



These pages, clockwise from top left: The high-rises of the Financial District; find a bench seat – Boston is a city made for people-watching; Boston Common, which borders Beacon Hill, was America's first public park; heritage buildings sit easily among the Financial District's glass and steel; on the beat on Newbury St.



glory DAYS

Boston is a city proud of its American Revolution history, but it's no stick-in-the-mud: as well as being the commercial hub of New England, it teems with vibrant culture and liberal politics.

FIRST THINGS FIRST: like all storytellers worth their salt, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow didn't let the facts get in the way of a good yarn when he wrote the classic American poem "Paul Revere's Ride". A stirring account of the events that preceded the first battle of the American Revolution in 1775, Longfellow's epic (*Listen my children and you shall hear/Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere*) has been memorised by generations of American schoolchildren, and for many years was accepted as historically accurate.

It wasn't. In fact Revere was only one of the messengers who rode from Boston to warn rebel colonist leaders in the towns of Concord and Lexington of the British advance that night, and he certainly never shouted the famous phrase "The British are coming" that was attributed to him, since the countryside was riddled with British loyalists and the object of his mission was stealth not heroics. But no matter: thanks to Longfellow he is a national hero and his name will forever be synonymous with the American ideals of patriotism and independence.

The legend of Paul Revere is still alive and well 250 years later. Paul Revere House, a small clapboard building on North Square built in 1680, is the oldest house in Boston, now a museum and one of its celebrated Revolutionary sights in the historic North End district. So too is the lovely Georgian North Church around the corner on Salem St, where the sexton famously hung two signal lanterns from the bell tower to alert Revere to the British movements. Nearby, a splendid bronze statue of the celebrated patriot watches over 21st century Bostonians at play in Paul Revere Mall, a pleasant tree-lined park not far from where all the fuss began.

Today the commercial hub of New England, Boston is a sophisticated city known for its vibrant culture, social reforms and liberal politics – and as the home of the famous Red Sox whose home ground, Fenway Park, is the oldest baseball park in the United States. The city has bragging rights to some of America's most colourful

➤ SLEEP

Experience true five-star luxury at **The Langham Hotel Boston**, located in the heart of the Financial District in one of Boston's important architectural landmarks, the handsome Federal Reserve Bank building built in 1922. From the stylish lobby filled with lovely antiques, to the brasserie-style Cafe Fleuri which is famous for its Sunday Jazz Brunch, and the generously proportioned rooms with their richly coloured furnishings, The Langham is the epitome of style.
250 Franklin St, Boston,
www.langhamhotels.com



These pages, clockwise from top: Street performers wow a crowd in Harvard Square; brownstones on Newbury St, one of the three most expensive shopping strips in the US; the ornate ceiling of the Massachusetts State House; Beacon Hill is a leafy enclave of Federal-style brick row houses on cobblestone streets.



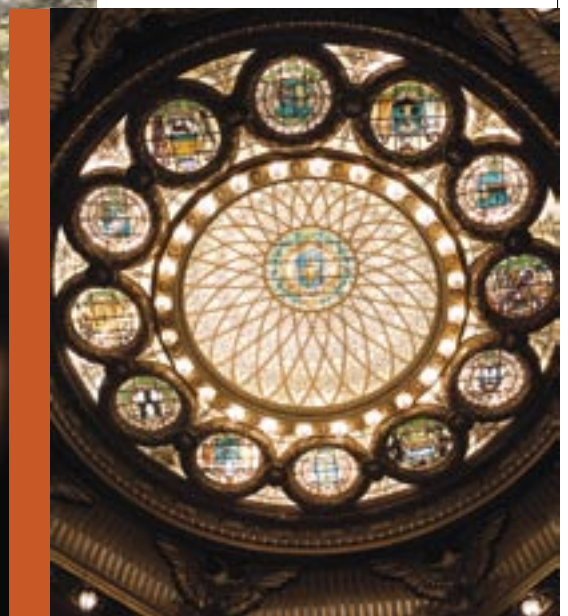
history – and a good many “oldests” and “firsts” – and a handful of its most significant heritage buildings nestle comfortably among the steel-and-glass high-rises of its cosmopolitan Financial District.

A compact, easily navigated city, well served by the first subway in the US (the “T”), Boston is divided into 14 districts, each with their own unique character and story.

Without a doubt the loveliest neighbourhood is Beacon Hill, a leafy enclave of Federal-style brick row houses on cobblestone streets lit with gas lanterns. Bordered by Boston Common, the country’s first public park, and the adjacent Boston Public Gardens, this is the city’s most sought-after address, and a leisurely stroll along its secluded streets provides a fascinating glimpse of life in a bygone era: don’t miss Louisburg Square, a cul-de-sac of Greek Revival bow-fronted houses which millionaire politicians, and corporate moguls call home. A central tree-lined garden behind high iron railings is for the exclusive use of the square’s residents.

