

CHAPTER 7

GETTING OUTDOORS

■ Getting Outdoors in Baltimore : Staying in the

Urban Parks

Despite being a city, Baltimore is not a suffocating asphalt jungle. On the contrary, the city has quite a few areas that allow residents to escape the touristy Inner Harbor, flashy neon plazas, and endless blocks of rowhouses.

Closest to the Homewood campus is, of course, **Wyman Park**. The park consists of two sections, Wyman Park Dell on Charles St. and the park on Tudor Arms Dr. behind the Space Telescope building. In general, the Dell is a pretty nondescript piece of land, but in the summer the Charles Village Association occasionally hosts movies or other events there. The larger part of the park is made up of a big field that attracts softball, rugby, and soccer players. In the winter, the hill leading down to the field is a favorite with sledders.

Starting at Wyman Park and running north is **Stony Run Park**, part of Baltimore City's mostly unrealized Greenways system. Stony Run is essentially a trail used by runners who desire a pleasant run through Roland Park up to Northern Parkway. Those looking for a pretty green space to walk to can head up to **Sherwood Gardens**, at the corner of Stratford and Greenway in the affluent Guilford neighborhood. For a very short time in late April, the gardens showcase a spectacular display of

every type of tulip imaginable. Make sure not to miss this while you're at Hopkins. In general, walking around Guilford and Roland Park is a pleasant way to get outside.

Also close to the Homewood campus is the **Jones Falls**, namesake of I-83, the Jones Falls Expressway. Also part of the Greenways system, the trails along the Jones Falls are not exactly developed for easy recreational use. However, for the intrepid, the Jones Falls could be an interesting urban waterway to explore. They can be accessed from Falls Road in Hampden.

Druid Hill Park, a large urban park constructed in the 19th century, is another park accessible by foot for those interested in a somewhat longer walk. The park is popular with runners and dog-owners since it contains 674 acres of open space. It houses the **Baltimore Zoo**, tennis courts, a community pool, and a frisbee golf course. The nearby **Baltimore Conservatory**, started in 1888 and recently expanded and renovated, is a Victorian greenhouse with indoor palm trees and exotic foliage. It also holds the **Annual Spring Flower Display**, which features thousands of colorful tulips, hyacinths, daffodils and lilies. Best of all, it's free!

Within driving distance (or biking distance) of campus is **Robert E. Lee Park**. Five miles north on Falls Road, it provides a lovely lake and plenty of room for picnics, fishing, dog-walking, mountain biking, and boating. **Lake Montebello**, at the end of 33rd Street east of campus, has a 1.4-mile loop frequented by bikers, walkers, and rollerbladers. The **Cylburn**

Arboretum is located west of Interstate 83 and has acres of gardens and forest. **Fort McHenry**, accessible by car or by water taxi, has large expanses of grass and a steady sea breeze for flying kites and watching boats.

■ Getting Outdoors in Baltimore : Leaving the

While Maryland might not have the highest mountains to climb or thousands of acres of backcountry camping, it has plenty to keep the outdoor enthusiast happy during his/her stay at Hopkins. In the following section, we list various outdoor pursuits and highlight some of

the best places for that activity while making note of any community resources that support it. More detailed information on many of the places listed in the individual paragraphs can be found in the Outdoor Recreation section immediately following.

Hiking

You won't be able to train for climbing Mount Everest in Maryland, Virginia or Pennsylvania, but there are many areas that provide hikes for hikers of all abilities. Some of the more famous areas include the **C&O Canal**, **Harpers Ferry**, the **NCR Trail**, **Gunpowder Falls**, **Cunningham Falls/Catoctin Mountain Park**, and **Great Falls of the Potomac**. **Susquehanna** and **Patapsco State Parks** are two of the closest state parks and contain many miles of hiking trails.

Other popular trails include the **Allegheny Highlands Trail of Maryland**, the **Western Maryland Rail Trail**, the **Northern Central Railroad Trail**, the **Historic Savage Mill Trail**, the **Cross Island Trail**, and **Ocean City Boardwalk**.

For those who prefer organized outings, the **Mountain Club of Maryland** has a full schedule of hikes that take place at established hiking

areas near Baltimore. For a \$15 membership fee, interested hikers can take full advantage of their programs. The **Maryland Outdoor Club** runs organized hikes as well as volunteer and social events. Best of all, membership is free. The Johns Hopkins Outdoor Club also arranges hikes from time to time, in addition to their other outdoor activities.

Mountain Club of Maryland, 410-377-6266, www.mcomd.org

Maryland Outdoor Club, www.maryland-outdoorclub.org

Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC), 703-242-0693, www.patc.net

Sierra Club Maryland Chapter, 301-277-7111, maryland.sierraclub.org

Johns Hopkins Outdoors Club (JHOC), www.jhu.edu/~outdoors

Camping and Backpacking

Many of the state and national parks in Maryland offer designated campgrounds that can be reserved ahead of time. National sites include **Assateague Island** on the Eastern Shore and **Greenbelt Park** in Greenbelt, MD, just outside of Washington, D.C. Assateague contains a range of camping options from drive-in spots to backcountry camping requiring a permit.

While most of the established state campgrounds are in the mountains of Western Maryland, there are a few that are closer to Baltimore. These include **Susquehanna**, **Rocks**, **Patapsco**, and **Gunpowder Falls** state parks. Campsites for one or two tents generally cost around \$20/night.

The closest wilderness in which long backpack-

ing trips are really feasible lies over three hours away, in Virginia's **Shenandoah National Park** or **George Washington National Forest**. The **Appalachian Trail** runs through both as well as through a short section of western Maryland north of **Harpers Ferry**. Contact the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC) for information.

National Park Service Camping Reservations, reservations.nps.gov
Maryland State Park Camping Reservations, reservations.dnr.state.md.us

Cycling and Mountain Biking

It's easy to assume that Hopkins' location in the middle of a large city makes cycling nearly impossible. This is not entirely true. For road bikers, there is quite a lot of great terrain north of the city which can be accessed fairly easily from Hopkins. Take Roland Ave. north until it bends left on Lake. Go down the hill and take a right on Falls Rd. Falls will bring you outside the Beltway into some very nice countryside. For a peaceful ride, try the **NCR Trail** north of the city (it's packed gravel, but people generally have no trouble with racing tires) or the **C&O Canal Towpath**.

The most accessible biking trail to Hopkins students is perhaps the newly completed **Gwynns Falls Trail**. Running for 14 miles, it cuts a line through Gwynns Falls Park in West Baltimore to the harbor and feeds you history and other totally cool facts along the way. There are beautifully designed interpretive panels along the way giving you information on where you are, what you are seeing, and the history of

all of the above. Another good choice is in the Baltimore City is the **Jones Falls Trail**. It is an urban hiking and biking trail providing access to the scenic and historic Jones Falls stream valley.

Other popular options include the **Baltimore-Annapolis Trail** (13.3 miles from Glen Burnie to Annapolis), the **BWI Trail** (10.7-mile loop around BWI Airport), and the **Washington, Baltimore & Annapolis Trail** (5.6 miles, partially completed, running along the site of the former Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis Railroad)

The **JHU Cycling Club** (www.jhu.edu/~cycling) is primarily concerned with road bikes and is open to members of all abilities. There is also some off-road activity.

