

# Hola Honeymoon!

by Laura Sandoval



Washington, DC, also known as the District of Columbia, is our fine nation's capital. It is located on the Potomac River, only a 68 mile stretch between Maryland and Virginia on our country's east coast. Founded in 1791, this historic landmark is not only educational, but very inspiring! Spring will be the best time to visit with the iconic cherry blossoms blooming in March and April, but its also the busiest. Almost 20 million people visit each year in a city that grows to almost 300,000 people per day with local commuters from surrounding areas. DC is full of rich history, recognizable buildings, monuments, and tons to eat, see, and enjoy. You and your new partner will have a restored love for the history of our country.

Washington, DC is federally owned land and not technically considered one of the 50 states. It is the capital of our nation and home to the US Capitol building, where our legislature meets. Capitol Hill is considered the neighborhood and worth exploring, along with other famous neighborhoods, Georgetown and DuPont Circle. If you are flying in, consider *not* renting a car,

and instead, researching the website for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, [www.mta.com](http://www.mta.com). Use their trip planner for useful directions, train, bus, and walking routes with pricing and estimated travel times. Traffic is real in this area and can be quite devastating if you do not plan ahead. No one wants to be stuck in traffic on vacation. Also, parking rates can add up quickly, being well over \$20 a day on average. Looking for places to stay can be done through your favorite booking site or rewards program but consider checking out [www.washington.org](http://www.washington.org). They have hotels and bed and breakfasts of different categories to fit your budget and style. The W Hotel is in the center of where you want to be and has a rooftop patio that lets you peak into the White House's property with rumored sniper sightings. You can walk or rideshare almost everywhere else, but break in those shoes ahead of time as you will walk a lot.

You must visit the Washington Monument which is 555 feet tall and the world's tallest, completely stone building. It is on The National Mall, which is an open area lined with monuments and memorials and

ends with the Lincoln Memorial. Bring a jacket and check the weather forecast as weather changes quickly and drastically. Sign up for a White House garden tour. Its free, but you have to get in line early to make your reservation and then come back during your scheduled time. George Washington's home, Mount Vernon is about 45 minutes by car or just over an hour by public transportation, but well worth the visit. You can tour the home, visit the distillery, and have a nice lunch on site. Depending on the length of your trip, select a few museums to visit and give yourself extra hours at each. You will get lost in the stories, history, and find connections everywhere you go! Many unique theories and legends can be learned about DC before you go. The Masonic connection is one that you cannot ignore and ties in the location of the Pentagon and many past presidents, dates, and conspiracy theories. Favorite museums would be The Smithsonian and Holocaust Museum but be sure to visit the National Gallery of Art and The National Museum of Women in the Arts next time.

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Washington, DC is a foodie's dream! There are so many wonderful places to dine that you will be overwhelmed with choices. Make a few reservations for those you must visit and then let spontaneity do the rest. Old Ebbitt Grill is the oldest saloon in the area and many famous people have dined and stayed there. MXDC is a Todd English restaurant and brings even more creativity to Mexican food and tequilas. There is a whole slew of Michelin-Starred restaurants if that is your thing, or stop by Union Market, DC's hippest urban market where you can eat, drink, shop, and attend events daily.

Washington, DC is also home to many major sports teams to catch a baseball, hockey, soccer, or football game. You can walk the Spanish Steps and take some pretty photos in this romantic area or go on a scavenger hunt of the vibrant murals by walking down Blagden Alley in the Shaw neighborhood. There are many festivals and events year round, but if you are lucky to visit during spring, The National Cherry Blossom Festival is city-wide celebrating the gift of 3,000 cherry blossom trees to Washington, DC by the mayor of Tokyo in 1912.

The District of Columbia is full of history, while constantly growing and changing. Staying true to our past, but embracing our future, Washington, DC is one place you must visit. A good foundation for your marriage starts with an understanding of the heartbeat of our country, and our country's capital is where we remember and celebrate our home, the United States of America. This excursion will not disappoint and is much more than a history field trip, I promise!

**DON'T FORGET:**

- Comfortable shoes: my feet and hips hurt from walking so much!
- Plan ahead: attractions may be open only on certain days or times of year.
- Do your research before you go: There are so many things to do and see, so narrow down that wish list to make the most of your honeymoon!



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