The back side of Beacon Hill, settled by freed African-American slaves in the 19th century, was the centre of Boston’s abolitionist movement. Holmes Alley, once an escape route for runaway slaves, and the Lewis and Harriet Hayden House on Phillips St, one of the “Underground Railroad” safe houses, are highlights of the Black Heritage Trail, as is the African Meeting House, the

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These pages, clockwise from above left: Back Bay is a fashionable and highly desirable neighbourhood; take a Boston Duck Tour in a WWII-era amphibious truck; Harvard Square teems with outlandishly dressed students full of liberal opinions; The Old State House at dusk; the statue of Sir John Harvard is a favourite backdrop for tourist photos.

oldest black church-building in the country which is the centrepiece of the Museum of Afro-American History on Joy St.

The jewel in the crown of Beacon Hill is the Massachusetts State House, an imposing building whose distinctive gold-leaf gilded dome is visible from many points of the city. Designed by Charles Bulfinch, the 19th century Bostonian credited with developing the Federal style of architecture, and built on the city's highest peak, the state house is well worth a visit; don't miss the Hall of Flags, with its collection of early American flags.

Given Bulfinch's influence on Beacon Hill, it comes as no surprise to find there used to be a pub named the Bull & Finch on Beacon St; what is less well known is that it was the inspiration for the bar named Cheers at the centre of the popular sitcom of the same name set in 1980s and 90s Boston.

Boston's oldest neighbourhood, the North End, is New England's Little Italy, a charming district of narrow streets and alleys, redolent with the alluring smell of fresh baking, coffee

and garlic. Revere and co. are not the only tourist drawcards here: Hanover St, with its plethora of excellent restaurants and delis, is a magnet for foodies. By day it's a busy ethnic neighbourhood full of locals, many of whom still speak their native Italian, going about their daily business; come evening it's jammed with restaurant-goers lured by the promise of the best Italian food outside Italy: you can tell the most popular restaurants by the length of the queue outside.

It's an easy walk from the North End across the Charlestown Bridge to Bunker Hill where the bloodiest battle of the Revolution was fought, or you can amble along the waterfront and in to the central city. Here you can't miss seeing (and being told about) the hugely controversial Big Dig, the Central Artery/Tunnel redevelopment of downtown Boston which has dragged on, to the locals' despair, for more than a decade and run up a bill of US\$15 billion dollars... so far.

