French cuisine, with an emphasis on fresh, seasonal ingredients. The chef, Jamie Mammano, is highly acclaimed in Boston and the restaurant has a lovely ambience. Reservations are recommended.

223 Columbus Avenue, Boston
Boston, United States of America

mistralbistro.com

The Capital Grille — \$\$\$\$

Steakhouse

The Capital Grille is an American steakhouse institution, serving up extremely high quality food in generous portions. Despite being a restaurant chain, The Capital Grille is an upmarket fine dining experience and a good option for special occasions. If you are visiting for a special celebration, mention it to them when you make a reservation as they really do go the extra distance. Although steak of all kinds is the speciality, there are also tantalising seafood and vegetarian options on the menu. The Capital Grille is open for lunch and supper, Monday to Friday, and supper only on Saturdays and Sundays. Reservations are recommended.

900 Boylston Street, Boston
Boston, United States of America

www.thecapitalgrille.com

Pho 'n Rice — \$

Asian

Boston's eclectic heritage is best appreciated through its foods and nowhere better than at Pho 'n Rice. For the uninformed, pho is deceptively simple traditional Vietnamese soup consisting of light but strong broth and noodles, with pieces of meat and vegetable that continue to cook in the bowl. Pho 'n Rice has added great variations to the traditional meal along with some Thai-style dishes that promise to be light on the wallet and the waistline. They'll even deliver your dinner to you for a small extra charge.

289 Beacon Street, Somerville
Boston, United States of America

www.phonrice.com

Legal Sea Foods — \$\$\$

Seafood

Known for serving some of the best clam chowder in Boston, Legal Sea Foods offers a range of fresh local seafood and steaks. The large restaurant has three levels, and the top dining room and balcony offer stunning views of the harbour, and the staff is attentive and knowledgeable. Booking ahead is recommended, as there can be long queues at peak times.

270 Northern Avenue, Liberty Wharf
Boston, United States of America

www.legalseafoods.com/restaurants/boston-legal-harborside

Atlantic Fish Company — \$\$

Seafood

Consistently ranked one of the top restaurants in Boston, the Atlantic Fish Company serves up local seafood like crab cakes, mussels, clam chowder, Atlantic cod, and lobster pot pie to hungry tourists and locals alike. The menu changes daily according to the day's catch. The dining room is built to resemble the interior of a classic cruising ship, and the outdoor patio. Atlantic Fish Company is open Sunday to Thursday from 11.30am-11pm, and Friday and Saturday from 11.30am-midnight. Reservations are recommended.

761 Boylston Street
Boston, United States of America

www.atlanticfishco.com

Shopping in Boston

One look at the city's boutiques, department stores, malls, and outlets, and it's no wonder why thousands flock to Boston to stock up on clothes, jewellery, and books. Visitors can take a walk down to the Downtown Crossing near Boston Common, a browser's paradise, while just around the corner Boston's Chinatown offers herbal remedies, silk slippers, and other traditional goods.

Faneuil Hall Marketplace, also known as Quincy Market, is a firm favourite, with more than 100 of Boston's finest shops and carts touting a variety of merchandise. It is also home to the Bull Market, a fleet of 43 unique pushcarts featuring New England's artisans and their wonderful wares, as well as an amazing food court where tired shoppers can stop and refuel.

Big spenders will enjoy the many designer boutiques on the renowned eight-block stretch on Newbury Street, boasting names such as Cartier, Armani, and Max Mara to name a few. History buffs will fall in love with the cobblestone streets of Charles Street on Beacon Hill, where they can browse through the cramped stores of this early Boston neighbourhood for historic photos, furniture, antique china, and intriguing architectural objects.

Shops in Boston generally open from 10am to 7pm from Monday to Saturday, with most large stores open on Sundays with reduced opening hours.

Climate in Boston

Boston has a continental climate with very changeable weather patterns such as wide temperature swings in a matter of days, and unseasonal snowfalls. Summers (June to August) are usually sunny, hot and humid, with temperatures in July hitting averages of 82F (28C).

Winters, by contrast, are bitterly cold, windy, wet and snowy, with temperatures in January averaging between 22F (-6C) and 35F (2C). Boston averages 42 inches (108cm) of snowfall annually, much of it deposited in northeasterly storms.

