

Boston: America's Walking City

Explore Boston on foot! Walking is an easy, pleasant and stress-free way to enjoy your visit. It is one of the best forms of exercise to keep you fit. Known for historic and picturesque neighborhoods, Boston has outstanding pedestrian features including:

- A compact and relatively flat layout with European style streets that are safe, lively and diverse.
- Centrally located points of interest: history, entertainment, nightlife, architecture, culture, science and arts abound.
- A great feeling of openness against a backdrop of skyscrapers, thanks to inviting green spaces like the Boston Common, Commonwealth Avenue Mall and the Charles River Esplanade.
- A convenient and affordable subway and bus system that takes you within steps of your destination.

Everything is within walking distance. And everyone in Boston walks. So walk—you'll feel better for it!

Walks for visitors

This self-guided walk includes points of interest, major conference hotels and the convention site. You might combine the walk with dining. Nearby Boylston and Newbury Streets are lined with restaurants and shops. A stroll in the other direction brings you to the charming South End. This neighborhood contains a stunning array of Boston's top restaurants. To reach the heart of this district, walk along Dartmouth or Clarendon Street to Tremont Street. Along the way, admire the brick bowfronts and bay windows of the 1850^s residences that line the streets.

The Greater Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau lists many walks and tours, including the Freedom Trail and the Black Heritage Trail. For a complete listing, see www.BostonUSA.com or call 888-SEE-BOSTON.

If you have a bit more time, the book **WalkBoston: Walking Tours of Boston's Unique Neighborhoods** contains 30 self-guided walks tracing history, exploring neighborhoods, and visiting parks and the oceanfront. Available for \$14.95 in bookstores, at GBCVB booths, or through the WalkBoston office at 617.367.9255.

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walkBoston

Commonwealth Avenue Mall Sculptures

Commonwealth Avenue Sculptures

Boston's Commonwealth Avenue finds its 19th-century inspiration in the boulevards of Europe. The centerpiece of the elegant Back Bay, the avenue is 200 feet wide, with generous carriageways and sidewalks. The gracious central walkway, called the Mall, is enlivened with sculpture and landscaping. Installation of statuary began in 1865 and continues to this day. Because nearly all of the sculptures face east toward the Public Garden, this walk is devised to allow you to go west and approach each frontally, as sculptors meant them to be seen.

Commonwealth Avenue attracted the city's newly rich financiers, industrialists and Civil War profiteers, who commissioned the pre-eminent architects of the day to design luxurious townhouses that still stand from this bygone era. Uniform setbacks and heights of dwellings, combined with the tasteful landscaping and plantings of the Mall, culminate in a richly harmonious whole. In the 20th century, many structures became condominiums, but facades were protected in this largest cohesive Victorian neighborhood in the nation.

As you walk along the avenue, be sure to admire the many fine examples of late 19th-century architecture that line it. Architectural styles include French Academic, Gothic, Richardsonian Romanesque, Beaux-Arts . . . an eclectic mélange of historic styles typical of the Victorian era.

Points of interest

① **Copley Square** is framed by the Boston Public Library, Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel, the 60-story Hancock Building, Trinity Church, and “New” Old South Church. Statues of “Art” and “Science” crafted by B.L. Pratt in 1911 stand at the main library entrance. The handsome bronze doors are by Daniel Chester French. Walk down Boylston Street and turn left at Arlington Street. The sculptures begin inside the Public Garden where Arlington Street meets Commonwealth Avenue.

② **George Washington** on a large horse rides just inside the Public Garden. Sculptor Thomas Ball's

work from 1869 honors Washington, beloved for freeing Boston from the clutches of the British after the long siege of 1775-76. The sense of motion and imperturbable might quaking in the giant bronze is most fitting. The sword clutched in his right hand disappears from time to time, a target of overzealous collectors, and is replaced by the city from its reserve. Cross Arlington Street and enter the Commonwealth Avenue Mall.

③ **Alexander Hamilton** was sculpted by Dr. William Rimmer in 1865, shortly after the Mall opened. Hamilton faces his mentor George Washington. The brooding Machiavellian statesman is in stark contrast to Washington's triumphal pose. The statue, in quintessential New England granite, is the only stone sculpture on the Mall.

Starting at Arlington Street, Commonwealth Avenue follows a straight line [unusual for Boston] through the Back Bay. Note that the cross-streets are in alphabetical order: Arlington, Berkeley, Clarendon, Dartmouth, Exeter, Fairfield, Gloucester, Hereford. They alternate as one-way streets; careful as you cross!

