

Washington and New York

Washington D.C.

It is the capital of the USA. D.C. stands for District of Columbia. It is situated on the Potomac River, about 4000000 inhabitants live there. It's the seat of the federal government of the United States.

History

- It is built on a ten-mile-square plot of land ceded to the federal government by two states – Maryland and Virginia. District of Columbia was established by the Act of Congress in 1790 and site for the capital was chosen by President Washington himself. It isn't the first capital. New York and Philadelphia used to be capital earlier.
- the city was first used as the seat of Congress in 1800
- the city was planned from the beginning – it was designed by the French engineer Pierre L'Enfant and his plans were always respected by other architects
- the city was divided into four quadrants (Northwest NW, Southwest SW, Northeast NE, Southeast SE) with the Capitol as the centre. The streets from N to S bear numbers while the E-W streets are named A, B, C... It helps visitors to find their ways.
- in the 1960s and 1970s the process of protection of historic buildings began, old structures were renovated rather than demolished
- at the same time was established a lot of parks and green spaces for which the city is famous

Places of Interest

- Capitol Building – situated on Capitol Hill, built to the plans of Dr. William Thornton, whose design was elected by competition, in 1814 the unfinished Capitol Building was partially destroyed by fire, finally in 1827, the old Capitol was completed, it has two separate chambers – the House of Representatives (south wing) and Senate (north wing), on the top of the building is the bronze Statue of Freedom, every four years the president comes here for his Inauguration
- White House - president's residence, exterior walls were made of sandstone and painted on white, official rooms are on the first floor while second and third floor are reserved for the Presidential family, it has 132 rooms and 20 baths and showers – Blue room – in this room the President and First Lady receive guests at state dinners, East room – decorated in white and gold, used for the state receptions, it's largest
- Washington monument – 1885, it's symbol of the President Washington and Washington city, about 170m high and 4,5m wide at base (there are lots of statues of George Washington in W.)
- Jefferson Memorial – 1934, commemorates the third US President, adaptation of the ancient Roman Pantheon, a bronze statue of Thomas dominates the open-air interior of the Monument Jefferson holding the Declaration of Independence, the four wall panels surrounding the statue are inscribed with Jefferson's writings

- Lincoln Memorial – 1922, commemorates the 16th US President, it is a white marble building designed by Henry Bacon, there is famous 6m high marble statue of a seated Lincoln
- Vietnam Veterans Memorial – a simple but solemn black granite wall engraved with the names of those 58 000 killed or missing in the Vietnam War. USA helped the government of the South.
- Arlington National Cemetery – located across the Arlington Memorial Bridge. It overlooks The Potomac River and Washington. It is in Arlington in the state of Virginia. It is the national cemetery for American military men. Many outstanding Americans are buried there including H. Taft, Robert and John F. Kennedy, contains the graves of over 200 000 military personnel
- Pentagon - largest office building in the world, situated in Arlington, it's called the Pentagon because of its shape
- Smithsonian Institution - founded in 1846 through a bequest to the US from Henry Smithson, non-profit corporation, It administers dozen of museums, galleries, The national ZOO park, Kennedy centre for the Performing Arts and a number of research and study laboratories.
- National Gallery of Art - independent institution, artefacts from the Middle Ages to the present (Raphael, Tizian, da Vinci, ...)
- National Theatre – focuses on plays and musicals
- American Film Institute – centre of drama, concerts and dance performances
- Concert Hall – home of the National Symphony Orchestra
- Opera House

New York

Points of interest

- 6 official languages - Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish
- It is called The Big Apple or The city, which never sleeps– because of the amount of people

Place of Interest

- Statue of Liberty - on Liberty Island, symbol of freedom, 46 m high, 225 tones
 - the statue was given by the people of France to American people to commemorate French-American friendship
- Manhattan - heart of the New York, large number of skyscrapers on a small area
 - the commercial and the financial centre
- skyscrapers - The World trade Centre (417 m), Empire State Building (381 m), Chrysler building (306 m), ...
- Wall Street - centre of US's financial world
- United Nations Headquarters – seat of the United Nations Organisation
- City Hall - the Mayor's office and the place for official ceremonies are situated there
- Times Square - centre of performing arts
 - people go there to welcome the New Year
- St. Paul's Chapel - the oldest church in New York, built in 1766
- St. Patrick's Cathedral - the largest Roman-catholic church in America, inspired by the great Gothic cathedrals of Europe, built in 1888, 2400 seats

- 29 universities - Columbia University - the oldest and largest university in the country
 - New York University - the largest private university in the US
- LINCOLN CENTER – a large complex of buildings:
 - New York State Theatre - home of the New York City Opera a New York City Ballet
 - Metropolitan Opera House - founded by wealthy New Yorkers, who wanted to have their own opera house
 - Metropolitan Museum of Art - collection of art (paintings, sculptures, furniture) from Africa, the Pacific, America, China as well as Europe
 - Museum of Modern Art - collection of modern arts - paintings (Picasso, van Gogh, Matisse), sculpture (Rodin), engravings and photographs as well as film, architectural models and highstyle functional objects (cars)
 - American Museum of Natural History – its collections document native American, African and Pacific civilisations
- Central Park - largest of the New York's parks