For recreational riders, the **Baltimore Bicycle Club** (410-792-8308, www.baltobikeclub.org) is very active, with a mountain bike division and group rides from leisurely to heart-attack pace. During the cycling season, April through November, the BBC offers scheduled rides with ride leaders on Saturdays, Sundays and major holidays. These rides include cue sheets detailing the ride route. In addition, there are evening rides on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, from May through October. Evening rides are leaderless and have cluster starts from two locations.

Mountain bikers have a selection of local trails from which to choose. **Wyman Park/ Stony Run** has a few miles of trail that get muddy after a good rain. For more serious trails, try **Robert E. Lee Park** near Mt. Washington, about four miles north of Homewood. **Loch Raven Reservoir**, the **NCCR Trail**, and the **C&O Canal** are more scenic and less difficult. **Gunpowder Falls, Patapsco Valley, Gambrill**, and **Susquehanna State Parks** allow biking, as do many of the other state parks. Information on local bicycle shops is available in the goods and services chapter.

Inline Skating

For those inline skaters not willing to take their chances skating in traffic, there are a couple of appropriate areas around Baltimore that allow for a car-free experience. **Lake Montebello** is the closest spot to campus. It consists of a 1.4 mile paved loop around the lake that is adequate for beginning skaters and those who just want to get in 45 minutes of skating. Note that the pavement is a little bumpy in spots. The **Baltimore and Annapolis Trail** is 13 miles long and paved, providing lots of room to skate. There is also an 11-mile path around BWI Airport that connects to the Baltimore and

Annapolis Trail. On weekends, a small section of Dulaney Valley Road that runs alongside **Loch Raven Reservoir** is closed for bikers and skaters. There's a steep but short hill at the end that challenges your legs. DC closes some streets to traffic on weekends that provide good skating, especially in **Rock Creek Park**.

Kayaking and Canoeing

Canoeists and kayakers can find fun at the **Gunpowder Falls, Patapsco Valley**, and **Susquehanna State Parks** with a mix of flatwater and various degrees of whitewater conditions. The **Potomac River** is runnable for much of its considerable length although some sections will involve portages around more exciting rapids and dams. **Harpers Ferry**, 90 minutes from Baltimore, is home to some very scenic, mild whitewater at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers. There are several outfitters there and several outfitters

which run float, raft and kayak trips.

For wild birds, ponies and fine flatwater paddling, **Assateague Island** is unsurpassed, and canoes can be rented on the Bay side. **Sandy Point Park** on the bay, less than an hour from JHU, rents boats and you can enjoy sheltered ocean boating. There is even a boat launch in the **Baltimore Harbor** for those who don't mind paddling around with the Water Taxis (not for the faint of heart!).

For those interested in white-water boating or rafting, three of the nation's premier white-water venues are located within a day's drive of Baltimore: the **Savage River** in western Maryland, the **Youghiogheny River** in southwestern Pennsylvania, and the **Gauley** in central West Virginia. All three are home to outfitters who can fix you up with equipment, tours, and lessons—for a price.

For those interested in learning how to kayak,

participating in organized kayaking trips, or even just meeting people to paddle with on your own, check out the **JHU Kayaking Club** (www.jhu.edu/kayaking). They have all the necessary equipment available and offer a number of trips throughout the year that are open to kayakers of all abilities. They offer several courses in whitewater kayaking, and hold weekly classes in the pool on how to roll a kayak.

Rowing and Sailing

Sailing is as much a part of the Chesapeake Bay as crabcakes and Natty Boh. Not many graduate students have easy access to sailboats, never mind the time to devote to them. But if you've got the urge to sail, the **Downtown Sailing Club** (410-727-2884, www.downtownsailing.org) at the Baltimore Museum of Industry is definitely for you! They are a very friendly, volunteer group based at the Inner Harbor offering lessons, racing, and general sailing at pretty much any level. The club owns quite

a number of boats of various types and sizes. Club members can sign out boats any time and sail around the harbor, and membership fees are reasonable.

If you were on the crew team in college, or at least wished that you had been, check out the **Baltimore Rowing Club** (410-355-5649, www.baltimorerowing.org). This city sponsored rowing club has crews ranging from novice classes to advanced teams.

Beaches

Despite having a lovely harbor and a plethora of famous seafood, Baltimore really has no good beaches. **Sandy Point State Park**, the nearest decent beach, is about an hour away and will probably not live up to the expectations of someone used to Atlantic Ocean beaches. However, if all you want is some sand, salt water, and a pretty view of the Bay Bridge, Sandy Point will fulfill your desires. On nice summer weekends, go early or risk not being let into the park.

A better bet for beaches is the **Eastern Shore** of Maryland, where a three-hour drive will bring you to the Atlantic Ocean. Among some

of the more popular places for beachgoers are **Assateague Island**, **Ocean City**, and Delaware towns like **Rehoboth Beach** or **Fenwick Island**. Assateague is a pristine national seashore and state park with camping, beaches, and wildlife (including the famous wild ponies and some "extreme biting insects"). These are probably too far for a day trip, but would make a nice summer weekend get-away. Be forewarned, however, that you will definitely not be the only ones with that idea, so get an early start.

If you prefer lake swimming, **Oregon Ridge Nature Center** in Hunt Valley, MD has an im-

maculate, aerated lake that prevents the growth of slimy algae. Some of the state parks, such as **Rocks** and **Gunpowder** also allow swimming in the rivers and lakes that are found in the

parks, although there are not always lifeguards. For more information on natural swimming holes in Maryland, visit www.swimmingholes.org/md.html.

Skiing

If you're from the west coast or even from New England, you might be a little disappointed with skiing in Maryland, but you don't have to hop on a plane to spend a day on the slopes. The only ski resort in Maryland is **Wisp** (www.skiwisp.com), 2 hours away from Baltimore in McHenry, in the westernmost part of the state. It has 23 trails of varying difficulty, and allows snowboards. Since it's Maryland's only ski resort, it has been reported to get very crowded.

There are more options nearby in Pennsylvania. Just north of York is **Ski Roundtop** (www.kiroundtop.com) about one and a half hours' drive, with 17 trails. It's nice and close, but small and very crowded on weekends. In Fairfield, PA (about two miles from the MD border),

you will find **Ski Liberty** (www.skiliberty.com), which has about the same number of trails and draws most, if not all, of its crowd from the Baltimore/Frederick area. Prices run about \$45 at both for an all-day ski pass. **Whitetail Ski Resort** (www.skiwhitetail.com) is just off of I-70, again in Pennsylvania, about 2 hours away. **The Poconos** in northeastern PA provide about 15 more resorts of various sizes; travel time is under three hours. All ski areas rent skis and provide lessons.

Cross-country skiing is easier to find, provided we get snow during the winter. Most state parks allow cross-country skiing, and equipment can be rented from several local stores (See goods and services).

Caving

If you're looking for a unique experience, caves are about as extraordinary and primal as it gets! Wild caves (where you crawl around in the mud with headlamps) are not advertised and are harder to find. The **JHU Outdoors Club (JHOC)** is quite active in caving and runs several wild cave trips per semester to the rich limestone strata of West Virginia and elsewhere. All equipment is provided.

Another way to explore caving is to join the **Baltimore Grotto**, the local chapter of the National Speleological Society.

