



Exploring our Nation's Capital – OLLI @ Furman Goes to Washington DC

April 29 – May 3, 2024

Pack your walking shoes, your journal, and some of that good ole' southern hospitality – we're going to Washington, DC! Join a smallish group of OLLI members to explore sites and stories spilling from Capitol Hill and the National Mall, down the broad Potomac. We'll spend four nights in a comfortable uptown hotel – not far from the White House – equipped with curiosity and a metro pass. We'll explore DC's classical architecture, learn about its origins and evolution, and pursue nationally important stories – often folded into the city's monuments and memorials, and national museums. We'll also visit a number of hallowed buildings, including the Capitol, Union Station, George Washington's Mount Vernon, and (we hope) the White House. This is one trip to the "DMV" to really look forward to!

Accommodation (4 nights):

The Hamilton Hotel

www.hamiltonhoteldc.com

Trip Itinerary:

Monday, April 29

Arrival in Washington. We'll shuttle to the Hamilton Hotel in central Washington, where we'll store our bags (until check-in, later in the day). After refreshing, and breathing in the cosmopolitan air, we'll enjoy an impromptu walking tour of our immediate surroundings: Lafayette Square (doorstep to the White House), the Old Post Office tower and food court, Freedom Plaza, and the temple-like U.S. Patents Building. Our walk will give us an orientation to "what's nearby" and how to navigate above ground in the District. We'll "elevate" to the top of the OPO tower (it's a National Park Service site), for one of the best views of the city to be had. We'll enjoy lunch in the pavilion, on the lower level. Our post-lunch walk will take us by several interesting memorials on Freedom Plaza, two historic theatres – the Warner, and Ford's. When we arrive at the old U.S. Patents Building, we'll be looking at the fourth massive architectural creation (*of our on-going walk*), produced by South Carolina's Robert Mills. Inside, we'll see the award-winning restoration of the building, and your choice of two national museums: The National Portrait Gallery; and the Smithsonian American Museum of Art.

We'll make our way back to the Hamilton for check-in and a proper R & R. We'll meet in the lobby at the appointed time to enjoy a group dinner together (included). Overnight at the Hamilton Hotel, Washington.

Tuesday, April 30

Enjoy breakfast in the hotel (included).

This morning we'll tour the White House. Afterwards we'll walk to the National Mall, via the historic homes and buildings on Lafayette Square, the Eisenhower Federal Office Building (offices of the Vice-President), and trappings of the old canal system that connected "inland DC" to the Potomac River! We'll emerge at the National World War II Memorial. This is one of the Mall's most recent major additions: take it in; and enjoy the beautiful view west, to the Lincoln Memorial.

Options: Those who want to walk . . . can make a loop around the Tidal Basin, taking in the MLK, Jr. Memorial; the FDR Memorial; and the Jefferson Memorial. That route will bring you to the National Holocaust Memorial (for a visit, and / or lunch in the café there). The other option will be to visit more memorials and museums of the national mall: nearby, you have the National Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Museum of American History, and the National Natural History Museum. Cafés (and outstanding gift shops) abound in each. For those who want to travel by metro back to the hotel

together, we'll have a mid-afternoon meeting time and place (for example, in front of the unique and noticeable, Smithsonian "Castle."

Enjoy free time this afternoon and evening. Dinner is on your own. Overnight, the Hamilton Hotel.

Wednesday, May 1

Enjoy breakfast in the hotel (included).

This morning, we'll make our way to Capitol Hill, for an appointment: We're going to straighten out Congress, and solve all the country's problems. (Sorry, did I just lapse into a dream state?) I meant to say we'll tour the lovely Capitol building! Afterwards, we'll have lunch at the Capitol. In the afternoon, we'll travel my metro to Arlington Cemetery (on the blue line) for a visit. Options: Those who wish to walk less, can enjoy the visitor center, and parts of the cemetery adjacent to it. Those who wish to walk more can visit the iconic Arlington House (National Park Service site), and / or the hallowed Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. We'll meet at the appointed time, to walk across Memorial Bridge (crossing the Potomac) to the Lincoln Memorial area. Depending on your interests and stamina, you can visit the nearby (and acclaimed, for its "realism") Korean War Veterans Memorial; and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Those still standing can walk through George Washington University to catch the metro "home!"

Enjoy free time (to collapse in your room) this evening. Dinner on your own; overnight in the Hamilton Hotel.

Thursday, May 2

Have breakfast in the hotel (included).

We'll travel by metro to the Washington Wharf, to catch our boat to Mt. Vernon. There's lots to see from the water (and we'll hear commentary from the captain).

Enjoy Mt. Vernon – George Washington's estate . . . saved from decline and ruin by an antebellum heroine from South Carolina (Oh yes, you'll hear that story.)

Lunch on your own (at Mt. Vernon). We'll meet at the boat dock at the appointed time for the swim upstream to "the city."

Enjoy afternoon free time. This evening, we'll meet for a group dinner (included) to celebrate the capital city and to celebrate our good times spent together! Overnight, the Hamilton Hotel.

Friday, May 3

Breakfast in the hotel (included).

We'll visit the (new) National Museum of African American History and Culture. We'll enjoy some late-morning flexibility for more Smithsonian visits, with a meet-up afterwards. In the afternoon, let's visit the Ulysses S. Grant Memorial – one of the Mall's most dramatic memorials; a Congressional office; and stunning Union Station – an architectural masterpiece. We'll metro back to the Hamilton to collect stored bags; then make our way to Ronald Reagan Airport. We're Upstate bound!

Pricing information:

\$2485 / person (double occupancy; single supplement, \$660); price includes 4 nights lodging + breakfast in the Hamilton Hotel (4-stars) in central Washington, DC; two group dinners; chartered shuttle from DCA airport to the Hamilton (upon arrival on our first day); metro pass for 5 days; all excursions / activities per the itinerary; guide and concierge service throughout the trip, provided by Explore Up Close. Price does not include airfare, other meals, alcohol, free time activities / options, or trip insurance (recommended). A \$500 deposit is due at registration.

