

Natalie Burclaff and Gina Calia-Lotz

# Explore Baltimore, Hon!

Arts, culture, nature, and sports

Those who have never been to Baltimore may be surprised by the rich and eclectic cultural life present in this city. Oozing with history, local pride, and ethnic diversity, there is truly something for everyone here. A visit to Baltimore's Inner Harbor might include a tour of the Historic Ships, selfies with the colorful crab sculptures, or a picturesque walk to Federal Hill Park. Maryland is often referred to as "America in miniature," making Baltimore, its largest city, a hodgepodge of cultural influences, artistic expressions, and historic institutions. Within the urban setting, you'll also find surprisingly expansive nature preserves and trails. Below is just a sampling of things to do while visiting during the ACRL 2017 conference. Come and find out why Baltimore is nicknamed "Charm City."

## History: Museums, monuments, and landmarks

Baltimore has been called the most northern southern city, and the most southern northern city. Its mid-Atlantic location made it a major port even before the city was founded, led it to play a strategic role in the Civil War, and turned it into the second largest immigrant intake station after Ellis Island.

The city is home to the first Washington Monument, Eubie Blake, Edgar Allan Poe, the Baltimore-Ohio Railroad, *and* "The Star Spangled Banner."

- **B&O Railroad Museum (901 W Pratt St., [www.borail.org/](http://www.borail.org/)).** The B&O Railroad Museum is a national historic landmark, the site of the beginnings of the first commercial long-distance track. The museum is one of the oldest and most comprehensive collections of railroad history in the world. In addition to smaller artifacts like pocket watches and communication devices, see one-of-a-kind locomotives and historic buildings.

- **Baltimore Basilica (409 Cathedral St., <http://americasfirstcathedral.org/>).**

The gorgeous Baltimore Basilica, America's first cathedral built after the signing of the Constitution, is a

15-minute walk from the Convention Center and is open to the public seven days a week, with

guided tours and worship services offered throughout the week.

- **Baltimore Museum of Industry (1415 Key Highway, [www.thebmi.org/](http://www.thebmi.org/)).** Experience Baltimore's past as a bustling port city during the industrial revolution through re-created spaces, including a gar-

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ment loft and machine shop. The collections include tools and machinery, transportation artifacts, and Baltimorean inventions and innovations.

- **Edgar Allan Poe House (203 N. Amity St., [www.poeinbaltimore.org/poe-house/](http://www.poeinbaltimore.org/poe-house/)).** Edgar Allan Poe, famous for his macabre poetry and short stories, spent part of his life in Baltimore, and although he eventually moved to Virginia, it was during a visit back to Baltimore when he mysteriously passed away. He is buried in the Westminster Burying Grounds at Fayette and Greene Streets. The Poe House, which offers an exhibit and tours, is open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



*USS Constellation at the Inner Harbor.* Photo credit: daveynin ([www.flickr.com/photos/daveynin/5248111576/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/daveynin/5248111576/)), CC BY 2.0.

- **Fort McHenry (2400 E. Fort Ave., [www.nps.gov/fomc/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/fomc/index.htm)).** Explore the War of 1812 at Fort McHenry, where Francis Scott Key famously penned the poem that would become our national anthem, “The Star Spangled Banner.” You can take a self-guided tour through the museum and fort. Check their online calendar for special talks and reenactments.

- **Geppi’s Entertainment Museum (301 W. Camden St., [www.geppismuseum.com/](http://www.geppismuseum.com/)).** Love a good superhero story? Geppi’s Entertainment Museum has 6,000 pop culture artifacts, from the 1700s to present day, on display, from comics to toys to memorabilia. It’s located in Camden Station at Camden Yards.

- **Historic Ships (Pier 1 301 E Pratt St., [www.historicships.org/](http://www.historicships.org/)).** Baltimore’s In-

ner Harbor is home to the *USS Constellation*, the *US Submarine Torsk*, the *US Coast Guard Cutter Taney*, and the *Lightship Chesapeake*, along Piers 1, 3, and 5. Tickets are based on how many ships you plan to visit. Admission to the Seven Foot Knoll Lighthouse is free.

- **Maryland Historical Society Museum and Library (201 W. Monument St., [www.mdhs.org](http://www.mdhs.org)).** The Maryland Historical Society has an impressive collection of Maryland cultural artifacts, many of which are on display in their museum.

Experience centuries of Maryland life in rotating exhibitions.

- **The National Great Blacks in Wax Museum (1601 E. North Ave., [www.greatblacksinwax.org](http://www.greatblacksinwax.org)).** The first wax museum to focus solely

on African American history. Visitors can explore more than 100 wax figures and scenes focused on both national and local historical figures.

- **Peabody Library (17 E. Mt Vernon Place, <http://peabodyevents.library.jhu.edu/>).** Librarians can’t miss a visit to this stunning architectural treasure. George Peabody, a Massachusetts-born philanthropist, dedicated the Peabody Institute in 1857 to the citizens of Baltimore in appreciation of their “kindness and hospitality.” The current Peabody Library building opened in 1878 and is renowned for its dramatic interior comprised of cast-iron balconies rising towards the building’s 60-foot ceiling.