The best time to travel to Boston is in late spring or early autumn, when the weather is warm and pleasant. Autumn is particularly lovely when New England's trees wear their colourful fall foliage.

Sightseeing in Boston

An historical treasure trove, Boston is full of fascinating sites crucial to America's history. Following a line of mostly red bricks and linking 17 of Boston's top attractions, from Paul Revere's house and the statue of Benjamin Franklin to the Bunker Hill Monument and Boston Common, the Freedom Trail is a must for history buffs and anyone sightseeing in Boston.

Travellers should head to the New England Aquarium, featuring more than 70 exhibits with aquatic animals from around the world. They can marvel at the Bengal and white tigers at the Franklin Zoo, visit the Museum of Fine Arts, and get away from the buzz of the city by wandering through the first botanical garden in the United States, the Boston Public Garden.

After a long day of exploring the city, what could be better than appreciating Boston from a distance aboard a sunset cruise on one of the many boats that leave the harbour, sipping on a glass of wine and enjoying a magnificently prepared seafood dinner?

Visitors keen on viewing a number of the city's greatest sights would be wise to get a Go Boston Card, which grants travellers admission to more than 70 of the best activities, tours, and attractions in Boston.

Kids Attractions in Boston

Children on holiday in Boston will be enthused by the exciting attractions and activities that abound in this buzzing city. With museums, kids' theatres, parks, playgrounds, and everything in between, deciding where to start will be the difficult part.

Of course, many of the city's most famous attractions are fun and educational for the whole family, but there are also many activities and attractions designed specifically for kids in Boston. Visitors can head to the stadium and watch a local Red Sox game at Fenway Park if they can, or for a more leisurely activity, enjoy seeing Boston by foot along the Freedom Trail.

Little ones would be better suited to the less exhausting option of the 'Boston by Little Feet' tour, giving kids the opportunity to enjoy the highlights of the Heritage Trail, come rain or shine. Activities such as Monster Golf and indoor playgrounds such as Jump On In are great options for those days when activities for kids out of doors are not an option.

With so much to see and do, parents will find Boston to be one of the most child-friendly and accommodating cities in the United States.

Boston Attractions

Freedom Trail

The two and a half mile (4km) Freedom Trail follows a line of red bricks, or a painted red line on the pavement, linking 16 historic sights associated with the early struggle for freedom from British control and the events leading up to the revolution. Markers identify the stops and provide information from downtown to the North End to Charlestown and Bunker Hill Monument. Sights along the way include Paul Revere House, Boston's second oldest surviving house that was home to the famous revolutionary. The Old North Church is also nearby, where two lanterns were hung in the belfry to warn the revolutionaries of the British movements while Revere went on his famous horse ride to warn of imminent British attack. The elegant Old State House was the seat of British colonial government and where the Declaration of Independence was read in 1776. There is a museum of Boston history inside. At the Old South Meeting House, Samuel Adams addressed the revolutionaries in the significant meeting prior to the Boston Tea Party, and a circle of cobblestones marks the site of the Boston Massacre. In Charlestown, the USS Constitution, also known as 'Old Ironsides', is the oldest warship still afloat. Its name was earned after the sinking of the British frigate, HMS Guerriere, during the war of 1812. Bunker Hill Monument is the site of the first formal battle of the American Revolution, fought in 1775. Also along the trail is the beautiful white steeple of Park Street Church, the site of several important anti-slavery speeches, and the Old Granary Burying Ground, where a number of revolutionaries are buried. Add to that the Quincy Market and Faneuil Hall that once were meeting places for revolutionaries as well as bustling marketplaces. Although a complete self-guided trail, the National Park Service also conducts free tours with guides in historic costumes that cover some of the trail's highlights.

Website: www.thefreedomtrail.org

Black Heritage Trail

Today, Beacon Hill brings to mind images of affluence and luxurious living. Yet until the end of the 19th century, it contained a free black community and escaped slaves who owned businesses, built houses and schools, and worshipped together in the churches. Although the black community has since shifted to other parts of Boston, the Black Heritage Trail covers 14 sites important in local black history. Massachusetts was the first state to abolish slavery in 1783. Beginning at the Boston Common, there is a memorial to slave abolitionist Robert Shaw who led the first black regiment recruited during the Civil War. Various sites on Beacon Hill include homes of famous citizens, the city's first racially integrated public school with exhibits portraying the struggle for equal school rights, and a house that was part of the famous Underground Railroad that sheltered runaway slaves from their pursuers. The African Meeting House, part of the Museum of Afro-American History, is one of the most interesting stops on the trail. It was one of the first black churches in the United States, known as Black Faneuil Hall during the anti-slavery campaign. Here, famous abolitionist speeches were made and black people were called to take up arms in the Civil War. There is an informative audiovisual presentation in the gallery. Although a self-guided trail with brochures and maps provided by the Museum of Afro-American History, park rangers also give free daily two-hour tours, which start at the National Park Service Visitor Center.

