Washington Visitor’s Guide

Congressman Dan Benishek M.D.
Michigan’s First District

514 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-2201
www.benishek.house.gov
Dear Michigander:

Thank you for your interest in visiting our Nation’s Capital. Despite its reputation as a tough, all-business city, Washington remains a wonderful place for a family vacation.

As our seat of government, you can be very proud of your tax dollars at work. From the grandeur of the monuments and memorials to the world class museums, Washington is filled with unique places and sites to see.

There’s no place like Northern Michigan, but hopefully, this outline will assist you in creating that memorable experience when you visit the Nation’s Capital.

I wish you a great trip and hope you will feel free to stop by our office if your vacation schedule permits.

Best wishes,

Dan Benishek M.D.
Member of Congress
Michigan’s First District

P.S. I would also like to invite you to visit my website, www.benishek.house.gov, for further information. If you have not already done so, please submit your email address so that my office can keep you informed on issues in Congress.
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Three Ways Our Office Can Help...

1. Capitol Tours
The United States Capitol is one of the most popular attractions in Washington, D.C. Millions of visitors tour this historic building each year, the majority between late March and early July. There are several ways to book a tour of the U.S. Capitol. Please arrive 15 minutes prior to your scheduled tour time.

- Call Congressman Benishek’s office directly (202-225-4735)
- Use the Capitol Visitor Center’s Website (www.visitthecapitol.gov) or call the Capitol Visitor Center directly (202-226-8000)
- Request a tour through Congressman Benishek’s website (www.benishek.house.gov)

2. House Gallery Passes
You may obtain passes to the House Gallery on the day of your visit. Please stop by Congressman Benishek’s office 20 minutes prior to the start of your tour to obtain a pass. (The office is located at 514 Cannon Building.) We are the closest office building to the Capitol South Metro stop. Our office will be happy to provide you with Gallery Passes and provide further directions.

- The House Gallery is open from 9:00AM until 4:30PM.

3. Photograph on the Capitol Steps
If you know that you will be traveling to the Washington area, please call the office (202-225-4735) and ask to speak with our DC Tour Coordinator who might be able to offer some guidance.

Also, if you are visiting from the First District, we encourage you to stop by 514 Cannon at any time. Congressman Benishek would love to meet you! Assuming Congressman Benishek is on site, he will make every effort to meet with you and take a photo on the steps of the Capitol. Please note that scheduling conflicts, such as hearings, votes, or district travel, may limit such opportunities.
The Smithsonian Museums

**African Art Museum**
950 Independence Avenue, Southwest, Washington, DC  
Nearest Metro: Smithsonian  
Hours: 10:00am-5:30pm daily  
Exhibits the finest examples of traditional and contemporary art from the entire continent of Africa.

**Air and Space Museum**
6th & Independence Avenue, Southwest, Washington, DC  
Nearest Metro: L’Enfant Plaza  
Hours: 10:00am-5:30pm daily, March 25th-September 4th open until 7:30pm  
Twenty-three galleries exhibiting hundreds of aircraft, spacecraft, missiles, rockets, and other flight-related artifacts.

**American Art Museum**
8th and F Streets, Northeast, Washington, DC  
Nearest Metro: Gallery Place/Chinatown  
Hours: 11:30am-7:00pm daily  
Artworks—including paintings, sculpture, photographs, folk art, and decorative arts from the colonial period to today—offer an unparalleled record of the American experience.

**American History Museum**
1400 Constitution Avenue, Northwest, Washington, DC  
Nearest Metro: Smithsonian (Mall exit) or Federal Triangle  
Hours: 10:00am-5:30pm daily  
Devoted to the scientific, cultural, social, technological, and political development of the United States.

**American Indian Museum**
Fourth Street & Independence Avenue, Southwest, Washington, DC  
Nearest Metro: L’Enfant Plaza (Maryland Avenue exit)  
Hours: 10:00am-5:30pm daily  
Home to one of the largest and most diverse collections of Native art and historical and cultural objects; exhibitions are designed in collaboration with Native communities from across the hemisphere.
The Smithsonian Museums (Continued)

Freer Gallery of Art
Jefferson Dr. and 12th Street, Southwest, Washington, DC
Nearest Metro: Smithsonian (Mall or Independence Avenue exit)
Hours: 10:00am-5:30pm daily
Houses one of the premier collections of Asian art, with objects dating from Neolithic times to the early 20th century, as well as the world’s most important collection of works by James McNeill Whistler.