If getting slimed is not your thing, there are various commercial caves with walkways and electric lighting to be explored. Maryland has

National Speleological Society/Baltimore Grotto, www.caves.org/grotto/baltimore
Crystal Grottos Caverns, Boonsboro, MD,
301-432-6336

Endless Caverns, Newmarket, VA, 540-896-2283, www.endlesscaverns.com

Luray Caverns, Luray, VA, 540-743-6551, www.luraycaverns.com

Shenandoah Caverns, Shenandoah Caverns, VA, 540-477-3115, www.shenandoahcaverns.com

Skyline Caverns, Front Royal, VA, 800-296-4545, www.skylinecaverns.com

one commercial cave (**Crystal Grottos Cav-**

erns in Boonsboro, MD) about 90 minutes from Baltimore. Larger show caves can be found farther south in Virginia including the

world-famous **Luray Caverns** (Luray, VA, about three hours away).

Rock Climbing

There are several relatively close venues for those who wish to do the Spiderman thing. First and foremost, the **Recreation Center** houses an impressive, student-run **Climbing Wall**. The gym features 13 permanent ropes, several sport leads and lots of terrain features including three cracks and numerous overhangs on its 33 vertical feet of surface. Routes are many and run from very easy (5.4) to finger-crimpingly impossible (5.12+). No experience is required and all equipment (except for shoe rentals - \$1) and instruction is free.

Farther afield in Timonium and Columbia is the commercial rock gym, **Earth Treks** (800-CLIMB-UP, www.earthtreksclimbing.com). Earth Treks is slightly larger and taller than the on-campus wall and offers a variety of routes (many of them 40+ feet tall). There are lots of terrain features (grooves, cracks, arretes, etc.), a sizable bouldering area, and climbing routes ranging from 5.3 through 5.14+. Monthly dues of \$85 give you unlimited gym usage and steep discounts (typically 50%) on all courses they offer. These courses range from basic climbing to advanced rescue techniques or specific group classes such as those for women only. You can also purchase one-day passes for \$13-\$16. Members get free day guest passes. Earth Treks also leads climbing trips all over the world and sells equipment.

In terms of real climbing (that is, on real rocks) there are many local options, but you'll have to supply your own ropes and equipment. **Great Falls** is, despite the unnerving name, a great rock-climbing location with over a hundred established and rated routes (all ability levels) on the Virginia side of the Potomac. On nice days, climbers are advised to get there early for

the best spots or to come later in the afternoon when many earlybirds have called it quits. The same rule applies for **Carderock** located across the river and downstream from Great Falls on the Maryland side.

Two other local favorite spots are **Rocks State Park** and **Sugarloaf Mountain**. Rocks is very tall (80') and has roughly a dozen quality routes at various levels (5.6 to 5.12). Sugarloaf is much larger with at least a hundred established routes up to 40' tall. More information is available at Mark "Indy" Kochte's Underground Climber's Guide to Central Maryland (www.bcpl.net/~indy/climbing/guide.html)

The Johns Hopkins Outdoors Club often leads climbing trips. They are led by extraordinarily knowledgeable student climbers and are a great way to introduce yourself to the sport and to other climbers.

Johns Hopkins Outdoors Club (JHOC) www.jhu.edu/~outdoors

JHOC is a very active student club that sponsors trips in most of the categories above. Though it's a predominantly undergraduate organization, graduate students are always welcome on trips and sometimes outnumber undergrads. Most JHOC trips are free or inexpensive. As with any expensive hobby, the best advice is to rent before you buy. The JHOC has a great deal of equipment that it rents to Hopkins folks and their affiliates for only \$5 per day. You can get kayaks, camping gear, backpacks, tents, sleeping bags, and many other items. Check the JHOC website for trip calendars, rent equipment, and other information.

■ Outdoor Recreation: Locations

Appalachian Trail (AT): The AT is America's premier long-distance hiking trail, running 2,200 miles from Maine to Georgia. "Thru-hikers," those who go from Maine to Georgia or vice versa in one trip, are considered an elite group among outdoor buffs. A small portion of the trail traverses Maryland west of Frederick, about an hour from Baltimore. There are many portions that can be day-hiked, and a particularly lovely section can be accessed at Harpers Ferry, WV. Trail maps and other information can be obtained through the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club or at local stores.

Assateague Island: Though a three-hour drive from Baltimore, Assateague Island is definitely worth it if you'd enjoy twenty miles of Atlantic beach, herds of semi-tame wild horses, and great wildlife. There are established beaches with lifeguards at both the State and National Parks on the island, although swimming is allowed anywhere. In the National Park, there are two types of campsites—those that are frequented by people with big travel campers (called Drive-In campsites) and the more isolated, peaceful ones that are nestled in the dunes a couple hundred feet away from the parking spots (called Walk-In campsites). There are sites located on both the ocean side and the bay side. Due to the "extreme biting insects" (as the National Park Service puts it) on the bay side, you may prefer the relative relief of the ocean side. In addition to the established campgrounds, several backcountry sites are available along the length of the island. Out-of-season visitors can avoid both the extreme insects and the extreme crowds. For those inclined, Assateague features some of the best surfing on the east coast. Fishing is a popular pastime along the beach as well. Obey the signs and don't feed the horses.

The back side of the island shelters a long bay with excellent canoeing and kayaking, as well as off-roading trails for anyone with a big

enough vehicle. To off-road, you will need to get a permit from the rangers. Wildlife, from ponies and deer to sea otters and waterbirds, can be seen in great abundance. Spring and fall are the recommended times for visiting here. One spectacular fall happening is the bioluminescent algae that appears toward the end of September. Reservations are recommended during the peak season (summer weekends through Labor Day), and can be made online at the National Park Service's online reservation system. Campsites are \$20 in-season, \$16 out-of-season, and \$5 for a backcountry permit.

Baltimore & Annapolis Trail: This "rail trail" is an established recreational greenway following the route of the old Baltimore & Annapolis Railroad from Glen Burnie to Annapolis. Although it is considered a park, the B&A Trail is really a 13.3-mile paved path that's used by walkers, cyclists, and inline skaters. The path is often lined with homes, commercial areas, and even highways and malls. The northern end of the path is connected to a loop around BWI airport that extends the trail by 11 miles.

Directions: Take I-95 or 295 to 195 (as if you were going to BWI). Take the exit for MD-170 toward Linthicum. Go for about three miles, until the intersection with Dorsey Rd. Take a left on Dorsey and go about a mile and a half until you get to Friendship Park on the right. Other parts of the trail can be accessed from side streets along MD-2, Ritchie Highway, which parallels the trail.

Chesapeake & Ohio (C&O) Canal: The C&O Canal was dug along 189 miles of the Potomac River to enable long, narrow barges pulled by mules to carry goods from the western frontier to the bustling port of Washington. Unfortunately, the same day ground was broken on the canal, the B&O Railroad company laid its first bit of track eventually rendering the whole canal endeavor obsolete.

Today the canal and towpath runs from Georgetown, all the way up the Potomac to Cumberland in western Maryland. It is a flat, gravel path passing through lovely countryside and is perfect for walking, mountain biking, or horseback riding. For the intrepid who might wish to walk the whole length, there are many established campgrounds along the way.

Directions: The canal can easily be accessed in Georgetown, at the C&O National Historical Park in Great Falls, MD, Harpers Ferry, Cumberland, or dozens of spots in between.