- **Reginald F. Lewis Museum of African American History and Culture (830 E. Pratt St., [www.lewismuseum.org](http://www.lewismuseum.org)).**

This museum presents the history and lives of African American Marylanders through its artifacts displayed in three galleries. Its largest collections include African American military history, early American jazz, and Maryland community history.

- **Washington Monument (Mount Vernon Place and Charles St., <http://mvpconservancy.org>).**

Located in the historic Mount Vernon neighborhood, just a 20-minute walk from the Convention Center, is the first Washington Monument, completed in 1829. For \$6 you can climb the original 227 marble steps for a unique view of the city.

- **World Trade Center and the Top of the World (401 E. Pratt St., [www.viewbaltimore.org/](http://www.viewbaltimore.org/)).**

Travel to the 27th floor of the world's tallest pentagonal building for an awe-inspiring view of the city. Enjoy exhibits on little-known Baltimore history.

## Art museums

Art galleries can be found throughout the city, especially in the Station North Arts and Entertainment District and the Bromo Tower Arts and Entertainment District. Baltimore's three main art museums offer distinct collections and are an easy walk or transit stop from the convention center.

- **American Visionary Art Museum (800 Key Highway, [www.avam.org/](http://www.avam.org/)).** You can't miss the mirrored mosaic exterior of this museum, located on the south side of the Harbor along Key Highway. Inside, the collections change each year around a differ-

ent theme. The current exhibit, running until September 2017, is "YUMMM! The History, Fantasy, and Future of Food," featuring 34 visionary artists.

- **Baltimore Museum of Art (10 Art Museum Dr., <https://artbma.org/>).**

Further north on Charles Street, the Baltimore Museum of Art houses the Cone Sisters' collection, which includes works by Matisse and Picasso, originally displayed in their Baltimore apartments. Entrance to the museum is *free*, and focuses on 19th-century modern and contemporary art.

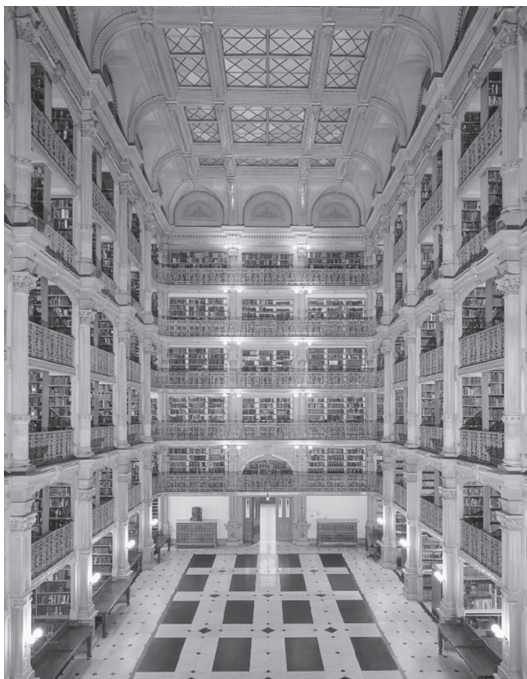
- **Walters Art Museum (600 N. Charles St., <https://www.thewalters.org/>).**

For something a little more traditional (and *free*) take the Circulator Purple Route to the Walters Art Museum, one of the few museums in the United States to offer art spanning from the third millennium B.C. to turn-of-the-century art deco, with an especially rich collection in art from Europe, Northern Africa, and the Far East. The Chamber of Wonders is a museum fan favorite that has three galleries depicting 17th-century collections, including taxidermy, armor, and drawings.

## Theater

Baltimore boasts many theaters and performing arts venues, offering performances from classical to alternative, from Broadway shows to revival film showings, and much more.

- **Baltimore Symphony Orchestra at**



Peabody Library. Photo credit: Raphaël Labbé ([www.flickr.com/photos/ulikleafar/1889079677/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/ulikleafar/1889079677/)), CC BY-SA 2.0

**the Meyerhoff (1212 Cathedral St., [www.bsomusic.org](http://www.bsomusic.org)).** The Meyerhoff offers a variety of performances and is home to the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra (BSO), which recently celebrated its 100th birthday. Under the direction of Maestra Marin Alsop, the first woman to head a major American orchestra, the BSO strives to bring classical music to new and varied audiences. For instance, they performed the entire score to *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, as the movie played.

- **Center Stage (700 N. Calvert St., [www.centerstage.org](http://www.centerstage.org)).** Recently renovated, Center Stage has two performing stages, and its shows range from classic to contemporary. *The White Snake*, a fantastical fairy tale, and *Twisted Melodies*, a musical one-man show, are scheduled to play during the ACRL 2017 conference.

- **Creative Alliance at the Patterson (3134 Eastern Ave., [www.creativealliance.org](http://www.creativealliance.org)).** This unique arts center includes a 200-seat theater offering an eclectic mix of performances, including “neo-burlesque performers as well as serious theater, traditional Irish and bluegrass concerts along with world music, indie rock, and hip hop.”

