



# PATRIOT'S TOUR

Summer is the perfect time to visit three history-steeped cities that played a starring role in our nation's founding

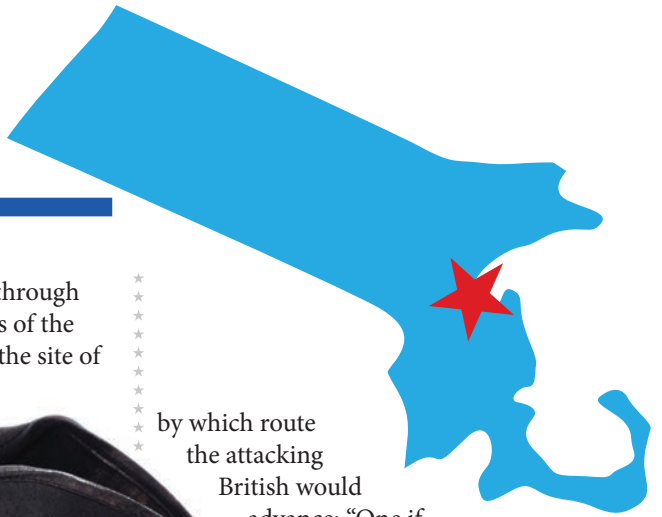
BY SARAH ACHENBACH

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While important historical events unfolded all over the 50 United States, a trip to the Big Three—Boston, Philadelphia and Williamsburg—is key to fully understand the “how and why” of the country's founding. Shake off those memories of your childhood visits to musty, no-touching-allowed historic sites. Today's would-be patriots can jump into the stories of the American Revolution through interactive tours, multimedia magic and hands-on history for learning and fun they won't soon forget.



# BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS



**THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION BEGAN** in Boston, so start your tour by getting riled up Revolutionary-style at the **Boston Tea Party Ships and Museum** ([bostonteapartyship.com](http://bostonteapartyship.com)). Cheer at a Colonial town meeting and then witness the events leading up to Dec. 16, 1773—the night the Sons of Liberty dumped tea into the Boston Harbor—in high-tech, holographic splendor by watching the museum’s state-of-the-art film. Then it’s time to dump “bales” of tea overboard from replica ships.

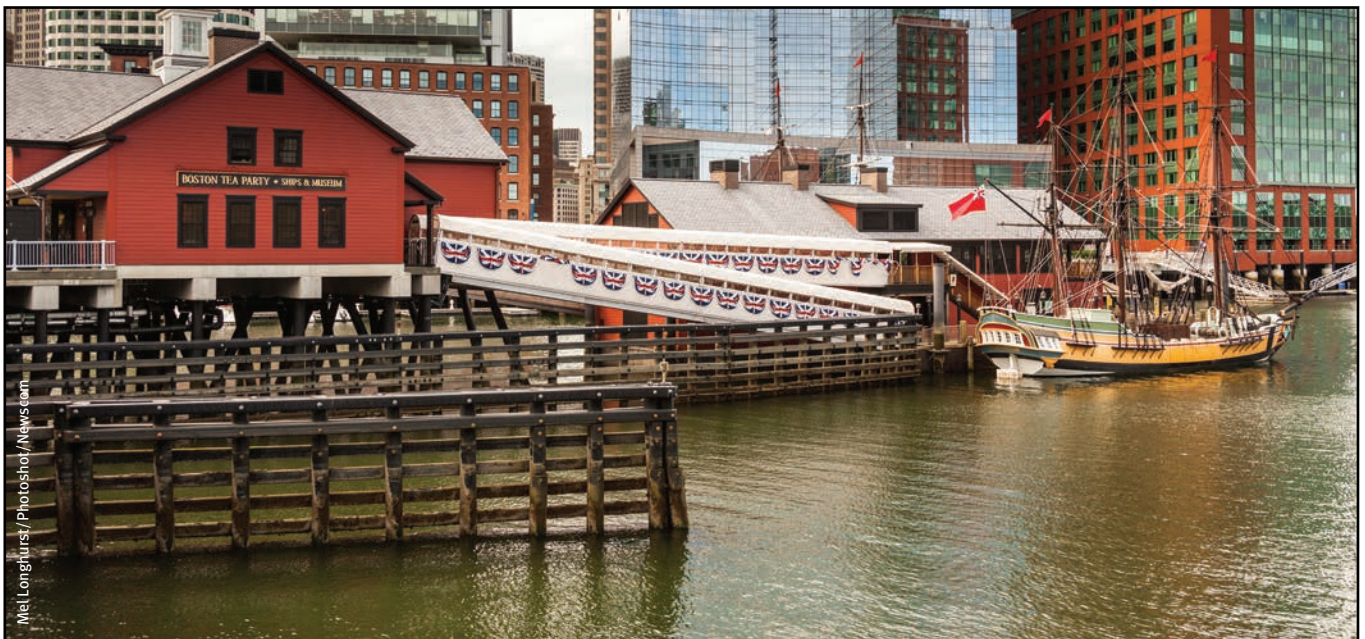
To get the full flavor of the city, walk through history on the **Freedom Trail**, a meandering 2.5-mile stroll that connects 16 historically significant sites. To get the full effect, pony up the money for a public or private tour: An 18th-century costumed Freedom Trail