Cunningham Falls State Park/Catoctin Mountain Park: Cunningham Park, in Thurmont, MD, boasts the state's tallest waterfall (a whopping 78 feet) and is a great area for camping, hiking, and boating. You can find boat rentals, cross-country skiing, miles of trails, and over 150 camping sites available for around \$25/night, or cabins for \$50/night. Reservations for boats and camping are useful during busy times. Unfortunately, if you want to reserve a campsite or cabin for the weekend, you have to reserve both nights.

The adjoining Catoctin Mountain National Park also has 25 miles of hiking trails, picnicking facilities, fishing, and camping available from mid-April through late November. Sites are \$20/night, first-come first-serve, and cabins are \$35-55/night. You don't need to worry about safety here as this park houses Camp David, the presidential mountain retreat. However, trails in this park will sometimes close for security purposes, so be sure to check the Park Service website before you head out. Both parks are popular in October when leaves are at their best.

Directions: There are three separate sections of the park, but the main section leading to the Falls is called the William Houck Area. Take I-70 west to Frederick, head north on US-15, and go west two miles on MD-77. The park entrance is on Catoctin Hollow Road, off Rt.

77.

Cylburn Arboretum: With nature trails, a mansion, and bird and nature museums, Cylburn Arboretum is a good place to go on a sunny Sunday afternoon with the *New York Times*. Located in a quiet area, it feels farther away than it is. It was once voted by the *City Paper* as the most romantic spot in Baltimore.

Directions: Take I-83 North to Northern Parkway west. Turn left onto Greenspring Avenue before Sinai Hospital. The Arboretum is located at 4915 Greenspring Ave.

Druid Hill Park: Located just southwest of Hampden, the park is a large, wooded, hilly piece of land. It originally belonged to Nicholas Rogers and his son Lloyd, who are responsible for much of the park's fine romantic 19th-century landscaping. The Baltimore Conservatory, located in the park, dates from 1888 and has expanded to comprise four greenhouses and outdoor gardens. There are whimsical pavilions built by George Frederick in the 19th century, which are some of the oldest park buildings in the country. Originally the buildings served as stops for the small railroad that wound through the park. The city has added six lakes, including Druid Lake, a city reservoir. You'll also find playing fields, tennis courts, a swimming pool, picnic areas, and even a frisbee golf course. The park is a nice place to bike, picnic, or run.

The Baltimore Zoo in Druid Hill Park has 1,200 exotic birds, reptiles, and mammals. They also have the country's largest colony of African black-footed penguins. At Christmas, they open the zoo at night for a festival of lights called Zoo Lights.

Great Falls of the Potomac: In a region of the country not known for its natural wonders, Great Falls is quite a surprise. Located about ten miles upstream of Washington on the Potomac River, this huge navigational hazard is not so much a waterfall as a water stampede through some very large rocks. For a few days after a rainstorm, the water level rises to awesome

proportions—all of which can be observed safely from cliff-top overlooks.

There are parks on both the Maryland and Virginia sides of the river where you can observe the Falls and walk along the edge of 50-foot cliffs overlooking the turbulent waters. It is a favorite spot for rock climbers of all skill levels and white-water kayakers (some of them world-class), as well as hikers, mountain bikers, horseback riders, and history buffs. It's a great place for spotting wildflowers and large birds (particularly great blue herons, Canada geese, and several types of vultures), but watch underfoot for the prolific poison ivy.

On the Virginia side of the river, about ten miles of trails wander back and forth along the cliffs and through some lovely forest. You can see the remains of a canal engineered by George Washington in the 1790s to allow boats to bypass the dangerous cataracts. The visitor's center and interpretive signs will provide the full picture. There is a picnic area with charcoal grills and tables.

Directions: Follow the DC beltway (I-495) west into VA. Take the first exit after crossing the state line and take a right on Georgetown Pike to Old Dominion Drive, then follow signs. Driving time from Baltimore is about 75 minutes.

What's often called the "Maryland side of Great Falls" is actually part of the **C&O Canal National Historic Park**. Here you'll find the famous Billy Goat Trail, a 1.4-mile rocky scramble over cliff tops along the Potomac. This strenuous hike involves navigating boulders and climbing up steep rock faces, but you are well rewarded with great views of the river and lagoon-like beaches. For the more sedate, the Falls themselves can be observed, and the straight and flat towpath of the C&O Canal extends north and south for miles.

Directions: Head west on the DC beltway (I-495) and take exit 41 for Great Falls, MD. Follow the Clara Barton Pkwy. to MacArthur

Boulevard. The park entrance is located at 11070 MacArthur Blvd.

Gunpowder Falls: In Maryland "falls" means river, not, as you might assume, a waterfall. Like Patapsco Valley, Gunpowder Falls is actually comprised of separate parks with different entrances. Gunpowder Falls and Little Gunpowder Falls, north of the city, are lovely areas for observing nature, hiking, fishing, and mountain biking. Large portions of the rivers are accessible to canoes as well, though, as it is a one-way trip, you will need another vehicle to shuttle you back. At the outlet of the river into the Chesapeake Bay, the Hammerman Area provides a large picnic ground and beach, as well as kayaks, surfboards, and catamarans. The Hereford Area is the northernmost section, and is popular for fly-fishing, bow-hunting (permits required), horseback riding, and hiking.

Directions to Central Area: Take I-695 to the White Marsh exit (Rt. 43 East). Pass Wal-Mart and take the next left. You'll see signs for US 1 North. Take a right at the light (heading north on 1). There will be a parking lot for Gunpowder on your right. The parking lot has a sign with trail maps. The best trails are the ones on the other side of Rt. 1 (you will walk through a tunnel).

Directions to Hereford Area: Take I-83 north to Exit 27, Mt. Carmel Road. Turn right on Mt. Carmel Road. At traffic light, turn left on York Road. Pass the Hereford High School and turn left on Bunker Hill Road. Continue on Bunker Hill Road to the parking lot, located above the river.

Directions to Hammerman Area: From I-95 take exit 67A for Route 43 east (White Marsh Boulevard). Follow 43 to route 40 east. Turn right at the first light onto Ebenezer Road and follow it for 4.5 miles. The park entrance will be on your left.

Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park: This urban park is being revamped by the city parks commission to become a 14-mile biking and hiking path

that begins at Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park and will eventually follow the Falls to the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River. Currently, it is 4.5 miles long, providing an easy-going trail if you're looking for an afternoon walk that's both close to home and somewhat removed from the concrete of the city. While the map of the park seems to include many historical sites along the trails, such as a water wheel, a mock fort, and a mansion owned by Baltimore railroad designer Thomas Winans, finding these well-hidden sites will require a side trip off the beaten path. Picnic tables and grills can be found in the park, and there are also tennis courts, basketball courts, baseball and softball diamonds, football and soccer fields.

Directions: Take North Avenue west, crossing over Hilton Avenue Parkway. Turn left onto Morris Road. To get to the Leon Day Park Trailhead parking lot (closer to the athletic fields), turn left off Morris onto Franklinton Road. To get to the Winans Meadow Trailhead parking lot (closer to the hiking trails), turn right off Morris onto Franklinton Road.