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden
Independence Avenue at Seventh Street, Southwest, Washington, DC
Nearest Metro: Smithsonian (Mall exit)
Hours: Museum 10:00am-5:30pm daily, Plaza 7:30am-5:30pm, Sculpture Garden 7:30am-dusk
In-depth collection of modern masters and works by emerging artists; cutting-edge films; sculptures by Rodin, Matisse, and Moore on the plaza and in the garden.

National Zoo
3001 Connecticut Avenue, Northwest, Washington, DC
Nearest Metro: Woodley Park Zoo/Adams Morgan
Hours: April-October 10:00am-6:00pm daily, November-March 10:00am-4:30pm
One of the world’s best zoos and home to approximately 2,000 animals representing nearly 400 species, of which about a quarter are endangered; provides leadership in animal care, science, education, and sustainability.

Natural History Museum
10th St. & Constitution Avenue, Northwest, Washington, DC
Nearest Metro: Smithsonian (Mall exit) or Federal Triangle
Hours: 10:00am-5:30pm daily, March 25-September 4 open until 7:30pm
Exhibitions on earliest human origins; development of world cultures; ancient and modern mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles, insects, and sea creatures.

Portrait Gallery
Eighth and F Streets, Northwest, Washington, DC
Nearest Metro: Gallery Place/Chinatown (7th and F Street exit)
Hours: 11:30am-7:00pm daily
Tells the stories of America through the individuals who have shaped our nation, from pre-colonial times to today.
The Smithsonian Museums (Continued)

Postal Museum
2 Massachusetts Avenue, Northeast, Washington, DC
Nearest Metro: Union Station (Massachusetts Avenue exit)
Hours: 10:00am-5:30pm daily
Devoted to the history of America’s mail service and the hobby of stamp collecting.

Renwick Gallery
1661 Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest (at 17th Street), Washington, DC
Nearest Metro: Farragut West (17th Street exit) or Farragut North (K Street exit)
Hours: 10:00am-5:30pm daily
Dedicated to exhibiting American contemporary crafts and decorative arts from the 19th to the 21st centuries.

Sackler Gallery
1050 Independence Avenue, Southeast, Washington, DC
Nearest Metro: Smithsonian (Mall exit)
Hours: 10:00am-5:30pm daily
Features both permanent and temporary exhibitions of Asian art from ancient times to contemporary.

Smithsonian Castle
1000 Jefferson Drive, Southwest, Washington, DC
Nearest Metro: Smithsonian (Mall exit)
Hours: 8:30am-5:30pm
Home to the Smithsonian Information Center and the permanent exhibition Smithsonian Institution: America’s Treasure Chest, as well as the Institution’s administrative headquarters. **Highlights include** video orientation, a scale model of the federal city, and brochures in several languages, Castle Café, and free public Wi-Fi.
Visiting the Memorials

This Mall map shows the major memorials and monuments on the National Mall: Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, and the Jefferson Memorial. Very little parking is available at the memorials, but most have restrooms, gift shops, and snack stands. Several tour services in the area will drive you around to each of the memorials, some even operating at night!

> See the next three pages for detailed information about each monument.
The Washington Monument

The Washington Monument is the tallest structure in Washington, D.C. and one of the city’s most recognizable attractions. It was built in honor of George Washington, who led the country to independence and then became its first President. The Monument is designed off of an Egyptian obelisk and stands 555’ 5 1/8” tall, and offers views in excess of thirty miles. It was completed on December 6, 1884.

**Hours:**

**Summer Hours:** 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. (May 31 - September 6, 2011), with the last tour beginning before 9:45 p.m. **Rest of Year:** 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with the last tour beginning before 4:45 p.m.

**Tours:**

Go to the Washington Monument Lodge, located along 15th Street, which opens at 8:30 a.m. for distribution of free, **same day, timed** tickets on a first come first serve basis. To get advanced tickets go to: [http://www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov) or call: 1.877.444.6777.
The Lincoln Memorial

Designed after the Parthenon in Athens, this temple in honor of the 16th President, Abraham Lincoln, is one of the most iconic buildings in America. Located on the opposite end of the National Mall from the US Capitol, this memorial stands not only in honor of the Great Emancipator and preserver of the nation during the Civil War—but also as an enduring symbol of freedom.

**Hours:**
The public may visit the Lincoln Memorial at anytime. Open 24 hours a day. Park rangers are on duty to answer questions from 9:30 A.M. to 11:30 P.M. daily.
The Jefferson Memorial

Honoring the author of the Declaration of Independence and our nation’s third president, the Thomas Jefferson Memorial, is modeled after the Pantheon of Rome. Designers used Jefferson’s own architectural interests for the memorial. It is designed to showcase Jefferson’s contributions to the nation as an architect, statesman, President, drafter of the Declaration of Independence, and founder of the University of Virginia.