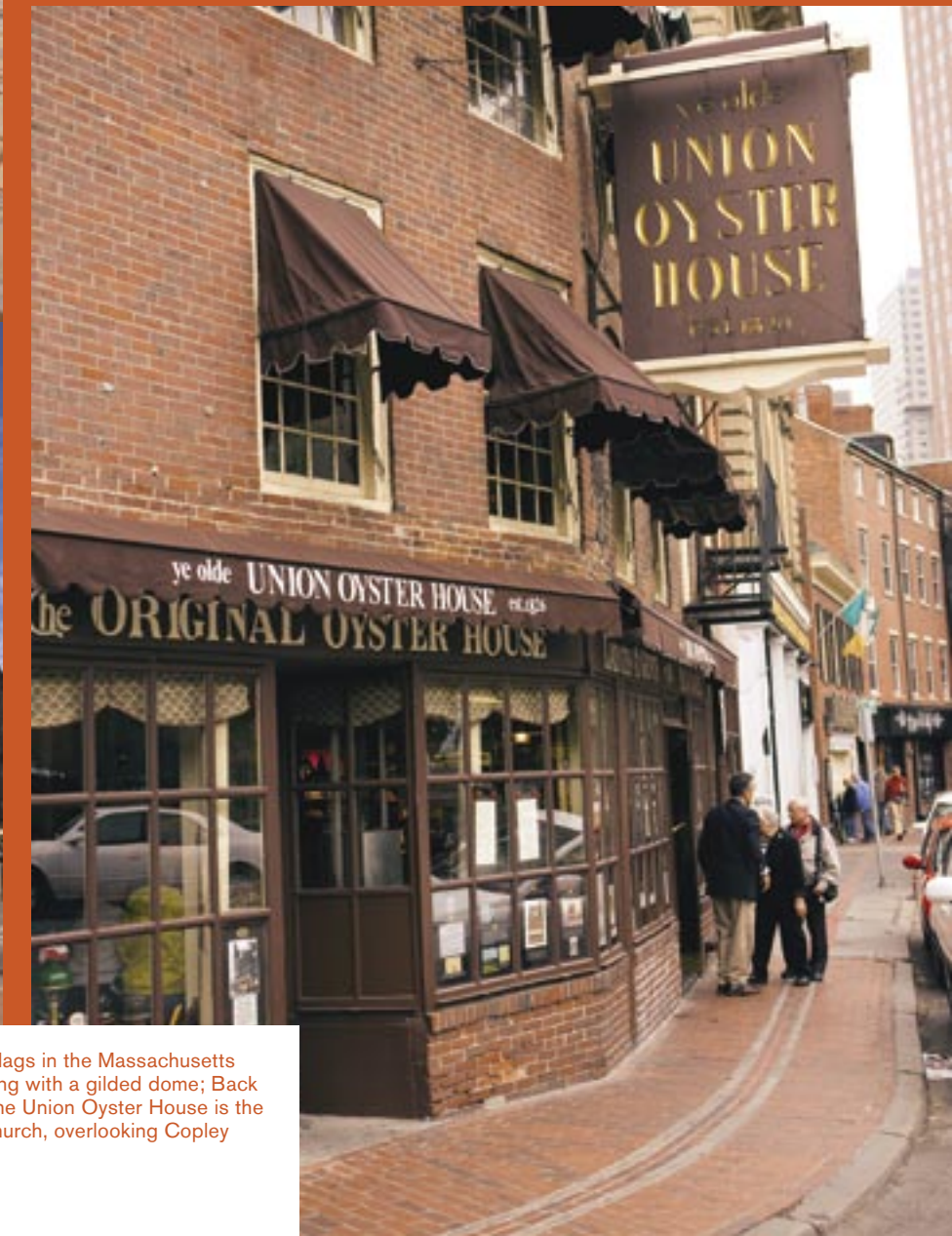
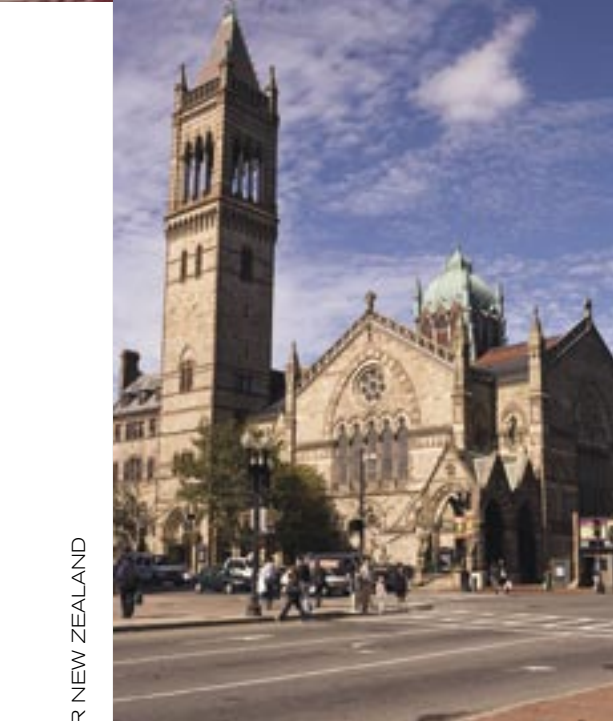
In the 18th century Boston was the busiest port in North America and one of the most





"THE NORTH END IS **NEW ENGLAND'S LITTLE ITALY**, NARROW STREETS AND ALLEYS REDOLENT WITH THE SMELL OF FRESH BAKING, COFFEE AND GARLIC."





These pages, clockwise from top left: The Hall of Flags in the Massachusetts State House; the state house is an imposing building with a gilded dome; Back Bay as seen from the Prudential Center Skywalk; the Union Oyster House is the oldest restaurant in the US; the New Old South Church, overlooking Copley



important in all of the colonies but today the focus is on tourism. Extensive urban renewal along the inner harbour has made this area one of the city's popular visitor attractions, complete with harbourside hotels, restaurants and shops.

The HarborWalk south from Columbus Park is lovely at any time, but especially on a hot day when there's a pleasant breeze coming off the river. Wander down historic Long Wharf, now a ferry dock where you can catch a boat to the Boston Harbour Islands, and on to Central Wharf where you'll find the excellent New England Aquarium. Keep going and you'll get to Seaport, home of the Boston Tea Party Ship and Museum, where you can watch a re-enactment of the city's most beloved Revolutionary event when rebels, dressed as Indians, stormed British ships and emptied their cargoes of tea into the harbour as a protest against crippling taxes. The rather avant-garde Institute of Contemporary Art is close by.

Just back from the waterfront is the quaint web of cobbled streets known as Blackstone Block, where Benjamin Franklin grew up, the son of a local candlemaker. America's oldest restaurant, The Union Oyster House, a local favourite of John F. Kennedy when he was in the Massachusetts senate, is just around the corner and close by is historic Faneuil Hall and Quincy Market, once the city's major produce market, and now a bustling tourist mecca full of shops and restaurants.