Harpers Ferry: This national park at the border of Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia is best known as the site of John Brown's ill-fated raid. While most people come to see the historic town, hiking, biking, and kayaking opportunities abound. The townsite is located at the junction of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers, so there are many kayaking and rafting opportunities. If you prefer not to get wet, both the C&O Canal trail and the Appalachian Trail are available for biking and hiking. For a shorter hike, check out Maryland Heights. A 4-mile out-and-back hike takes you up to the cliffs overlooking the townsite for a view Thomas Jefferson described as "worth the trip across the Atlantic". If your legs can muster another 2 miles you can take a loop to the top of Maryland Heights and explore the ruined embattlements of a Civil War fort. A 8-mile out-and-back hike up Loudon Heights also offers scenic views and good exercise. Rock climbing is allowed on Maryland Heights, but be sure to register with the park office first. Entrance fee

is \$4 /person or \$6/vehicle. A Hostelling International Hostel is located nearby in Knoxville, MD, as well as private camping.

Directions: From I-695, take I-70 west. At Frederick, take US 340 south towards Charles-town. After crossing into WV, follow the signs for the park. Harpers Ferry is also served by Amtrak and MARC from Union Station in Washington, DC.

Lake Montebello and Herring Run: The lake is an attractive spot located directly east of campus on 33rd Street (past Eastern High School). You'll find many people out jogging, bicycling, and roller-blading on the path around the lake. Herring Run Park, bordered mostly by the Belair-Edison neighborhood on the west, begins north of the Lake and continues to the southeast—another great place for a bike ride or jogging, but it also has tennis courts and a picnic area. Herring Run can be accessed from Sinclair Lane.

Loch Raven Reservoir: This artificial lake, which supplies Baltimore with a good portion of its drinking water, is a great resource for bikers, anglers, boaters, and runners. On weekends a portion of the road is closed to traffic and taken over by cyclists, rollerbladers, and walkers. There are picnic areas, mountain-biking trails, and ample roads for road bikers. A nice road ride starts at Dulaney Valley Rd., goes through the park, north on Manor Rd. to Sweet Air and then circles back down along Baldwin Mill, Long Green Pike, Glen Arm, and back over Cromwell Bridge to Loch Raven Blvd. There is a place to rent boats off Dulaney Valley Rd., just after it breaks off from Jarrettsville. The lake is stocked with fish and, judging from the number of people with rods in hand, the fishing is good.

Directions: Take I-695 to exit 27 (Dulaney Valley Road North), go 4.8 miles and turn right at the park.

Longwood Gardens: These extensive botanical gardens were built on a 1,050-acre estate

in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, at the turn of the century and have become one of the largest botanical preserves in America, with over 11,000 species of plants. Even in the dead of winter or on the rainiest of days, Longwood is gorgeous. There are Italianate fountain gardens, hordes of tulips, exotic orchids, palm trees, giant water lilies, roses, and topiary. Cost is \$12-15 for adults.

Directions: Take I-95 to MD-222 west to 275 north to 276 north to Rte. 1 north.

North Central Railroad (NCRR) Trail: Another converted rail trail, this level path runs more than 20 miles from Ashland, north of Loch Raven reservoir, all the way to York, PA. The trail is hard-packed gravel, but road bikes will have no trouble. Most of the route travels near creeks and rivers, and the whole area is highly scenic. It is popular with cyclists, walkers, and horseback riders, as well as fisherfolk, and can be pleasantly bustling on nice spring days.

Directions: Take York Rd. (Rte. 45) to Cockeysville (Exit 18A Shawan Rd. off I-83). Turn right on Ashland Rd. and left onto Paper Mill Rd. Look for parking along the road, less than half a mile down.

Oregon Ridge Nature Center: One of the best parts about Oregon Ridge is the algae-free, naturally aerated lake. While the shallow part of the lake is usually crowded, the other part of the lake is an old converted rock quarry which is much less packed. Because it's 50 feet deep, you have to pass a small swim test. Entrance to the swimming area is \$7, but worth it for the quality of the lake. Oregon Ridge also has several miles of trails that are good for relaxing on a weekend afternoon. Dogs are welcome, but bicycles are not. There is also a Nature Center with exhibits and colloquia for those interested in natural phenomena. The swimming is available from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

Directions: Take I-695 to I-83 North to Exit 20B (Shawan Road West). Follow Shawan

Road to the first light, Beaver Dam Road, and turn left. Immediately after making the left onto Beaver Dam Road, there will be a fork in the road. Take the right fork. Follow the driveway to the parking lot.

Patapsco Valley State Park: This park, now infamous for being the site of the filming of *The Blair Witch Project*, is a vast expanse of land surrounding the Patapsco River and the now-defunct Baltimore and Ohio railway that runs along it. The park is comprised of five separate areas (with separate entrances) that are very different in nature. The Avalon/Glen Artney/Orange Grove areas and the Hilton area are the oldest parts of the park, and are full of trails that are well suited for hikers, mountain bikers, and horseback riding. This part of the park, the closest to Baltimore city, also features picnic areas, fishing, and canoeing, as well as historical sites. The Hollofield Area, where the park headquarters is located, has a number of campsites and picnicking facilities, but is more limited in the trails that it offers. The Pickall Area is most appropriate for large group gatherings that require picnic pavilions, ballfields, and playgrounds. The McKeldin Area, the farthest from Baltimore, contains the Trail of the Medicine Tree along which some of the natural history of the area is explained, as well as camping, fishing, hiking, and equestrian trails. Day use of the parks is \$2 per adult, but once you've paid the entrance fee, you can go to any of the other areas of the park.

Directions to Avalon/Glen Artney/Orange Grove: Take I-95 or MD 295 (the Baltimore-Washington Parkway) to I-195. Take the exit for Rt. 1 South. After turning onto Rt. 1, make an immediate right onto South Rd, where you will see the entrance for the park.

Directions to Hilton: Take Rt. 40 West past the Beltway (or take the Beltway to Rt. 40 west). Turn left on Rolling Road, and continue until it intersects Frederick Road. Turn left on Frederick Rd (MD-144), and go a very short distance to the intersection with Hilton Ave. Turn right on Hilton Ave, which goes into the park.

Directions to Hollofield: Take Rt. 40 West past the Beltway (or take the Beltway to Rt. 40 west). The entrance to the park is off Rt. 40, just after all the strip malls end.

Directions to Pickall: Take Rt. 40 West past the Beltway. Turn right on Rolling Road and left on Fairbrook Road, which turns into Johnnycake Road. Follow Johnnycake Road into the park.

Directions to McKeldin: Take I-695 to exit 18 for Liberty Road (MD-26). Take Liberty Road west to Kings Point Road. Turn left on Kings Point, which becomes Marriottsville Road. This road goes to the entrance of the park.

Robert E. Lee Park/Lake Roland: This suburban wild area has something for everyone. There is fishing for a variety of fish, and for those who would rather eat, there are several large picnic shelters. Miles of wooded trail along a defunct rail line provide space for walking, running, or mountain biking for every level, from easy trails to a precipitous, tree-choked single track. If you have a boat of some sort, Lake Roland, which the park wraps around, will provide an entertaining hour or two of paddling. Nice sandy swimming holes can be found a few miles up the trail where it crosses the Jones Falls. Dogs are especially welcome and prevalent at the picnic area near the dam.

Directions: Take Roland Ave. north until it bears left into Lake. Go down the hill past Boys Latin and take a right on Falls Rd. Immediately take another right and go down the hill under the bridge. Look for a sign. It is only four to five miles from Homewood, an easy bike ride.