- **Eubie Blake Cultural Center (847 N. Howard St., [www.eubieblake.org](http://www.eubieblake.org)).** Named after renowned jazz musician and Baltimorean Eubie Blake, this center hosts performances, exhibits, and workshops. *Eubie Live!*, located on the fourth floor, has intimate jazz concerts.

- **Everyman Theatre (315 W. Fayette St., <http://everymantheatre.org>).** This intimate theater was built in 1910 and fea-

tures actors from the Baltimore/Washington area. It’s half a mile from the Convention Center, and, in late March, will be showing *Los Otros*, an “unusual kind of musical” that tells the story of one white and one Latino whose lives intertwine.



Mt. Vernon Square. Photo credit: Mark Goebel ([www.flickr.com/photos/sangre-la/2470721289](http://www.flickr.com/photos/sangre-la/2470721289)), CC BY 2.0.

- **Hippodrome Theatre (12 N. Eutaw St., [www.france-merrickpac.com/](http://www.france-merrickpac.com/)).** The Hippodrome, built in 1914 and restored in 2004, sits in the Bromo Tower Arts & Entertainment District and features Broadway shows and world class performances.

- **Senator Theatre (5904 York Rd., <http://thesenorththeatre.com/>).** Catch a revival film or first-run movie at the beautiful Senator Theatre in north Baltimore, built in 1939 and recently renovated to its former art deco-style glory.

- **Station North Arts and Entertainment District ([www.stationnorth.org](http://www.stationnorth.org)).**

Located two miles north of the Inner Harbor, the Station North Arts and Entertainment District is home to many art galleries, theaters, and makerspaces including: Graffiti Warehouse (128 W. North Ave.), Motor House (120 W. North Ave.), The Windup Space (12 W. North Ave.), Mercury Theater (1823 N. Charles St.), Station North Tool Library (417 E. Oliver St.), and many, many more.

## Sports

Baltimore has an impressive history in baseball and football, while also offering lesser-known sports activities.

- **Babe Ruth Birthplace and Museum (216 Emory St., <http://baberuthmuseum.com>).**

org/). Just a couple blocks west of Camden Yards, the rowhouse where the Great Bambino was born has been converted into a museum, where you can learn more about Babe Ruth, the history of baseball, and the historic house itself.

- **Baltimore Orioles (333 West Camden St., [www.orioles.com](http://www.orioles.com))**. Although it won't be baseball season, Oriole Park at Camden Yards—routinely ranked one of the best stadiums in the country—is in walking distance of the Convention Center and offers off-season tours. Stop by Dempsey's Brew Pub, located on Eutaw Street at Oriole Park and open year-round, and indulge in bacon on stick and a baseball-themed craft brew.

- **Baltimore Ravens (M&T Bank Stadium, 1101 Russell St., [www.baltimore-ravens.com](http://www.baltimore-ravens.com))**. The Baltimore Ravens are the NFL home team. They might play in M&T Bank stadium, but the whole city turns purple on game days. In the offseason, you can snap a picture with the statues of Johnny Unitas and Ray Lewis, located outside the main entrance.

- **Charm City Roller Girls (Skateland Northpoint, 1113 N. Point Rd., [www.charmcityrollergirls.com](http://www.charmcityrollergirls.com))**. For a nontraditional sport, experience the Charm City Roller Girls, Baltimore's all-women, flat-track roller derby league. Watch the hits fly as these amateur athletes take the track. Most games are played at Skateland Northpoint.

## Parks and trails

Baltimore offers many parks and trails for those looking to spend time outdoors. Maps and detailed routes can be found online.

- **Druid Hill Park (900 Druid Park Lake Dr., <http://bcrp.baltimorecity.gov/parks>)**. The park, one of Baltimore's largest, has walking and biking tracks around its manmade reservoir, steep back hills that wrap around the Maryland Zoo, tennis and

basketball courts, and a disc golf course. The Rawlings Conservatory, the second oldest Victorian-era glass conservatory, is located on the southwest entrance to the park.

- **Federal Hill Park (300 Warren Ave.,**



Rawlings Conservatory, Druid Hill Park. Photo credit: City of Baltimore (<http://bcrp.baltimorecity.gov/facilities-rec-parks/conservatory>).

- <http://bcrp.baltimorecity.gov/parks/federal-hill>)**. This park served as defensive grounds during the War of 1812 and the Civil War and now offers recreational space along with breathtaking views of the Inner Harbor.

- **Gwynns Falls Trail (<http://bcrp.baltimorecity.gov/parks>)**. This 22-mile hiking and biking urban trail meets up along the Inner Harbor and can be followed south around the Patapsco River or west to Gwynns Falls Park, one the largest wilderness woodland parks in the country.

- **Jones Falls Trail (<https://jonesfallstrail.us/>)**. The Jones Falls Trail is a ten-mile stretch starting in the Inner Harbor. It snakes its way north along the Jones Falls stream, and passes into Druid Hill Park, before ending at the Cylburn Arboretum. *ZZ*