Website: www.afroammuseum.org

Boston Tea Party Ship and Museum

Moored to the bridge is the Beaver II, known as the Boston Tea Party Ship and Museum, and one of the three ships stormed by patriots in 1773 as an act of rebellion against British rule and in particular against the new tax laws imposed on tea. A group of revolutionaries dressed as Mohawk Indians burst from the South Meeting House and boarded the ships that were loaded with tea. They emptied the crate contents into the harbour in an event known as the Boston Tea Party. The Beaver II is an exact replica of the original Beaver I and visitors can learn about the event onboard the ship. The museum has recently been renovated and improved, receiving rave reviews from visitors of all ages.

Website: www.bostonteatpartyship.com

MIT Museum

The MIT Museum is located in Cambridge, near the campus of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, one of the most prestigious universities in the US. The relatively small museum houses technology-themed collections. These include holograms, artificial intelligence, robotics, and maritime history, placing specific importance on MIT's contributions to the history of technology. Some of the most interesting exhibits are those of the MIT Hacks, elaborate pranks pulled by students each year. Visitors shouldn't miss the Arthur Ganson gallery of kinetic sculptures, which is also something special.

Website: web.mit.edu/museum

Cambridge

Just across the Charles River from Boston, Cambridge is actually a city in its own right. But the two cities are so closely associated that many people believe them to be one and the same. Cambridge is home to two of the most prestigious centres for education in the country, Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. It has a young and vibrant atmosphere due to the 30,000 university students from around the world that reside and study here. The city centres on Harvard Square, a gathering spot that reflects the international culture of its learning community as well as the influence of its students, residents, and business owners. Surrounding the square and lining the streets that spread out from Harvard Square are dozens of bookstores and music shops, cafes, coffee houses, and restaurants. Harvard Square, occupied on one side by the university, is a lively mixture of students and professors, buskers, evangelists, and political campaigners, and is a great place to have a cup of coffee, watch the activity, and soak up the atmosphere.

Website: www.harvardsquare.com

Harvard University

Established in 1636, Harvard University is the oldest in the country and one of the most prestigious institutions of higher learning in the USA. It's famous for its brilliant faculties, which have produced economists, biologists, prize-winning poets, and famous graduates such as President John F. Kennedy. It is perhaps equally well-known for its famous dropouts, such as actor Matt Damon and tech icon Bill Gates. The focal point of the university is Harvard Yard, a courtyard surrounded by ivy-covered colonial buildings from the 18th century named for John Harvard, a graduate of Cambridge University in Britain, who died leaving the college half his estate and his entire library. The shoe of John Harvard's statue is rubbed for good luck. Harvard also has some outstanding museums, including the Harvard Art Museums, the Fogg Art Museum, and the Museum of Natural History. The huge collection covers works from the European Renaissance period to the modern day, including works by Renoir, Monet, Van Gogh, and Klee. The Bush-Reisinger and Arthur Sackler Museums are included in the same ticket while the Natural History Museum is renowned for its display of hand-blown glass flowers.

Website: www.harvard.edu

Boston Public Garden

The first botanical garden in the United States, the Boston Public Garden provides a tranquil escape from the fast pace of the city centre. Maintained by the Boston Parks and Recreation Department and the Friends of the Public Garden, the botanical garden is a must-see on any exploration of Boston. With more than 600 varieties of trees and colourful displays of well-ordered decorative flowers, visitors can go for a relaxing swan boat ride on the three acre lagoon, enjoy the attractive vista of the city's sardined skyscrapers through the trees, or take pleasure in the numerous public works of art that border the meandering paths. The gardens are a great stop for families wanting a break from sightseeing.