Rocks State Park: This is a good spot for picnicking, hiking, and rock climbing. It's located just 30 miles north of Baltimore and is named after soaring rock outcroppings called the King and Queen Seat, which provide impressive views. Swimming is also allowed in the creeks and ponds in the park.

Directions: The park is located at 3318 Rocks Chrome Hill Rd. in Harford County, about 30 miles north of Baltimore and 8 miles northwest of Bel Air on MD Rte. 24. Take I-95 to exit 77 for MD Rt. 24.

Sandy Point State Park: This is the closest real beach to Baltimore (one hour). Located under the impressive span of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge, it features everything you would expect from a beach except crashing surf. You can rent a boat or swim in the tightly controlled area protected by zealous lifeguards. There are also some walking trails that are good for bird watching. The entry fee is \$5 per person in peak season and \$3 per car in off season.

Directions: Take I-95 to I-695 east to I-97. I-97 will become US 50/301 East. Look for signs for the park before crossing the bridge.

Shenandoah National Park: Located in northwestern Virginia, Shenandoah is one of the closest of the best national parks. The 105-mile Skyline Drive, which runs through the entire length of the park, has many spectacular views of the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Shenandoah River valley. For those interested in exploring on foot, Shenandoah offers a fascinating variety of terrains, including mountains, forests, waterfalls, rock scrambles, and meadows. In spring and early summer, the park is famous for its wildflowers. Hikes range from short, pleasant 1-mile loops to the Appalachian Trail, which can be used to hike the whole length of the park. Several developed areas and campsites along Skyline Drive provide goods and services.

Directions: Take 95 South to 495 West, the Washington Beltway. Take Exit 49 for I-66 West. Take I-66 for about 55 miles to Exit 6, Route 340 in Front Royal, VA. Follow signs to the park.

Sugarloaf Mountain: Sugarloaf is something of a geographical oddity, considering that it's a mountain that rises over 1200 ft. despite being

surrounded on all sides by flat farmland. Sugarloaf Mountain is a privately owned property that is open to the public free of charge. There are several trails, ranging from a strenuous quarter-mile hike to the summit from a parking lot halfway up the mountain, to a moderate-to-difficult 7-mile loop that can be combined with one of the summit hikes so you can have the feeling of having hiked up a mountain. Mountain biking and horses are allowed on the yellow-blazed Saddleback Horse trail on the weekends all year and during the week in the summer.

Directions: From I-70 get off at Exit 62 and turn left onto Rt 75. Follow Rt 75 to Hyattstown. Once Rt 75 ends at the edge of Hyattstown, turn left and go to the center of this village. Turn right at the light onto Rt 109. Follow 109 for about 3 miles to the Comus Inn on the right. Turn right onto Comus Road. Follow this to the base of Sugarloaf Mountain. You can park right at the entrance to pick up the yellow trail, or follow the road up most of the way to the summit to park at the East or West lots.

Susquehanna State Park: This Harford County park lines the Susquehanna River on its western bank. About 15 miles of trails open to hikers, mountain bikers, and horseback riders wind through the park. It is worth getting a trail map before starting out, since it can be difficult to figure out how the trails connect and where they begin and end. (Trail maps can be ordered from the MD State Parks website). One

of the more notable trails is the 6-mile Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenways trail, which goes from Conowingo Dam to Lapidum Road. The trail is lined with gravel on the northern section, then becomes a dirt path as it moves along the banks of the Susquehanna, and finally turns into the park's Susquehanna Ridge Trail. The Heritage Greenways Trail is also part of the Mason-Dixon Trail, which goes from Whiskey Springs on the Appalachian Trail in Cumberland County, PA, through Maryland and Delaware, and loops back to Chadd's Ford, PA.

Directions: Take I-95 north to Exit 89, MD Rt. 155. Follow signs to the park. In the summer, it costs \$2 to park in the picnic area lot, and other areas are free. Most trails begin either in the picnic area or around the parking lot at the Rock Run Historic Area.

General Information

National Park Service, www.nps.gov

Maryland State Parks, www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands

Maryland Greenways (includes B&A and NCRR trails), www.dnr.state.md.us/greenways/statewidetrails.html

Baltimore City Parks, www.ci.baltimore.md.us/government/recnparks

Baltimore County Parks, www.co.ba.md.us/Agencies/recreation

Individual Parks

Appalachian Trail, 304-535-6331, www.nps.gov/appa/

Assateague Island National Seashore, 410-641-1441, www.nps.gov/asis/

Assateague State Park, 410-641-2120, www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/eastern/assateague.html

Baltimore & Annapolis Trail, 410-222-6244, www.dnr.state.md.us/greenways/b&a_trail.html

Baltimore Zoo, 410-366-LION, www.baltimorezoo.org

C&O Canal National Park, 301-739-4200, www.nps.gov/choh

Catoctin Mountain Park, 301-663-9388, www.nps.gov/cato

Cunningham Falls State Park, 301-271-7574, www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/western/cunninghamfalls.html

Cylburn Arboretum, 410-396-0180, www.cylburnassociation.org

Druid Hill Park, 410-396-6106

Druid Hill Park Swimming Pool, 410-396-6477

Gambrill State Park, 301-271-7574, www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/western/gambrill.html

Great Falls of the Potomac, 703-285-2965, www.nps.gov/grfa

Gunpowder Falls State Park, 410-592-2897, www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/central/gunpowder.html

Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park, 410-396-0440

Harpers Ferry National Park, 304-535-6298, www.nps.gov/hafe

Herring Run Park, 410-396-6101

Longwood Gardens, 610-388-1000, www.longwoodgardens.org

North Central Railroad Trail, 410-592-2897, www.dnr.state.md.us/greenways/ncrt_trail.html

Oregon Ridge Nature Center, 410-887-1815

Patapsco Valley State Park, 410-461-5005, www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/central/patapscovalley.html

Rocks State Park, 410-557-7994, www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/central/rocks.html

Sandy Point State Park, 410-974-2149, www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/southern/sandypoint.html

Shenandoah National Park, 540-999-3500, www.nps.gov/shen

Sugarloaf Mountain, 301-874-2024 or 301-869-7846, www.sugarloafmd.com

Susquehanna State Park, 410-557-7994, www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/central/susquehanna.html

■ Other places to go

Historical Interest

Being both one of the original thirteen states and a border state during the Civil War era has infused Maryland with an interesting mix of Northern and Southern attitudes. Many of you may not remember that slavery was legal in Maryland, and many residents of the state

supported the recognition of the Confederacy. Today, remnants of these sentiments are visible in the form of statues celebrating Robert E. Lee (on Art Museum Drive) and the achievements of Confederate women (at the corner of N. Charles and University Parkway).

Other aspects of Maryland's history are remembered through more substantial monuments. At the entrance to Baltimore Harbor sits **Fort McHenry**, a National Monument, historic shrine, and participant in several American wars. In fact, "The Star Spangled Banner" was written from the harbor looking towards the Fort during an attack on American soldiers by the British in 1814. Though currently without either bombs bursting in air or rockets' red glare, it is well worth the \$5 admission charge for a tour of the battlements, and is a very pleasant grassy place for wandering by the water or exploring the fort, cannons, small museum, and restored buildings. The park rangers who conduct the tours are knowledgeable and entertaining. The perimeter of the fort is free of charge, and is an excellent site for picnicking or taking a walk on the paved path around the fort. Sometimes you can see one of the largest flags in the world flying from the main flagpole. Fort McHenry can be reached by road or, the preferred route, by water taxi from the Inner Harbor during tourist season (\$6 to ride all day).