Hours:
The public may visit the Jefferson Memorial at any time. Open 24 hours a day. Park Rangers are on duty to answer questions from 9:30 A.M. to 11:30 P.M. daily.
Map of Capitol Hill

The Capitol Complex contains the U.S. Capitol Building, three House Office Buildings (Cannon, Longworth, Rayburn), and three Senate Office Buildings (Russell, Dirksen, Hart).

Across First Street from the East Front of the Capitol, are the U.S. Supreme Court Building, and the Library of Congress’ Jefferson Building.

> For more information: www.aoc.gov
Using the Metro System

Each passenger needs a farecard to enter and exit the Washington, DC Metro system. Up to two children under age 5 may ride for free with each paying customer. The fares are based on when and how far you ride. You may pay for fares with cash or credit/debit cards, and do not need exact change. If paying with cash, please bring small bills, as the farecard machines only provide up to $5 in change (in coins). You can save $0.25 per ride by using a SmarTrip card.

> For more information: www.wmata.com

Hours of Service:
Open: 5:00 am Monday-Friday, 7:00 am Saturday-Sunday
Close: Midnight Sunday-Thursday, 3:00 am Friday-Saturday

Stops at the Capitol:
Capitol South (Orange Line) | U.S. House
Union Station (Red Line) | U.S. Senate
Map of the National Mall

The National Mall is the area between Constitution and Pennsylvania Avenues. The Mall was envisioned as a “Grand Avenue” in the middle of Washington. Today it is home to the City’s most recognizable memorials and monuments.

**National Mall Metro Stops**
- Smithsonian (Orange)
- Federal Triangle (Orange & Blue)
- Federal Center SW (Orange)
- L’Enfant Plaza (Orange, Blue, Yellow, Green)
Arlington National Cemetery

Arlington National Cemetery is open to the public at 8 a.m. 365 days a year. From April 1 to Sept. 30 the cemetery closes at 7 p.m.; the other six months it closes at 5 p.m.

At the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the changing of the guard occurs every hour.

Ample paid parking is available to visitors, accessible from Memorial Drive. During all hours the cemetery is open, the Arlington Cemetery Metro stop is regularly served by high-speed subway trains. The cemetery is also a stop on most tour guides’ itineraries, and is serviced by Tourmobile, the popular tour buses that allow patrons unlimited reboarding for a single daily rate.

> For more information: www.arlingtoncemetery.mil
George Washington’s Mount Vernon

"First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen...” No figure stands taller in American history than President George Washington. The first President’s estate, Mt. Vernon, is located only 16 miles South of Washington, DC. Visitors to the plantation are able to tour the mansion, explore a dozen outbuildings, and visit the tomb where President and Mrs. Washington lie in peace.

The plantation also boasts a new museum that recreates the story of George Washington’s life like never before.

> For more information: www.mountvernon.org
National Harbor

This urban-waterfront community offers stunning views of downtown Washington, D.C. and Old Town Alexandria, and is just a 15-minute drive—or water taxi ride—to the heart of the nation’s capital.

Familiar national retailers and unique local boutiques line this bustling urban town center, filled with pedestrian friendly plazas, tree lined walkways and colorful streetscapes. National Harbor’s waterfront backdrop completes the perfect setting for prime retail, dining and entertainment opportunities.

Boasting six on-site hotels and resorts, National Harbor attracts visitors and guests from across the country and around the globe. With every amenity at their fingertips, visitors enjoy shopping, dining, conducting business and strolling the grounds of National Harbor.

> For more information: www.nationalharbor.com
Old Town Alexandria

Today, the colonial spirit is alive in Old Town which has been bustling with activity since it was founded by Scottish merchants in 1749. Shopping addicts enjoy the charm of the boutiques of all types housed in historic buildings. The free King Street Trolley (stops at King Street Metro and ends at the Potomac River) will take you to all of the antique shops and contemporary art galleries that line the cobblestone streets of this neighborhood once home to George Washington and Robert E. Lee. Old Town is accessible by the King Street Metro stop and is only a five minute drive from Washington.