★ Player will lead your family through the events, stories and heroes of the American Revolution, from the site of



★ the **1770 Boston Massacre** (where five colonists famously died, arguably the first fatalities of the Revolutionary War); ★ to the **Old North Church** (where lanterns were hung to signal when and

★ by which route the attacking British would advance: “One if by land; two if by sea”); and the **Paul Revere House**, home of the “Son of Liberty” who made the midnight ride to Lexington to warn that the British were coming. It’s worth noting that the house is the birthplace of another American original: the Mary Jane candy, which has been made on-site for decades by the Charles N. Miller Company. (Sweeten the historical connection by telling your kids that Revere sometimes practiced



## BOSTON TEA PARTY SHIPS AND MUSEUM

The Boston Tea Party Museum features a replica of *Eleanor*, an original Boston Tea Party ship. *Eleanor* was one of several vessels owned by leading Boston merchant, smuggler, and Boston Board of Selectman John Rowe. He was so angered by British policy that he was influential in inciting the destruction of his own cargo aboard his ship.



## FREEDOM TRAIL

Left to right: Freedom Trail Players in front of the Old State House, an official Freedom Trail Historic Site; Copp's Hill Burying Ground is the second-oldest burying ground in the city; a Freedom Trail Player guides tourists through the Granary Burying Ground, where Paul Revere is buried.

as a dentist.) Tours run year-round; you also may walk the Freedom Trail at your own pace by downloading the app at [thefreedomtrail.org](http://thefreedomtrail.org).

To step into the fascinating history of African-Americans' key role in the American Revolution, follow **The Black Heritage Trail**, a free guided or self-guided walking tour of 14 locations of schools, homes, churches and Underground Railroad sites. Many African-Americans



## AFRICAN MEETING HOUSE

fought alongside white colonists in the battles of Bunker Hill and Lexington and Concord, and by the end of the American Revolution, Boston's free blacks outnumbered its slaves. Tours depart from the **Robert Gould Shaw and 54th Massachusetts Regiment Memorial** and end at the nation's first African Meeting House.



## OLD NORTH CHURCH

Built in 1723, the Old North Church, also known as Christ Church in the City of Boston, is Boston's oldest surviving church building and one of its most visited historical sites.

# RED, WHITE AND BLUE ... AND GREEN

**GARDENS AND GREEN SPACES PLAYED KEY ROLES IN THE FOUNDING OF THE UNITED STATES. IT'S EASY BEING GREEN WITH VISITS TO THESE HISTORIC GARDENS AND PARKS.**

**Boston Common**



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**BOSTON COMMON** (139 Tremont St. Boston, Mass.): America's oldest public park was founded in 1634. Its 44 acres in the heart of the city were the grazing site for local livestock. It served as a "trayning field" and eight-year encampment for more than 1,000 Redcoats during British occupation. Over the decades in the Common, Bostonians hung pirates from the now-gone "Great Elm"; enlisted in the Civil War; planted World War I victory gardens; and marched with Martin

Luther King Jr. at an anti-Vietnam War protest. Today, it's perfect for people-watching, picnicking, playing baseball or enjoying the Frog Pond's spray pool in the summer and its ice-skating rink in the winter.