Another repository of local history is the **Greenmount Cemetery**. Located directly south of North Ave. and east of Greenmount Ave., the cemetery is home to many old grave

sites of the rich and (in)famous, including that of John Wilkes Booth.

Other places of historical note include **Great Falls** in Virginia, where the ruins of a 1790s canal and town can be seen. **Harpers Ferry**, West Virginia, was the site of John Brown's attempted insurrection in 1859 and has been maintained in a mostly period condition. Philadelphia and Washington D.C. are also rich with historic sites and museums.

Half an hour west of Philadelphia is **Valley Forge**, a large historical park where George Washington and the Continental Army wintered during the Revolutionary War. There are cannons, reconstructed cabins, monuments and, of course, interpretive signs.

If you are a Civil War buff, several major battlefields lie just a few hours away. **Antietam** is about an hour and a half west of Baltimore, one mile north of Sharpsburg, MD, on Rte. 65. **Monocacy** is about an hour away, in Frederick, MD, and **Manassas/ Bull Run** is just across the Potomac outside Washington, about 90 minutes away. Farther afield in Pennsylvania is **Gettysburg**, site of Lincoln's famous address.

Towns and Cities

Annapolis: This is a nice place to spend a relaxing autumn afternoon. The state capital is known for its 18th-century buildings, one of the oldest colleges in the U.S., and a picturesque harbor. Both **St. Johns College** and the **US Naval Academy** are located in Annapolis, and both have pretty grounds for walking. If you like big sports events, the Naval Academy has many excellent athletic teams (that typically generate more interest than sports teams at Hopkins). There are a number of shops, pubs, and restaurants as well. Locations of particular interest are the **Maryland State House** and the 18th-century **William Paca House and**

Garden.

Eastern Shore: The Maryland Eastern Shore seems as if it can't possibly be part of the same state that houses the urban grit of Baltimore or the posh Montgomery county suburbs. The Eastern Shore is rural and sparsely populated, but it contains some of the most interesting places in the state. The Atlantic Ocean side of the shore is home to the tacky tourist haven known as **Ocean City**. With a boardwalk, miles of beach, cheap hotels, and tens of thousands of tourists, Ocean City is the place for the typical family beach vacation. The beaches in

Delaware just north of Ocean City are often less overrun and provide more privacy.

The Chesapeake side of the Eastern Shore, while less gaudy, is also home to a number of towns that attract a fair number of tourists in the summer. **St. Michael's** and **Tilghman Island** are quaint towns located on a tiny peninsula that juts out into the Chesapeake near Easton, MD. St. Michael's is known for its many bed and breakfasts, expensive restaurants, and artsy shops that line the town's main street. During the summer, the town is in full swing, although the off-season is disappointingly slow.

Also located in the Chesapeake and accessible from the Eastern Shore is **Smith Island**. Due to its isolation from the mainland, Smith Island residents retain curious speech mannerisms that are unlike any accent heard in other parts of the state. Smith Island is also known for its own cuisine and superb seafood. The island can only be accessed by a ferry from Crisfield, MD, which runs more frequently in the summer than in the winter.

Harpers Ferry: This quaint town located at the corner where Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland meet, has many attractions for a day trip or weekend get-away. Cobblestone streets wander through the old historic district where you can learn more about John Brown's significant, though unsuccessful, rebellion. On top of the hill is an old cemetery with gravestones dating from the 18th century. The C&O Canal also comes through on the Maryland side of the river and, as always, provides walking, biking, and other outdoor activities.

Directions: Take I-70 west from Baltimore to Frederick. Bear SW on US-340 crossing one bridge into Virginia and then another into West Virginia. The visitors' center is located several miles out of town and runs regular shuttle buses into town. Parking in town is also available. Travel time: 1 hour. You can also take the MARC train to Harpers Ferry, but you have to start in Washington, D.C.

Philadelphia: Although somewhat harder to

Antietam, 301-432-5124, www.nps.gov/anti/

Fort McHenry, 410-962-4290, www.nps.gov/fomc

Gettysburg, 717-334-1124, www.nps.gov/gett

Harpers Ferry National Park, 304-535-6298, www.nps.gov/hafe

Independence Hall, 215-597-8974, www.nps.gov/inde

Manassas / Bull Run, 703-361-1339, www.nps.gov/mana

Monocacy, 301-662-3515, www.nps.gov/mono

Valley Forge, 610-783-1077, www.nps.gov/vafo

access without a car than downtown Baltimore or Washington, DC, Philadelphia is well worth a trip during your days in Baltimore. Of historical interest are **Independence Hall**, the **Liberty Bell**, and the houses of **Betsy Ross** (where she sewed the first American flag) and **Benjamin Franklin** (where he flew the kite and discovered lightning). South Street provides some of the more eclectic shopping and dining experiences in the city, including several Philly cheesesteak vendors, as well as a number of good theaters and clubs. There are also many colorful street vendors and several good used book stores. The **Philadelphia Art Museum**, well known to fans of the *Rocky* movies, and the **Franklin Institute** are both worth a visit. If you're not too squeamish, drop by the **Mutter Museum of Medical Oddities**, a bizarre collection of human remains illustrating the true meaning and range of the word 'grotesque.'

Washington D.C.

Washington, D.C. is the big city to escape to when you start thinking there must be something out there beyond Baltimore. Being the seat of the federal government, Washington not only makes a point to be aesthetically inviting but also contains plenty of attractions to fill up a day. There are national monuments to see, museums to visit, and buildings to tour. If you'd rather go at night, Washington is filled with hip bars and restaurants, mostly in the Northwest section of the city. For weekly information on what's going on in DC, you can access the **Washington City Paper** online at www.washingtoncitypaper.com, or buy Friday's *Washington Post* (www.washingtonpost.com).

The museum list is topped by the many museums that are part of the Smithsonian Institution. They are free and can occupy you for quite a while. If you've never been to Washington before, start with the museums lining the Mall. The **Air and Space Museum** contains a lot of information about the history of international aviation and space travel. It has also recently opened a new branch in Virginia, the **Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center**. It hosts the more space-hogging and yet more eye-opening aviation artifacts such as Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird, the fastest jet in the world and the Boeing B-29 Superfortress Enola Gay which was used for throwing A-bombs in 1945. The center is right next to the Dulles Airport of Washington D.C. The **Museum of Natural History** contains exhibits not only about animals, dinosaurs, and fossils, but focusing on world cultures as well. One of the most interesting is the **Museum of American History**, which displays both George and Martha Washington's china collection as well as Dorothy's ruby slippers from *The Wizard of Oz*. This is only a handful of the museums just on or near the Mall; for more extensive information on Smithsonian Museums, visit www.si.edu. Also on the Mall is the **National Gallery of Art**, which houses some of the most famous paintings in the world. Information on exhibits can be found at www.nga.gov.

Other important museums include the **Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden** for modern and contemporary art with frequent changes of exhibitions, the **Freer Gallery of Art** for a top-notch collection of Asian art, **National Museum of African Art** for ceramics, textiles, furniture (and masks!) from Africa, and the **National Museum of the American Indian** for exhibition of the living cultures and history of the native peoples of the Americas.