④ **John Glover** was a Revolutionary War hero who helped Washington cross the Delaware and whose brigade helped give the Marines their name. Martin Milmore sculpted the piece in 1875. Glover's left leg is perched on a cannon barrel in a defiant gesture of conquest, perhaps from one of his skirmishes with British troops and his capture of artillery installations.

⑤ **First Baptist Church** was designed by Henry Hobson Richardson in 1871. Built of local Roxbury puddingstone, it features a frieze on the upper reaches of the bell tower by Auguste Bartholdi, sculptor of the Statue of Liberty. Trumpeting angels perched high on the campanile gave it a local nickname “Church of the Holy Bean Blowers.”

⑥ **Patrick Andrew Collins** was mayor of Boston from 1902-1905. His bust was commissioned by community leaders after Collins' premature death while in office. It was sculpted by Henry and Theo Alice Kitson in 1908. Neoclassical female figures stand impassively on either side, one holding a harp and the other a tree frond.

⑦ **Vendome Firefighters Memorial** honors the nine firefighters who died in the Vendome Hotel fire in 1972. Created in 1997 by Ted Clausen, aided by Peter White,

it marks the tragic event's 25th anniversary. It juxtaposes stark modernism in the polished granite base with poignant realism in the fireman's coat and hat draped across it. The inscriptions tell the story of the fire and the unexpected collapse of the building's rear portion.

⑧ **Hotel Vendome** [1871] is a Second Empire style structure that now houses galleries, offices, and residences. In 1882 it was the first public building in Boston to have electric lights. For many glorious years, it was Boston's premier hotel.

⑨ **William Lloyd Garrison** was sculpted in 1886 by Olin Levi Warner. The stern abolitionist is seated, manuscripts in hand and scattered beneath his chair, staring contemplatively, perhaps envisioning a future in which man no longer enslaves his fellow man. Be sure to read the inscription of Garrison's statements from his publication, *The Liberator*. The green oxidized copper surface of the statue is unique along the Mall. Garrison's presence here is unquestionably fitting, as he was largely based in Boston.

⑩ **Samuel Eliot Morrison**—sailor, Harvard professor, maritime historian, and author of many books on maritime and Massachusetts history—was sculpted by Penelope Jencks in 1982. Perched on a pedestal that mimics a coastal rock formation, Morrison is rendered in a casual, engaging way that is a welcome contrast to the stiff 19th-century figures preceding him. Many visitors pose for photos with Morrison.

⑪ **Algonquin Club**, at 217 Commonwealth Avenue on your right, has a gracious facade designed by the renowned architectural firm of McKim, Meade and White [architects of the Boston Public Library]. Both buildings are High Italian Renaissance Revival in style, but the club boasts the delicate surface articulation and decorative carvings associated with the firm's gregarious partner Stanford White, while the grand masculine lines and bulk of the library are the work of the more staid and conservative Charles Follen McKim.

⑫ **Boston Women's Memorial** was created by Meredith Bergmann in 2003. It represents a trio of three notable local figures—former first lady Abigail Adams, journalist/suffragist Lucy Stone, and the first published African writer in America, Phyllis Wheatley. The grouping is one of the few city sculptures designed by a woman.

⑬ **Domingo Sarmiento** [1811-1888] is an imposing full-length bronze of the Argentinean president and diplomat, donated by Argentina in 1973. His Boston connection stems from his 1847 visit with and admiration of local education reformer Horace Mann. Subsequently, he designed his country's entire school system on Mann's principles. The sculpture, created by Yvette Compagnon, recalls the work of Rodin in its raw, almost pockmarked bronze surface.

⑭ **Burrage Mansion**, at 314 Commonwealth Avenue, was designed in the Chateaux style by Charles Brigham in 1899 for lumber magnate Albert Burrage. It features intricately carved details throughout its facade and a magnificent steel, copper and glass-encased conservatory on the Hereford Street side.

⑮ **Leif Eriksson** and his Viking ship was sculpted by Anne Whitney in the 1887 statue of Eriksson standing on a ship pedestal. Eben Horsford, who discovered baking powder, commissioned this work. Horsford believed that Eriksson came to America before Columbus and discovered a place called Vinland on the Charles River.

At Charlesgate East, the elegant 19th century mall connected to Frederick Law Olmsted's Emerald Necklace parks. This link was broken in the mid 20th century by intrusive overpasses.

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