**BARTRAM'S GARDEN** (5400 Lindbergh Boulevard, Phila., Pa.): This 45-acre "living" laboratory and outdoor classroom is less than 15 minutes by car from Center City, Philadelphia, and accessible by public transportation. John Bartram, a self-taught Pennsylvania Quaker and friend of Benjamin Franklin—they co-founded the American Philosophical Society—traveled the colonies and beyond to collect the most varied collection of North American plants in the world. The city took ownership of the garden in 1891, and today the John Bartram Association manages it in cooperation with Philadelphia Parks and Recreation. Open year-round for free, with self-guided tours, ticketed tours with a docent, and programs, Bartram's Gardens is also the perfect place to enjoy another natural Philly resource: the Lower Schuylkill River. Saturdays from July through October, take a free kayak or rowboat ride from the **Bartram's Garden Community Boathouse**.



Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

**Colonial Garden and Nursery**

There are plenty of beautiful, period gardens at **WILLIAMSBURG**. Take a tour, visit the **Colonial Garden and Nursery**, or attend a Meet a Gardener program. But your kids will probably just want to dig in the dirt. Each day, weather permitting, kids ages 5 to 16 may sign up to work alongside Colonial Williamsburg archaeologists excavating the cellar of Archibald Blair's 18th-century store on Duke of Gloucester Street. Sign up at the Colonial Street entrance at 9 a.m.: [colonialwilliamsburg.com/plan/calendar/dig-kids-dirt-discovery](http://colonialwilliamsburg.com/plan/calendar/dig-kids-dirt-discovery).

Bartram's Garden/copyright 2017

**1810 Yellowwood at Bartram's Garden**

# PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

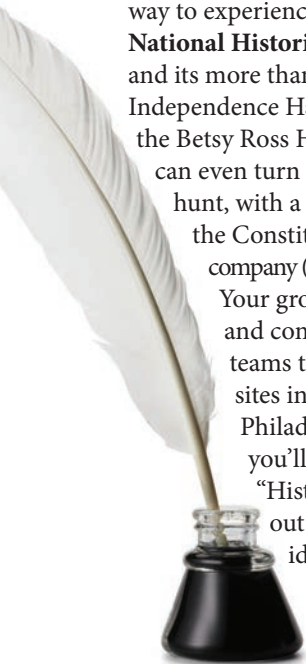


Photo by G. Widman for Visit Philadelphia™

## INDEPENDENCE HALL

**AMERICA'S BIRTHPLACE** is best experienced on foot. The 1.25-mile Constitutional Walking Tour is a great way to experience the **Independence National Historical Park** area and its more than 20 historic sites: Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, the Betsy Ross House and more. You can even turn it into a scavenger hunt, with a reservation through the Constitutional Walking Tour company ([theconstitutional.com](http://theconstitutional.com)). Your group will receive clues and compete against other teams to find answers at sites in and around historic Philadelphia. At the end, you'll meet up with a trained "History Hunter" to find out the results—and ideally win top prize.

High-tech, high-touch elements abound at



Philadelphia's many museums dedicated to preserving our country's founding. Don't miss the **National Constitution Center**, where the most famous words in the United States spring to life. Start your visit there with "Freedom Rising," a live, 360-degree theatrical performance (free with general admission) that tells the story of the U.S. Constitution and the American quest for freedom.

Philadelphia's newest gem, the **Museum of the American Revolution**, opened in April 2017, with 3,000-plus artifacts, manuscripts and more from the Revolutionary period, including



Gen. Washington's Headquarters Tent. Start your journey by exploring a massive, interactive map of the North American continent. Then watch Congress issue the Declaration of Independence from the comfort of your very own Windsor chair in an immersive theater. You can also join the Sons of Liberty under a life-size "Liberty



## THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

The world's only museum dedicated to the U.S. Constitution, the National Constitution Center puts into historical context the most famous four pages ever written through high-tech exhibitions, artifacts and interactive displays. A live narrator narrates the multimedia "Freedom Rising" show, a moving presentation of the nation's story.

Photo by G. Widman for Visit Philadelphia™

"Quill and Inkwell" DNY59/iStock/Getty Images Plus/Getty Images; "Liberty Bell" orderfinishedart/iStock/Getty Images Plus/Getty Images



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## MUSEUM OF AMERICAN REVOLUTION

The museum houses a life-size reproduction of the Boston Liberty Tree, a large elm tree where the first stirrings of revolt were discussed and debated. Liberty Trees became gathering places for the Sons and Daughters of Liberty, groups of men and women who rebelled against British tyranny.