> For more information: www.visitalexandriava.com
Udvar-Hazy Center At Dulles Airport

The **Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center** has more than 100 aircraft and 122 space objects on display. Visitors enter on the second level where the Welcome Center, Airbus IMAX Theater, Museum Store and food service entrances are located. Floor exhibits, classrooms and tower entrance are located on the first level. The center boasts a full size space shuttle, Blackbird spyplane, and the *Enola Gay*, the B-17 that dropped the atomic bomb in World War II.

**The Udvar-Hazy Center is located near Dulles Airport at:** 14390 Air and Space Museum Parkway, Chantilly, VA 205151. Hours are 10 am- 5:30 pm. Extended Summer Hours from May 27- September 4, 10 am-6:30 pm. Admission is free, public parking is $15.

> For more information: [www.nasm.si.edu/udvarhazy](http://www.nasm.si.edu/udvarhazy)
The Bureau of Printing and Engraving (BEP)

Located in the heart of the Nation's Capital, the BEP's Washington, DC Tour and Visitor Center is a great place to learn all about U.S. paper currency. You can see millions of dollars being printed as you walk along the gallery overlooking the production floor! The free 40-minute experience includes an introductory film and gallery tour of the production process. The visitor center includes exhibits and currency products for sale.

Note: The Tour and Visitor Center is closed on weekends, Federal holidays, and the week between Christmas and New Years Day.

> For more information: www.moneyfactory.gov
The Newseum

The Newseum, a 250,000-square-foot museum of news, is Washington, D.C.'s most exciting new attraction. Through dozens of exhibits, films and interactive experiences, you are there at some of the biggest events in history. The Newseum is an unforgettable highlight of any visit to the nation's capital.

For more information:  www.newseum.org
The International Spy Museum

> For more information: www.spymuseum.org

HOURS:
9:30 am - 6:00 pm
Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day.
Hours are subject to change. spymuseum.org.

ADMISSION:
All tickets are date and time specific.

SAME-DAY TICKETS:
Purchase tickets for immediate entry or a later time that day at the Lobby Ticket Counter. Tickets are sold until one hour before closing daily and are subject to availability.

ADVANCE TICKETS:
For weekend visits and holidays, spring and summer periods, advance tickets are recommended. You can purchase tickets at the Museum or online at spymuseum.org.

GROUPS:
Groups and tour operators are welcome. For information, please call 202.393.7796.

ACCESS:
There is wheelchair access into and through the Museum. Strollers, food, drinks, and photography are not allowed inside the Museum.

SHOP:
Complete your mission at the Museum Store, where you'll find invisible pens, retriever glasses, concealment devices, recording devices, code kits, spy apparel and souvenirs, books and CDs.

MEMBERSHIP:
Infiltrate The Spy Ring®, the International Spy Museum’s Membership program.

As a member of The Spy Ring, you will enjoy privileged access to the world’s largest collection of international espionage artifacts ever placed on public display.

In addition, you will receive advance notice and member discounts for select Museum programs and events, discounts on purchases from the Museum Store and Spy City Cafe, and much, much more.

Email: membership@spymuseum.org

RESTAURANT:
Stop by the Spy City Cafe for breakfast, lunch or a snack.

DIRECTIONS:
Take Metrorail to Gallery Place/ Chinatown or National Archives/ Navy Memorial. For driving directions, visit our website. Beware. You may be followed.
Family Dining Near The National Mall

The following list of eateries are family friendly and better than a typical cafeteria:

- **American Indian Museum Cafeteria** (On the Mall)
  Fourth Street & Independence Ave, Southwest, Washington, DC

- **Food Court at Ronald Reagan Building**
  1300 Pennsylvania Ave, Northwest, Washington, DC

- **Natural History Museum Café** (Lower-level)
  10th St. & Constitution Avenue, Northwest, Washington, DC

- **National Gallery of Art Cascade Café** (Underground between East and West Buildings)
  4th and Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC

- **Food Court at Union Station** (Lower-level)
  2 West/40 Massachusetts Ave, Northwest, Washington, DC

- **Longworth House Office Building Cafeteria** (On Capitol Hill)
  Independence Avenue, New Jersey Avenue, C Street, Southeast, Washington, DC.
Top Ten Sites

A visitor can easily spend a week touring around Washington, DC. The Nation’s Capital can sometimes be overwhelming to citizens unfamiliar with the unique four quadrant layout of the city where there are four different “First Streets.” (Hint: Pay special attention to the directional references—NW, SW, SE, NE—after the street to be sure what part of the city you need to be heading).

While opinions may differ on what are the “must see” stops during any Washington trip, here are a set of Top Ten sites to see, especially when traveling with children under age fifteen.

