

# TOP 10

Not to be missed!

Our TOP 10 hits – from the absolute No. 1 to No. 10 – help you plan your tour of the most important sights.



**★ FREEDOM TRAIL ▶ 46**

The 2.5-mile (4km) path through Boston takes you to many places where landmark events in American history occurred; one of them is the Old State House (photo left).

**★ PROVINCETOWN ▶ 85**

In the 20th century the old whaling station on the tip of Cape Cod played host to all kinds of artists and hedonists – and it is still considered the most liberal town north of Key West.

**★ WHITE MOUNTAINS ▶ 158**

These wild mountains with their extreme fluctuations in temperature and unpredictable weather are the rugged alter ego of the otherwise mild New England.

**★ ACADIA NATIONAL PARK ▶ 162**

The only national park in New England is a wildly romantic interplay of land, sea, and sky and is one of the most beautiful parks in the United States.

**★ MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON ▶ 50**

The museum is one of the largest and best of its kind in the United States and has artworks from around the world in its collections.

**★ JACOB'S PILLOW DANCE FESTIVAL ▶ 102**

With its top-quality performances in the idyllic countryside, this traditional summer dance festival in Becket is typically New England.

**★ NANTUCKET ▶ 82**

Forget your car when you visit this romantic island and hire a bicycle as soon as you arrive – it is the perfect way to get to the beach during the day and to the bars at night.

**★ FLY-FISHING ▶ 118**

The esthetics of fly-casting holds a very special appeal for men and women alike, and the loveliest spots to cast a fly line in style are in Vermont.

**★ THE BREAKERS ▶ 140**

The Vanderbilt mansion in Newport is possibly the most impressive monument of unbridled capitalism prior to the introduction of the antitrust laws.

**★ HARVARD ▶ 54**

When you think of Boston, you immediately think of Harvard. The elite university has produced more Nobel Prize laureates than any other.

# Birthplace of a NATION

**New England is where it all started. The seeds of America's more than 200-year-long experiment in democracy were sown here, and reminders of those days stand proudly in this northeast corner of the United States.**

Name a landmark event in colonial American history, and it almost assuredly happened somewhere in New England. The Pilgrims' landing at Plymouth Rock, the Salem Witch Trials, the Boston Massacre, the Boston

Tea Party, Paul Revere's ride, the first shot of the American Revolution, the Battle of Bunker Hill – they all happened here. You could spend a month touring the historic sites in Boston alone, not to mention those found elsewhere in the New England region.

The best historic sites are linked by the Freedom Trail (▶ 46), a red line on the Boston sidewalk that seems never to run out of historically important attractions.

## The Pilgrim Fathers

A new chapter of history began in 1620, with the Pilgrims' landing.

Originally intent on Virginia, the Pilgrim Fathers landed first at Provincetown rather than brave a difficult storm, but found no source of fresh water, and so continued on to Plymouth. A rock – who can say for sure whether it is *the* rock? – marks their disembarkation spot in Plymouth (▶ 65). A stone tower memorializes their landing at Provincetown (▶ 85).

Almost half of the 102 Pilgrims who came over from England on the *Mayflower* died within the first year, falling victim to pneumonia, influenza and malnutrition. The others survived, but only with the help of the friendly Wampanoag Indians, who taught the new arrivals how to live off the land. They planted corn and other native vegetables, and in the fall of 1621, legend has it that the Pilgrims and the Native Americans celebrated the first harvest, or Thanksgiving.

## Building a Community

The first settlers arrived in Salem in 1626; Boston became the first capital of the colony in 1632; Boston Latin opened its doors in 1635, America's oldest public school; Harvard College was founded a year later, making it the first institution of higher learning in the United States; in 1638, colonists built their first printing press in Cambridge; and in 1639, Richard Fairbank opened the country's first post office.

The Puritan ethic, so valuable for building communities, was not as successful in tolerating those who did not share the same views. Native Americans, Quakers, Baptists and other dissidents were persecuted and sometimes prosecuted. Religious hysteria reached its most fevered pitch in Salem, where 19 men and women were put to death for allegedly practicing witchcraft (▶ 64).

## “No Taxation Without Representation”

The 18th century brought many more settlers, and fundamental changes to the colonial way of life. In their quest for more space, the colonists' once-symbiotic relationship with the Native American tribes turned hostile. At the same time, many residents began to feel the strain of ties to Britain. In an effort to pay off the debt amassed during the Seven Years' War (the French and Indian War), the British government levied taxes on colonial sugar (1764), stamps (1765), tea (1767) and other British imports. Each new tariff provoked greater outrage among the free-trade-minded colonists, who adopted the revolutionary slogan of “No taxation without representation.” The King sent British troops to quell the unrest in 1770, but ended up fanning the flames of independence when the soldiers killed five colonists outside the Old State House (▶ 47).

In 1773, patriots disguised as American Indians snuck aboard a British merchant ship and dumped its cargo of tea into Boston Harbor as a



# Getting Your Bearings

What makes Boston special? Talk to ten people and you will get ten different reasons. Its history – the capital of Massachusetts and one of the oldest cities in the USA, with a 400th birthday coming up in 2030. Its location – the city is bordered on two sides by water: the harbor and the Charles River. Its walkability – as in European cities, everyone walks everywhere.

In addition, Bostonians love the cut and thrust of politics, just as their revolutionary forbears did. After all, the flames of independence were fanned here more than two centuries ago.

As one put it, “When you see candidates for governor holding a debate at Faneuil Hall, where Sam Adams sowed the seeds of liberty, it makes you proud to live here.”

The city has other charms, too. Boston is a college town of the highest order. Harvard, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Boston College, Wellesley and Boston University are just a few of the scores of colleges and universities that call the area home. That means the city is full

of thousands of undergraduates seeking enlightenment and entertainment. But it is also full of professors and other professional people who give the city a sophisticated air.

Most of the city's attractions are within easy walking distance, and the most significant Revolutionary sites are all linked by a red brick path along the sidewalk (the Freedom Trail). The historical flavor doesn't stop at the city limits, either. Plymouth, where the Pilgrims first settled, is less than an hour to the south. Within commuting distance to the west of the city are Lexington and Concord, where the first shots of the American Revolution were fired and where the Transcendentalist movement (▶ 30) began a century later. To the north are

Salem, infamous for its 17th-century witch trials, and the idyllic coastal towns of Gloucester and Marblehead.

## TOP 10

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- ★ Museum of Fine Arts ▶ 50
- ★ Cambridge & Harvard ▶ 54

## Don't Miss

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## At Your Leisure

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- ⑭ Boston Children's Museum ▶ 59
- ⑮ New England Aquarium ▶ 60
- ⑯ Boston Common & Public Garden ▶ 60
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