Tree.” And in the panoramic Battlefield Theater, you’ll experience the frenzy of an advancing British infantry charge at the Battle of Brandywine.

Before you leave Philadelphia, be sure to spend time learning about America’s original Renaissance man, Benjamin Franklin. At the **Benjamin Franklin Museum**, explore the man who gave us the bifocal, lightning rod, political cartoon, public library, volunteer firefighter and the postal system—and who co-authored the Declaration of Independence. You can literally trace big Ben’s path with the Franklin’s Footsteps Itinerary, discovering historic places he frequented, sites dedicated to him, and even restaurants that would have appealed to him.

## BENJAMIN FRANKLIN MUSEUM

Franklin Court includes the newly opened Benjamin Franklin Museum and the Ghost Structure, which marks the site of Franklin’s home.

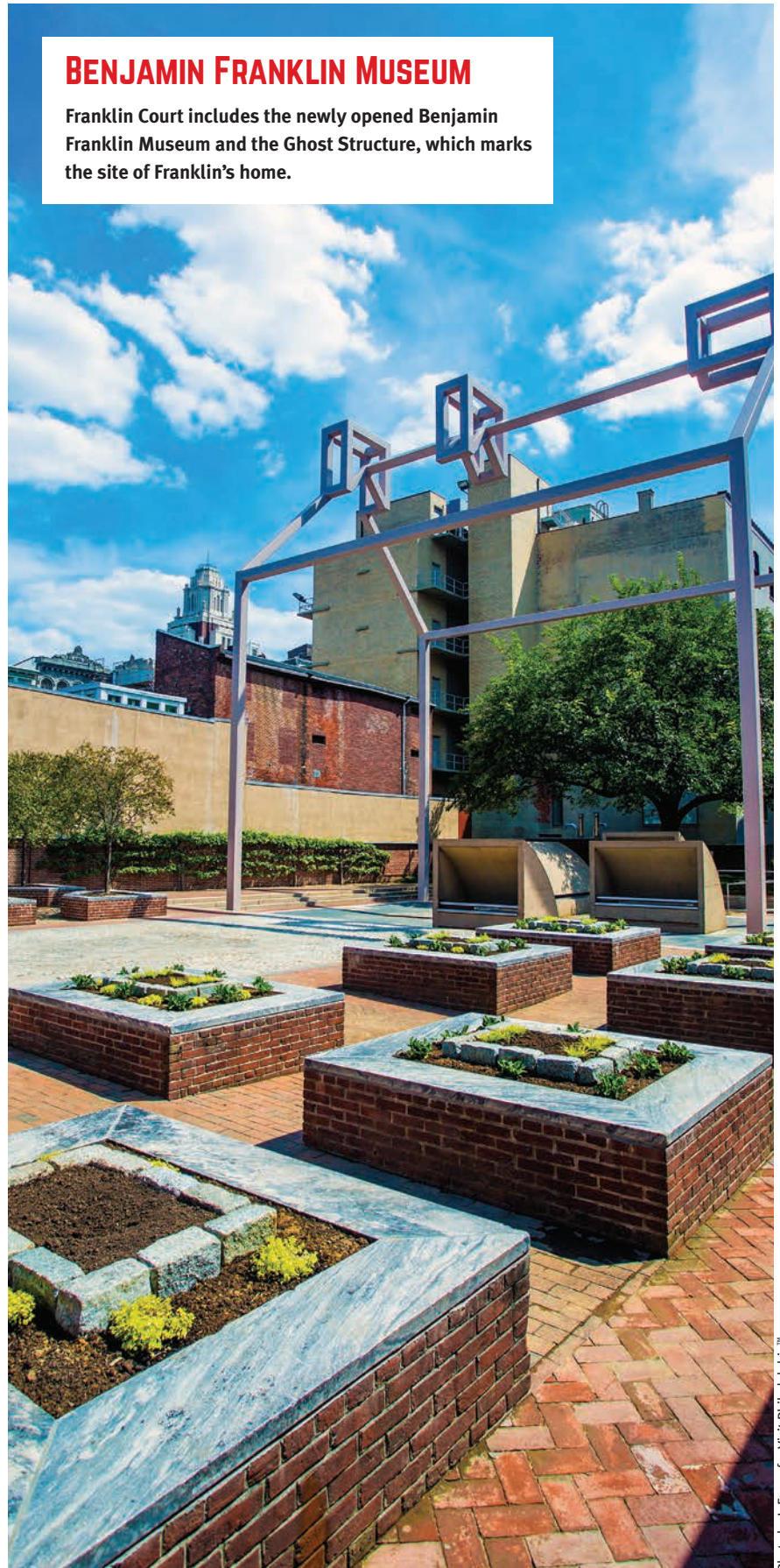


Photo by J. Fusco for Visit Philadelphia™

# REAL OR NOT REAL?

Of the many properties and structures at Colonial Williamsburg, 88 are original. The rest have been painstakingly restored or crafted with period details and techniques. Before you visit, bookmark the list of original structures (research.history.org/research/architecture/buildings/original-buildings). As you traverse the streets of Colonial Williamsburg, ask your kids if they think a building or structure was restored or reconstructed. When Colonial Williamsburg was founded in 1926, restoring an entire town was unprecedented. Architects, designers, historians, archaeologists and craftspeople researched, renovated and reconstructed grand homes as well as commonplace workshops and smokehouses.

## The Market House

Colonial Williamsburg Foundation/David M. Doody

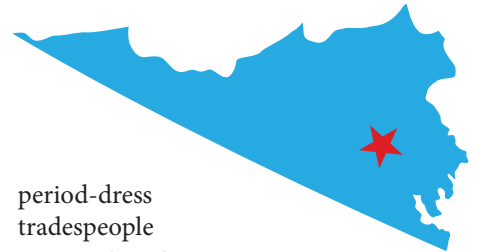


# WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA

## EVERY STEP IN COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG

is a step through history. To ensure that your family's visit is steeped in Colonial times, go digital: The Colonial Williamsburg free, mobile app (colonialwilliamsburg.com/mobile-app) gives real-time updates on interactive programs and tours, and pop-up notifications on where to find the Colonial celebrities that roam the grounds—Martha Washington, Thomas Jefferson and others (including the friendliest of all Williamsburg “re-enactors,” George Washington’s dog, Liberty).