1. Air & Space Museum and Udvar-Hazy Center (See page 19)
2. Natural History Museum (See page 6)
3. The International Spy Museum (See page 22)
4. The National Zoo (See page 6)
5. The Washington Monument (See page 9)
6. The Capitol (See page 12)
7. The Bureau of Engraving & Printing (See page 20)
8. The American History Museum (See page 5)
9. Union Station (See page 13)
10. George Washington’s Mount Vernon (See page 16)
Often Overlooked But Worth Seeing (if you have the time!)

- **Dumbarton Oaks**

This 1801-built Federal-style estate is now part of Harvard University and remains an oasis in Georgetown... Admission to the Museum is free. Tours of the Special Exhibition take place every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 3:00 pm. There is a charge to enter Gardens...from March 15th to October 31st, the gardens are open daily, except Mondays, from 2–6 p.m.

> www.doaks.org

- **Washington Harbor**

Washington Harbor is located along the Georgetown waterfront ... and offers great views of the Potomac River, the Kennedy Center, Washington Monument and the Key Bridge. This historic Georgetown location has a public boardwalk and several restaurants. The waterfront restaurants are especially popular during the summer months... try the restaurant Sequoia...Sightseeing cruises depart from Washington Harbor giving a narrative tour of Washington, DC aboard a small river boat.

- **Embassy Row**

As the name suggests, “Embassy Row” refers to a part of the city where many of the foreign embassies are located, along Massachusetts Avenue extending from Dupont Circle toward the National Cathedral. Washington has more than 175 foreign embassies, residences, chanceries, and diplomatic missions. Note: Less than half of the embassies of Washington DC are actually located along Embassy Row. For an alphabetical guide of all of the embassies, see Washington, DC Embassy Guide (www.dc.about.com/od/communities/a/EmbassyGuide.htm).

- **Paddle Boats @ Tidal Basin**

(located behind the Bureau of Engraving & printing, facing opposite the Jefferson Memorial)

While visiting the Tidal Basin in Washington, DC, you can rent a paddle boat from Tidal Basin Paddle Boats and enjoy the fresh air and terrific views of the Jefferson Memorial and the famous Japanese cherry trees. Cost: $12.00 per hour - 2 passenger boat; $19.00 per hour - 4 passenger boat...Contact: www.dc.about.com/od/touristattractions/a/TidalBasin.htm. Note: At least one passenger has to be of the age of 16 years; If you can wear a life vest, you can ride in a boat.
- **Annapolis**

The state capital of Maryland, is a beautiful historical seaport situated along the Chesapeake Bay... an easy day trip just 32 miles from Washington. The city boasts more 18th century buildings than anywhere else in the United States, including the homes of all four Maryland signers of the Declaration of Independence... quaint harbor tours, interesting shops... home to the US Naval Academy.

- **Fashion Centre at Pentagon City**

Just over the 14th Street bridge in Virginia... very easy to get to @ Pentagon City Metro stop... one of the DC area’s premier shopping malls... Upscale venue of 170 stores including Macy's, Nordstrom, Williams-Sonoma and full-service restaurants like Ruby Tuesday... Food court great for kids (on lower level.)

- **DoubleDecker Bus Tour**

View the sights of our Nation's Capital aboard an open-top double-decker bus. This tour operates as a hop-on, hop-off tour that encompasses some 25 stops throughout the city. This tour will cover the major DC sites -- Union Station, US Capitol, ESPN Zone, Chinatown, Ford's Theatre, White House (Photo Stop), the Memorials, Arlington National Cemetery, Washington National Cathedral, etc-- in an approximate two-and-a-half-hour circle. The on and off flexibility allows one to create your own tour by choosing your stops. Call 888-878-9870 for reservations or more info.
For More Information

For additional information, contact Congressman Benishek’s office:

202-225-4735
514 Cannon Building (Fifth Floor)
Washington, DC 20515
www.benishek.house.gov
Note: Ask to speak with the Congressman’s DC Tour Coordinator.

Other Useful Websites:

- www.washington.org
  The official tourism site of Washington, DC, get the latest information on events, attractions, and create your own experience during your visit to Washington, DC.

- www.dcvisit.com
  Washington DC Hotels offers discount hotel rates and free booking for Washington, DC, Virginia, and Maryland hotels.

- www.dcducks.com
  DC Ducks is an incredible land and river attraction that will entertain and educate your family all about Washington, DC!

- www.citysightsdc.com
  The best sightseeing, attractions & things do in Washington DC on double decker hop on hop off tour buses.