

The Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History is dedicated to inspiring curiosity, discovery and learning about the natural world.



Smithsonian

STUDENT TRAVEL



SCIENCE AT THE SMITHSONIAN

DAY 1: WASHINGTON, D.C.

Welcome to Washington, D.C. • Travel by airplane or motorcoach to Washington, D.C. The world's first planned capital city, Washington has served as the seat of Congress since 1800. Upon arrival, you are greeted by your Smithsonian Student Travel Tour Director, who will accompany you throughout your stay.

Introduction to the Smithsonian • The Smithsonian Institution is the world's largest museum and research complex, endowed by James Smithson and created by an act of Congress in 1846, dedicated to the increase and diffusion of knowledge. The Smithsonian Institution houses more than 136.5 million objects and comprises 17 museums and the National Zoo in Washington, D.C., two museums in New York City and nine research centers around the world. It extends its global outreach through more than 150 Smithsonian Affiliate museums. The Smithsonian is an institution dedicated to discovery, exploration and learning.

The Smithsonian's Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center • The Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center is the companion facility to the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum on the National Mall. The sites showcase the largest collection of aviation and space artifacts in the world. Walk along elevated skywalks in the Boeing Aviation Hangar for a thrilling view of aircraft hanging from 10-story-high trusses. Many of the helicopters, engines and experimental flying machines you'll see are on display in a museum setting for the first time. Peer into the *Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird*, the fastest jet in the world, or imagine yourself rocketing to space in the James S. McDonnell Space Hangar, where you will be amazed by hundreds of famous spacecraft, rockets and satellites. Take in the awe-inspiring *Space Shuttle Enterprise* or the *Gemini VII* space capsule for an experience that is truly out of this world!

Washington, D.C. by night • Experience the magic of seeing Washington's most impressive sights illuminated during your evening scenic tour downtown. Thanks to the foresight of D.C.'s urban planners (who placed strict limits on the height of downtown buildings), you're assured a view of the Washington Monument from nearly every part of the city. Other points of interest on our tour include the Lincoln Memorial, the WWII Memorial and the Korean War Memorial.

DAY 2: WASHINGTON, D.C.

Today is your best opportunity to arrange special visits such as meeting your representative in Congress or touring the White House. Please note that these appointments may affect the day's schedule.

Visit to Capitol Hill • Today, you will head to Capitol Hill, nicknamed "Our Nation's Neighborhood." Capitol Hill is an area of D.C. that is home to many of its most prominent attractions, including the U.S. Capitol, the U.S. Botanical Gardens, the U.S.

Supreme Court, the Library of Congress, Union Station and the Navy Museum. Many of the 19th- and 20th-century row houses here are considered historic landmarks.

U.S. Capitol and Visitor Center • See the U.S. Capitol, the city's epicenter and the heart of the American legislature. George Washington laid the first cornerstone for the building in 1793, but the edifice was set on fire in 1814 when British troops marched through the city. Much of the structure was salvaged, thanks to heavy rains that quelled the flames, and the Capitol remains the symbol of American government today. You'll also explore the Visitor Center, a new 580,000-square-foot extension to the Capitol Building. The underground facility features an exhibition gallery, orientation theaters, a 550-seat cafeteria and gift shops. The addition is the largest project in the Capitol's 215-year history. (Please note: Smithsonian Student Travel is unable to make group appointments at the Capitol. Groups are responsible for arranging their own visit.)

U.S. Supreme Court • Behold the imposing white-marble Supreme Court building, where the nine justices of the nation's highest court convene to hear oral arguments and rule on cases that affect the course of law in the United States.

Library of Congress • Marvel at the green-domed Library of Congress, whose collection of 113 million items includes a Gutenberg Bible. (Please note: Smithsonian Student Travel is unable to make group appointments at the Library of Congress. Groups are responsible for arranging their own visit.)

Guided sightseeing of Washington, D.C. • A local guide introduces you to the sites where national policies and political reputations are formed and re-formed daily. You'll observe the quiet dignity of Arlington National Cemetery, the final resting place of more than 200,000 veterans and their families. At JFK's gravesite, you'll see the eternal flame that was originally lit by Jacqueline Kennedy at her husband's funeral. Here you'll also witness the changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns. Next, visit the United States Marine Corps War Memorial, which depicts U.S. Marines raising an American flag at Iwo Jima. On the grassy National Mall, which extends from the Capitol to the Potomac River, view the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Washington Monument. Visit the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial nearby and finish your sightseeing with a photo stop at the White House, home of every U.S. president except George Washington.

Smithsonian's IMAX® • At one of the Smithsonian IMAX® theaters, you won't just see a movie, you'll experience it! The unique 360-degree theater surrounds you, throwing you into the heart of the action. Past showings have included *Aliens of the Deep 3-D*, *Wild Safari* and *Apollo 13*.

Options

- Downtown hotel
- Extended stay
- Lunches
- Gratuities
- Opportunity to earn credit for group leaders and students

DAY 3: BALTIMORE ★ WASHINGTON, D.C.

Transfer to Baltimore • Travel to Baltimore.

Visit to the National Aquarium in Baltimore • Come face-to-face with more than 14,000 animals in the hundreds of exhibits in the National Aquarium of Baltimore. Highlights include Atlantic bottlenose dolphins, giant Amazon river turtles and blue poison dart frogs.