There is a lot to do in the nation’s largest living history museum. Every structure and street is authentic to what life was like in a bustling 18th-century city when Williamsburg was the capital of Virginia. Learning about a Colonial trade is great but don’t try to see every tradesman. Pick a few—the blacksmith, the cooper, the bindery, the munitions shop, whatever interests your family members—and spend time there. The



period-dress tradespeople you meet are true craftspeople working with real 18th-century tools and techniques, and many will let you try your hands at a trade. During the summer, you can even help bricklayers by stomping water into clay with your bare feet.

Immersion is the point of the place where rumblings of freedom from England first stirred. At the recently restored **Market House**, you can pick up some Colonial gossip and rent period costumes. Visit the **James Geddy House** for games, dancing and chores your child will actually want to do. At the **Peyton Randolph House**, meet re-enactors who share the experiences and struggles of the



## JAMES GEDDY HOUSE

The James Geddy House is one of the original buildings in the Historic Area. A unique feature of the house is its L-shape house plan, uncommon in Williamsburg, which may have been adapted to fit the corner location.

Colonial Williamsburg Foundation



## PEYTON RANDOLPH HOUSE

The deep red Peyton Randolph House is one of the oldest, most historic and most beautiful of Colonial Williamsburg's original 18th-century homes.

enslaved people in Colonial America. At **The Magazine**, hear members of the Native American delegation talk about what it was like to be a soldier. And don't miss The Magazine's daily Firing of the Noon Gun and Running of the Engine.

Don't rush back to the hotel at sundown, though. Dinner at a historic tavern is a fun Williamsburg tradition, and two new programs in **Raleigh Tavern** give an extra layer of history. "The Magic Parlour" offers Colonial-era magic tricks, and "Escape the King"

puts you in a locked room with other patriots to solve clues to escape the king's wrath. When the hour is up, a British officer interrogates you. Two ghost walks—one with family-friendly ghost stories; the other where families (with older children) enter haunted properties—add mystery. And in the evening, characters portraying the slaves who lived and worked at **Great Hopes Plantation** share the music and dance of African-American musical culture in Colonial Virginia. ●



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