Website: www.friendsofthepublicgarden.org

Faneuil Hall Marketplace

A great Boston day trip and shopping destination, Faneuil Hill Marketplace offers superb shopping at some familiar designer stores, quality arts and crafts, as well as great restaurants and sidewalk cafes. Four places in one, Faneuil Hall Marketplace encompasses Faneuil Hall, Quincy Market, North Market, and South Market. Set around a cobblestone promenade, the market is a haven for the performing arts with jugglers, mimes, musicians, and magicians entertaining passers-by. Centrally located and operating for more than 250 years, the Faneuil Hill Marketplace is the hub of Boston city life. Drawing large crowds excited by the electric energy, visitors can shop, stroll, eat, and wander.

Website: www.faneuilhallmarketplace.com

Boston Museum of Fine Arts

An artwork in itself, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston houses some of the most famous European paintings in the US. Boston's oldest, largest, and best-known art institution, the MFA's collection is one of the planet's most comprehensive, with something like 22,000 artworks including masterpieces by some of the finest artists in the world. With a striking collection of Impressionist paintings, Egyptian sculptures, and a moving exhibition of Japanese and other Asian artworks, visitors should make sure they have ample time to explore the exhibition rooms of the MFA. Have a break and enjoy a coffee or lunch at one of the three gallery restaurants or browse the outstanding museum bookstore and shop.

Website: www.mfa.org

Codzilla

Codzilla takes passengers on a high-speed cruise around Boston's harbour. People on board will scream in pure delight as the boat curves, spins, and rips through the harbour for 40 minutes. They will be travelling at a heart-pumping 40 miles (70km) per hour. Reservations are recommended. Very young kids may be frightened, but generally the whole family will relish the thrill. Numerous other boat tours and cruises are available in Boston's harbour, with more sedate options for those who aren't keen on braving Codzilla.

Website: www.bostonharborcruises.com/codzilla

New England Aquarium

The New England Aquarium is home to Simons IMAX Theatre and the New England Aquarium Whale Watch, which runs from April through October. It features a plethora of some of the world's most amazing marine species, such as the impressive giant pacific octopus, sand tiger shark, green sea turtles, and North Atlantic Right whales. It is an absolute must for children of all ages and any adult in love with the underwater world. The aquarium is a wonderful family attraction for a rainy day. Basic admission includes the aquarium, while the IMAX and Whale Watch charge additional fees.

Website: www.neaq.org/index.php

Fenway Park

The Boston Red Sox are a much-beloved part of life in New England. The 'Curse of the Bambino' and their infamous near 100-year losing streak only made their supporters more fanatical. Fenway Park is the oldest Major League Baseball stadium still in use, and has quirky features such as The Triangle, Pesky's Pole, and the famous Green Monster left-field wall. Visitors will notice a lone red seat in the right-field bleachers, which is where Ted Williams hit the longest home run at Fenway, measuring 502 feet (153m). A baseball game at Fenway Park is a must for any summertime trip to Boston, hot dog, crackerjacks and all.

Website: boston.redsox.mlb.com

Sam Adams Brewery

Visitors to Boston can take an informative tour of the Sam Adams Brewery and get a look at the brewing process for the popular beer. Named for the revolutionary war hero, the beer has been brewed in Boston since the 1980s. The tour showcases the entire process and allows visitors to taste the special malts used. Tours depart roughly every 45 minutes and last about one hour, with a free glass included for visitors using the Go Boston Card. The brewery does not accept reservations, but they do recommend that visitors arrive fairly early in the day to avoid long waits, especially on Saturdays. All donations benefit local charities.

Website: www.samueladams.com

Events in Boston

Boston Harborfest

Wednesday July 01, 2020 to Tuesday July 07, 2020 (TBC 2020)

Where: Historic downtown and waterfront districts, and City Hall Plaza

The Boston Harborfest celebrates the nation's independence and the maritime and colonial heritage that is part of Boston's history. There are over 200 events, including re-enactments, concerts, historic walking tours, and parties, climaxing with the 4th of July orchestra and fireworks display over the Charles River. Main events include the Opening Ceremony, the Chowderfest, and Children's Day. The festival is thought to be the largest celebration of patriotism in the country. The 4th of July is no ordinary date in Boston. As one of the pivotal locations of the Revolutionary War, the city celebrates the American Independence Day like no other. The July 4th Boston Pops Fireworks Spectacular includes a performance by the Boston Pops Orchestra and one of the biggest fireworks displays in the US, as well as parades, festivals, and many other parties.