Tour director-led sightseeing of Baltimore • Accompany your tour director for an overview of Baltimore's thriving waterfront and historic neighborhoods. The World Trade Center and Washington Monument both provide excellent views of the city. Footbridges connect the historic row homes of Federal Hill to the harbor. In Little Italy, Italian restaurants and clean white marble stoops abound. The Carroll Mansion and the Star-Spangled Banner house—where the flag that inspired the national anthem was woven—lie east of Inner Harbor. To the west, you find the house where Edgar Allan Poe wrote his first horror story and the birthplace of baseball legend Babe Ruth. You may also see some of the city's professional sports stadiums. Nearby, find the red brick homes and unique shops of Fells Point.

Free time for lunch at the Inner Harbor • Relax over lunch at the Inner Harbor.

Return to Washington, D.C. • Make your way back to the nation's capital.

The Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History • The Museum of Natural History is "dedicated to understanding the natural world and our place in it" and is comprised of more than 120 million natural and cultural artifacts. Look an iguana or a sea turtle in the eye, compare the skeletons of a gorilla and a human and see how many different types of butterflies you can identify in the museum's Butterfly Habitat Garden. From the fossils of dinosaurs to marine ecosystems to Polynesian cultures, this museum becomes your history classroom. Don't miss the 45.52-carat, billion-year-old Hope Diamond, the world's largest deep blue diamond!

Or The Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum • The National Air and Space Museum boasts the largest collection of historic air and spacecraft in the world and is a research center for aviation technology and planetary science. Come face-to-face with the original *1903 Wright Flyer*, the *Spirit of St. Louis* (which Charles Lindbergh flew from New York to Paris) and the Apollo 11 command module, *Columbia*. The 22 exhibit halls cover topics such as *Exploring the Planets*, *How Things Fly* and *Looking at Earth*.

Optional Potomac River Cruise (March through summer) • Depending on the season, dine and dance the evening away on an optional boat cruise down the historic Potomac River, a waterway that was explored by Captain John Smith in 1608.

DAY 4: WASHINGTON, D.C. ★ DEPARTURE

Embassy Row • Drive through one of Washington's most cosmopolitan neighborhoods on Embassy Row. This area of grand houses and over 130 foreign embassies boasts a range of architecture as diverse as its international denizens.

The Smithsonian's National Zoological Park • The National Zoo is home to one of Washington's most beloved families: the giant pandas, Tian Tian and Mei Xiang, and their baby, Tai Shan. The giant pandas are rare and endangered, with as few as about 1,600 living in the wild. The zoo has successfully bred a variety of exotic species, including red pandas, golden lion tamarins and pygmy hippopotamuses. It was also the first zoo outside Indonesia to successfully breed Komodo dragons. Visit the walk-in aviary, the octopi and giant crabs of the invertebrate exhibit, the Cheetah Conservation Area, and the zoo's most ambitious addition: Amazonia, a re-created South American rainforest. Examine the zoo's feathered friends and winged mammals to see how animal adaptations allow creatures to overcome gravity and fly.

The Smithsonian's Albert Einstein Planetarium • Speed through our solar system past the Milky Way to the very edge of the universe and back! Infinity Express is just one of the out-of-this-world exhibits at Smithsonian Albert Einstein Planetarium,

where astronomy comes to life. Check out the night sky using a planetarium projector, cruising through the stars and constellations. The planetarium recently acquired Sky Vision™, a dual digital projection system with six-channel digital surround sound, making your adventures more realistic than ever.

Departure • Head home today, or extend your tour.

★6-DAY TOUR★

DAY 4: WASHINGTON, D.C. (CONTINUED)

Optional Theater Performance • Enjoy a theater performance tonight.

DAY 5: SMITHSONIAN ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH CENTER

Transfer to the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC) • Travel to the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC), located about 30 miles east of Washington, D.C., on the western shores of the Chesapeake Bay. SERC is the leading national research center for understanding environmental issues in the coastal zone, especially where the land meets the sea. The world's coastal zones are home to 70 percent of the global population and subject to intensive activity. Scientists at SERC take an interdisciplinary, experimental approach to research aimed at increasing knowledge of the biological and physical processes that sustain life on Earth.

Participate in the SERC educational program • Take part in one of SERC's educational programs, such as:

- **SERC educational program: Wetland Ecology** • You will really get your hands wet during this SERC educational program about the wetlands. Your ecological adventure will have you hiking through the forest and marshes of SERC as you tackle topics like nutrient testing, weather monitoring, plant identification and field research planning. Students will learn more about watershed topography, nitrogen and phosphorous cycles, and marsh ecosystems while exploring and discussing environmental issues.
- **SERC educational program: Java History Trail** • Travel back in time along the 1.3-mile self-guided Java History Trail through field, forest and marsh as you learn about the lives and times of the people who once worked this land. Begin in the 1600s with the Native peoples who lived in this region. Then walk through Colonial Times as settlers began to populate the area until around 1900, when it was turned into a dairy farm. By the 1960s, it was bequeathed to the Smithsonian for ecological research.

Return to Washington, D.C. • Travel back to Washington, D.C., for the night.

DAY 6: WASHINGTON, D.C. ★ DEPARTURE

Visit the Smithsonian's museum of your choice • Spend time visiting one of the Smithsonian's museums you have not seen yet—or return to a favorite.

Departure • Your tour director assists with your departure.

Itinerary subject to change. For complete financial and registration details, please refer to the Booking Conditions.

Tours operated by



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