Off the Mall, the **Holocaust Museum** is intense and moving. Tickets are free but are assigned a specific entrance time, so you may need to arrive early and then come back for your time. Or, you can call (800) 400-9373 to reserve tickets in advance. At either end of the Mall, is the **U.S. Capitol** or the **Lincoln Memorial**. Other memorials include the famous **Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall**, the **Korean War Memorial**, the **Jefferson Memorial**, the **World War II Memorial** and the riveting **Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial**. The **Washington Monument** stands 555 feet tall and offers a spectacular view of DC. You can also take tours of the **Capitol**. After 9/11, tours to the **White House** need to be reserved months (if not years) ahead. You need to contact your congressman, whose contact info you can find through www.house.gov. The **National Zoo**, home to a host of exotic creatures, is located at the Woodley Park-Zoo Metro stop and, being a branch of the Smithsonian, is also free.

The most impressive art museums other than the Smithsonian Institution galleries include the **Corcoran Gallery** (www.corcoran.org) and the **Phillips Collection** (www.phillipscollection.org). Both often have unique exhibits that you won't see anywhere else in the region.

If you're planning on getting in an afternoon of power-shopping in Georgetown, you might also consider a stroll around the pretty, pocket-size garden of the **Old Stone House** on M Street or the vastly larger, elegantly landscaped grounds of **Dumbarton Oaks**, an estate that now be-

longs to Harvard. (The latter charges \$6 for admission.) The **C&O Canal Towpath**, along Georgetown's bottom edge, is also pleasant for picnicking, or you can rent a canoe for a lazy paddle.

Other DC neighborhoods that merit a visit are **Dupont Circle** (located at the intersections of Connecticut and New Hampshire Avenues) and **Adams-Morgan** (the neighborhood centered around the intersection of 18th Street and Columbia Road). Along Connecticut Ave. in Dupont Circle are a number of trendy bookstores, music shops, hair salons, and restaurants that can easily occupy a few hours. Adams-Morgan has traditionally been considered a diverse neighborhood offering many different ethnic stores and restaurants. It is also full of bars, making it one of the more popular nightlife sections of the city. On weekend mornings, **Eastern Market** is a lively food market/flea market/bazaar located at North Carolina Avenue and 7th Street SE on Capitol Hill, the residential neighborhood immediately east of the U.S. Capitol. Here, you can find both an extensive farmers' market and a large number of vendors selling everything from the unique to the trashy.

Unlike subways in many cities, the DC Metro is actually efficient, fast, clean, and pleasant to

ride. The cost is \$1.20 between most downtown stops. Just don't be caught with food or drink in the stations or on the trains, as this is punishable by a stiff fine for reasons unknown to all. While DC does have one of the highest crime rates in the nation, the touristy areas are pretty safe, especially during the day.

In addition to taking MARC or Amtrak trains to Washington D.C. (see page ?), if you have a car but do not want to drive it into the city, you can use the Park & Ride option. One option is to park at either the Forest Glen or Wheaton stations on the Red Line of the Metro. Parking is free on weekends. To reach the Forest Glen lot, take 95 south to west 495 (the outer loop). Go a few miles on 495 to Georgia Ave. Take Georgia Ave. north, then take the first left (only one block down) onto Forest Glen Rd. More parking is available at Wheaton, which is several blocks further up the road on Georgia Ave. More information about public transportation in D.C. can be found at www.wmata.com.

American Art Museum, Main building is closed for renovation until July 2006. Renwick

Gallery is open and located at Pennsylvania Ave. and 17th St., NW, Washington D.C., 202-633-2850, www.americanart.si.edu

The Anacostia Museum & Center for African American History and Culture, 1901 Fort Place, SE, Washington D.C., 202-287-3306, www.anacostia.si.edu

Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia, 703-607-8000, www.arlingtoncemetery.org

Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, 1050 Independence Ave., SW, Washington D.C., 202-633-4880, www.asia.si.edu

Bureau of Engraving and Printing, 14th and C St., SW, Washington D.C., 202-874-3019, www.moneyfactory.com

Corcoran Gallery of Art, 500 17th St., NW, Washington D.C., 202-639-1700, www.corcoran.org

Dumbarton Oaks, 1703 32nd St., NW, Washington D.C., 202-339-6401, www.doaks.org

FBI Headquarters, J. Edgar Hoover Building, 935 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington D.C., 202-324-3000, www.fbi.gov

FDR Memorial, West Basin Dr., near the Tidal Basin, Washington D.C., 202-426-6841, www.nps.gov/frde

Ford's Theater, 511 10th St., NW, Wash-

ington D.C., 202-426-6924, www.nps.gov/foth

Freer Gallery of Art, Jefferson Dr. and 12th St., SW, Washington D.C., 202-633-4880, www.asis.si.edu

Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden, Independence Ave. and 7th St., SW, Washington D.C., 202-357-2700, www.hirshhorn.si.edu

International Spy Museum, 800 F. St., NW, Washington D.C., 202-393-7798, www.spymuseum.org

Jefferson Memorial, East Basin Dr., SW, Tidal Basin, Washington D.C., 202-426-6841, www.nps.gov/thje

Library of Congress, 101 Independence Ave., SE, Washington D.C., 202-707-5000, www.loc.gov

Lincoln Memorial, 23rd St., NW, between Constitution and Independence Aves., Washington D.C., 202-426-6841, www.nps.gov/linc

National Air and Space Museum, Independence Ave. and 4th St., SW, Washington D.C., 202-357-2700, www.nasm.si.edu

National Archives and Records Administration, 700 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington D.C., 1-866-272-6272, www.archives.gov

National Building Museum, 401 F. St., NW, Washington D.C., 202-272-2448, www.nbm.org

National Gallery of Art, Between 3rd and 9th Sts. at Constitution Ave., NW, Washington D.C., 202-737-4215, www.nga.gov

National Museum of African Art, 950 Independence Ave., SW, Washington D.C., 202-633-4600, www.nmafa.si.edu

National Museum of American History, 14th St. and Constitution Ave., NW, Wash-

ington D.C., 202-633-1000, www.americanhistory.si.edu

National Museum of the American Indian, 4th St. and Independence Ave., SW, Washington D.C., 202-633-1000, www.nmai.si.edu

National Museum of Natural History, 10th St. and Constitution Ave., NW, Washington D.C., 202-357-2700, www.mnh.si.edu

National Museum of Women in the Arts, 1250 New York Ave., NW, Washington D.C., 202-783-5000, www.nmwa.org

National Portrait Gallery, 8th And F Sts., NW, Washington D.C., 202-275-1738, www.npg.si.edu

National Postal Museum, 2 Massachusetts Ave., NE, Washington D.C., 202-633-5555, www.postalmuseum.si.edu

National Zoological Park, 3001 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington D.C., 202-673-4800, www.natzo.si.edu

Phillips Collection, 1600 21st St., NW, Washington D.C., 202-387-2151, www.phillipscollection.org

Supreme Court, 1st St., NE and Maryland Ave., Washington D.C., 202-479-3211, www.supremecourtus.gov

Union Station, 50 Massachusetts Ave., NE, Washington D.C., 202-289-1908, www.unionstationdc.com

United States Capitol, Capitol Hill, east end of the Mall, Washington D.C., 202-225-6827, www.aoc.gov

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Pl., SW, Washington D.C., 202-488-0400, www.ushmm.org

Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Beacon Dr. and Constitution Ave., Washington D.C.,