<http://www.bostonharborfest.com>

Boston Marathon

Monday September 14, 2020 (14 September 2020)

Where:

The oldest marathon in the world and ranked as one of the most celebrated and popular road racing events, the marathon sees 20,000 runners take to the streets of Boston every year. Entry is by qualification: would-be runners must complete a certified marathon in a qualifying time determined by age and so qualifying is highly competitive. After the terrorist attack at the Boston Marathon in 2013, in which two bombs exploded, killing three people and injuring about 264 others, security has been increased at the marathon and Boston is working hard to put a positive spin on the famous race despite the tragedy.

baa.org

First Night Boston

Thursday December 31, 2020 (31 December annually)

Where: Various

Said to be the oldest and largest New Year's Eve celebration in the country, First Night Boston features performances and entertainment at more than 40 indoor and outdoor venues throughout the city. Highlights include ice sculptures, glittering fireworks displays, and a Family Festival. As well as the First Night Grand Procession, there is a variety of theatre, dance, music, film, and storytelling on offer. Of course, First Night is also a big party and Boston becomes a winter wonderland with fireworks, street parties, live music, and performance art.

<http://www.firstnightboston.org>

Airports in Boston

Boston Logan Airport (BOS)

Boston Logan International Airport

<http://www.massport.com>

Location: Boston The airport is situated four miles (6km) northeast of Boston.

Time: GMT -5 (GMT -4 from mid-March to first Sunday in November).

Contacts: Tel: +1 800 235 6426.

Transfer between terminals: A free shuttle bus services the four terminals.

Getting to the city: The Massachusetts Bay Transport Authority provides regular bus services for free, on the Silver Line, and a faster subway connection, on the Blue Line, to and from the city centre, costing about \$2.65. Massport's free water transportation bus connects from all airport terminals to the Logan dock where private water taxis and public commuter boats are available to multiple destinations in the Boston Harbour.

Car rental: Car rental companies include Avis, Budget, Hertz, and National.

Airport Taxis: Taxis are available outside all terminals and a taxi from Logan International Airport to downtown Boston takes between 20 minutes and an hour, depending on traffic. Some companies offer shared vans that provide door-to-door services. Ride-sharing apps like Uber and Lyft both operate from the airport.

Facilities: There are ATMs and bureaux de change in all terminals. Other facilities include restaurants and bars, shops, duty-free shopping, children's entertainment, tourist information, and hotel reservations.

Parking: Parking at Boston Logan starts at \$8 for an hour, \$22 for two hours, and up to \$44 per day. The three parking lots closer to the terminal are more expensive if travellers stay more than a couple of hours, and all lots are serviced by a free shuttle to the terminals.

Nantucket

Thirty miles (48km) off the coast of Cape Cod, the small and remote island of Nantucket is an escape from the city stress and chaos of everyday life. The land has miles of unspoilt beaches, rolling wind-swept moors, solitary windmills and lighthouses, church steeples, and peaceful lanes. Its only settlement, Nantucket Town, was once the whaling capital of the world and retains much of its 17th to 19th-century character, with historic mansions, old-fashioned street lamps, and cosy inns lining the cobblestone streets. Bar a few villages, the rest of the island is mainly residential. There isn't a billboard, fast-food franchise, or flashing neon light in sight.

Nantucket has long appealed to wealthy visitors and has grown to a summer vacation retreat for nearly 50,000 tourists. Despite the increasing amount of luxury houses going up, more than 36 percent of the land is protected from development and the island still feels like a romantic paradise. The excellent Whaling Museum is an added attraction to the beaches, strolling and biking, and window-shopping at the exclusive boutiques. July and August are the most popular months and the busiest times, though thick fog often covers the island at this time.

Marthas Vineyard

Martha's Vineyard is a favourite summer destination for New England's wealthy elite. Far less developed than Cape Cod but more sophisticated than neighbouring Nantucket Island, the main economy is tourism and holidays here are dominated by simple pleasures such as the weekly farmers' market, and walks on the miles of coastal pathways.

Although it is a peaceful place, Martha's Vineyard does host many events in the summer months, which keeps things lively. The influx of people in summer raises prices and makes things less serene so that some travellers prefer to visit off-season. Visiting outside of the busy summer period (June to August) also increases the chance that some of the private beaches in the area will be open to the public.