To the west of the inner harbour is the financial district, where the towers of the multinational banks, law firms, insurance companies and technology giants reflect the ornate 17th and 18th century architecture of the city's early civic buildings. Bostonians are proud of their American Revolution history, and much of its tourist industry is centred on the rebellious acts of heroes Samuel Adams (brewer of a popular beer of the same name) and John Hancock who began the anti-British movement, the Sons of Liberty.

If you don't manage the whole "Freedom Trail", which takes in 16 premier American Revolution sites across Boston, it's worthwhile exploring this locale: within a kilometre of each other there's the glorious Custom House with its huge illuminated clock, Old City Hall, Old South Meeting House and

➤ EAT

Don't leave town without sampling a bowl of creamy, decadently rich Boston clam chowder at the **Union Oyster House**, the oldest restaurant in the United States. Famous for its New England fare including lobster and oysters. While you're there check out table number six upstairs, where John F. Kennedy sat when he dined here. Be sure to book as it's full every night of the week. www.unionoysterhouse.com



the Old State House and site of the Boston Massacre where five colonists were killed by British guardsmen in 1770; fittingly, the Declaration of Independence was read for the first time in 1776 from the balcony immediately above the circle of cobblestones that marks the site.

Back Bay is the city's fashionable face, developed in the 19th century to meet a population boom. An elegant neighbourhood of cobbled streets lined with lovely four and five storey Victorian brownstones, Back Bay wooed many of Boston's wealthy citizens away from Beacon Hill when it was developed, and it remains one of the city's most desirable areas to reside.

Best known is Newbury St, one of the three most expensive shopping boulevards in the US (after Fifth Avenue and Rodeo Drive), home to hundreds of designer stores, specialist shops, trendy boutiques and art galleries, plus an astonishing number of beauty bars where you can

be primed and pampered to within an inch of your life. Retail therapy is hungry work, so you should stop for lunch in one of the many excellent restaurants and do some people-watching – highly recommended.

No visit to Boston is complete without a visit to the nation's earliest seat of learning, Harvard University in the district of Cambridge, on the north shore of the Charles River. Established by the founding Puritans in 1636, six years after they settled in Boston, Harvard is one of the world's most prestigious colleges, and its alumni, with its list of presidents, Pulitzer and Nobel Prize-winners, is impressive.

The campus is substantial – more than 400 buildings house the various different faculties – but Old Harvard Yard, with its handsome red-brick buildings, wide pathways, and mature trees, is still the heart of the college

today and attracts thousands of visitors who routinely pose for silly photographs in front of the statue of Sir John Harvard.

Cambridge is a true university town, full of bright-eyed students bristling with liberal opinions and youthful optimism. There's much to see and do: Harvard's celebrated museums house some of the world's finest university collections, and you can easily lose a couple of hours in Harvard Square, with its marvellous bookshops and cafes, not to mention the student co-op, formed in 1882 and still going strong. Longfellow National Historic Site on Brattle Street is worth a visit if only to pay homage to the old bard, even if he did misinform generations of Americans on the subject of Paul Revere.

It was an unseasonably hot Sunday afternoon in late autumn when we were there so we took a break under the shade of huge oak trees whose gnarled trunks were scored with the names of generations of lovers, and watched the passing parade of outlandishly dressed students, street performers and buskers. An ageing hippie wandered among the crowd, his sandwich boards proclaiming the end of the world was nigh. It never seemed so far away as it did that Sunday. ☞

Air New Zealand has direct daily flights to Los Angeles and San Francisco with connections on our Star Alliance partner United Airlines, to Boston.

➤ DO

Walk the 4km **Freedom Trail** that leads to Boston's 16 most significant American Revolutionary sites from Boston Common to the Bunker Hill Monument in Charlestown. www.thefreedomtrail.org

Take a **Boston Duck Tour** in a WWII-era amphibious truck which trundles around town then splashes into the Charles River for a harbour tour. Great for the kids. www.ducktours.com

Visit pretty **Copley Square**, in Back Bay, where you'll find the **Boston Marathon Monument** on the finish line of the famous race and the magnificent **Boston Public Library**, notable for its exquisite interior art.

Take a tour of **Fenway Park**, home of the beloved Boston Red Sox and the oldest baseball park in the United States. www.redsox.com

Indulge in some JFK nostalgia: Visit the **John F. Kennedy National Historic Site**, the house in Brookline where Jack was born in 1917 (www.nps.gov/jofi), and visit the fabulous John F. Kennedy Library and Museum, the official memorial to the slain president, www.jfklibrary.org

➤ CONTACT:

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