The six towns of Martha's Vineyard have distinct characters. Upmarket Vineyard Haven is the island's main port, receiving ferries as well as private yachts. The fun centre of Oak Bluffs is home to the old Flying Horses Carousel, pizza takeaways, and ice-cream parlours that cater to the young and carefree. The graceful Edgartown has quaint inns, historic whaling captains' homes and stylish boutiques lining the narrow streets, and is the island's oldest settlement.

Cape Cod

Named for the large quantities of cod caught by its founder ship in 1602, Cape Cod is a 70-mile (113km) peninsula likened to a flexed arm bent at the elbow, extending from the main body of Massachusetts. It is the premiere vacation destination in New England, with charming historic towns and small villages, miles of sandy beaches, and wind-sculpted sand dunes. Millions of visitors from around the world flock to the amazing natural beauty of the Cape, and although known as the playground for the rich and famous and mostly geared for big spenders, there is plenty of sun, sea, and sand for everyone to enjoy.

Provincetown, at the tip of the Cape's 'fist', is the happy centre of New England and long renowned as an artistic colony with more than 20 art galleries. It's also the liveliest resort town on the Cape. Stretching from Provincetown, which was the landing site of the first Pilgrims in the 17th century, down to the pretty town of Chatham are 40 miles (64km) of dunes and desolate beaches protected within the Cape Cod National Seashore. Wellfleet is a quieter, picturesque town untouched by commercial development, and famous for its oysters. The commercial towns along the horizontal stretch of the arm offer shopping, exquisite dining, and beach activities, but there is also whale-watching, walking, and biking.

Sightseeing in Cape Cod

Cape Cod is primarily a beach holiday destination. The best beaches include the Nauset Light Beach and Coast Guard Beach of Eastham, as well as the other three beaches that make up the protected stretch of the National Seashore. Visitors should note that there is a fee for visiting any of the National Seashore Beaches, but the spacious, unspoiled seashore is totally worth it. There are also numerous public beaches, such as Craigville Beach, Sandy Neck Beach, and Sea Street Beach in Barnstable, but these do tend to get crowded during the summer tourist season.

Those travelling with children should bear in mind that the bayside beaches are far calmer and more protected from the elements than those on the oceanside, making them safer family destinations. The summer months, between June and August, are the most popular, but those visiting at this time should come prepared for crowds and traffic-filled roads, booked-out accommodation, and high prices. Otherwise, come in the off-season when the colder beaches afford solitude and the towns have quietened down. Cape Cod is also the gateway to the beautiful vacation islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. Please note that many beaches in Cape Cod are for residents only.

Cape Cod Attractions

Cape Cod Lighthouses

Cape Cod is home to a number of picturesque lighthouses that draw sightseers throughout the year. At one point, there were more than 20 on the peninsula. However, many of them are now decommissioned and knocked down. Those remaining have varying degrees of difficulty in access: some are easy to reach, while others require a hike. Some of the most popular, and easiest to get to, include Chatham Light and Nobska, which offers a spectacular view of Martha's Vineyard. Some that involve more walking are Cape Cod Light and Race Point Light. There are also lighthouses that only viewable from a distance, including Monomoy Light, which involves a boat trip past a very active seal colony. Some of the lighthouses can be rented for weekly accommodation.

Website: <http://www.capecodlighthouses.info>

The Berkshire Hills

Sprinkled with small New England towns, country shops, and green hillsides that turn to a kaleidoscope of golden colours in autumn, the Berkshires are a popular weekend destination from Boston, and in winter the snow-covered peaks and cross-country tracks lure skiers from around the region.

The Berkshires skiing community is well-served by the heavy snowfall in the area. The hillsides are dotted with grand country estates and Victorian mansions that were once the summer residences for wealthy families from Boston and New York, and today have become inns or museums.

Many have converted their grounds to outdoor venues for summertime music, theatre, and dance performances, attracting thousands of visitors every summer. Perhaps most notable is the Boston Symphony Orchestra that performs at the Tanglewood Estate in Lenox. These performances, as well as several museums and art institutions, have turned the region into the summer culture capital of New England.

Farther north it is easy to escape the crowds, especially along the scenic route known as the Mohawk Trail that historically used by the Native Americans to travel between valleys, and there are beautiful views and vistas as it winds through miles of state parks and forests.

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				