

DOUBLE HEADER

Boston: two tales of a city

ts winters might be brutal, but few places on Earth come alive like the city of Boston in the summer. History, culture, cuisine and baseball all come out of hibernation in the spring and thrive in the warm New England air. A three-hour direct flight and you're there.

TRAVEL

GET ON THE TRAIL

In terms of getting around, Boston might be the most navigable big city in the country. Roll your luggage through Logan International Airport down to the "T" station, and after a quick \$2 ride into downtown, you're off and running.

Start on the Freedom Trail, a 2.5-mile path of side-by-side red bricks snaking its way through dozens of sites integral to the Declaration of Independence and subsequent American Revolution. Many of the Trail's small buildings now cohabitate with glass and steel skyscrapers; the juxtaposition boggles the mind.

The Trail commences at Boston Common, the central park of the city, and quickly arrives at the Old State House, site of the Boston Massacre. Down the path lays Faneuil Hall, where Samuel Adams once inflamed colonists' revolutionary passions with his oratory.

SLEEP AND EAT HISTORY

The Omni Parker House hotel sits directly on the Freedom Trail. The oldest continuously operating hotel in the country, it's the home of the infamous Boston Cream Pie, which originated in its kitchens, as did the term "scrod," a Boston term for catch of the day. Its restaurant also employed Malcolm X and Ho Chi Minh and was the site of JFK's proposal to Jacqueline.

For a historic meal, we ate at the Union Oyster House (also on the Freedom Trail), the oldest continuously operating restaurant in the United States. Former regulars included Daniel Webster and JFK, who frequently enjoyed Sunday brunch there. The creamy clam chowder is a standout.

PLAY BALL!

Nowhere does America's pastime mean more than in Boston. After 86 tortuous



DAVID DANZIG

Fenway Park

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Boston Harbor skyline

GREATER BOSTON CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

years of losing by their beloved Red Sox, the city now swaggers with two World Championships in the past four seasons. Throughout the town, men, women and infants proudly don Red Sox gear from head to toe. Fittingly, the Boston Museum of Science presents its "Baseball as America" exhibit now through Sept. 1. More than 500 artifacts from the Baseball Hall of Fame traveled from Cooperstown to Beantown for the summer.

But clearly the main attraction remains Fenway Park, Major League Baseball's oldest stadium (yet another of Boston's "oldest continually operating" distinctions). Fans have heard the crack of the bat since 1912, and Fenway remarkably maintains much of the old aura of an early 20th-century baseball park.

Outside, a carnival-like atmosphere engulfs you. People arrive hours before the game, essentially tailgating without cars. Throngs crowd neighborhood bars, spilling out into the street. The smell of grilling Polish sausages, onions and peppers wafts along the breeze, and there's an indescribable wide-eyed joy on every face. Attending a Major League Baseball game anywhere can certainly be a thrill; at Fenway, it's more akin to a religious experience.

Here, it's like stepping back into a time machine. Entering through ancient portals, you come into the belly of the stadium with crammed, dimly lit, low-ceiling concourses. The rank and file jam through the narrow passageways until you find your field entrance and go toward the light. The next sensation—the one when you emerge from the darkness and first glimpse the playing field—simply takes your breath away. The perfect green grass, the hal-
lowed diamond, the Green Monster in left field ... this is baseball in its purest form. —David Danzig

24 HOURS IN BOSTON

I've tanned on South Beach in Miami, shopped on Fifth Ave. in New York, wandered through Pike's Market in San Francisco and walked through Lincoln Park in Chicago. I've also spent a brief but thorough few days exploring the grand cities of London, Paris, Barcelona, Rome and Amsterdam. But my only previous experience with Boston, the home of many textbooks' worth of American history, is a fleeting memory of running through a snow-covered parking lot while wearing only a formal dress and a light sweatshirt, at age 12, as I raced into a cab following my cousin's wedding. And even that wasn't in Boston proper.

So when my college roommate suggested I take a quick detour from New York City, where I was spending five days, to visit her in the other great New England city, I was thrilled. I easily got my travel-loving boyfriend on board, and we booked a room at the Liberty Hotel, a luxurious place that, prior to a \$150 million renovation, once served as the Charles Street Jail. Much of the original architecture has been preserved, and the jail theme is maintained throughout the upscale, perfectly decorated building. Our extravagant room would be an inmate's paradise, complete with a king-size bed, flat-screen TV, and a bathtub *and* shower—not to mention a clear view of the St. Charles River.

After dropping off our bags, we were off for a Duck Tour. I'd been told tours atop these Army-turned-tourist land/water vehicles are the way to go, but I'll admit I was dubious until aboard. Despite brutal weather (the heat index was higher than 100), the 90-minute tour was enjoyable, and our eccentric guide, dressed in a Greek costume, pointed out every historical and/or significant landmark possible, with relevant pieces of trivia thrown in. But seeing

is not the same as exploring, so during dinner at the InterContinental Hotel's Sushi-Teq—a stylish sushi restaurant with a large patio—that night, we resolved to actually experience as much as we could of Boston the next day. We had brunch at Clink restaurant and lounge in the morning before embarking on a Freedom Trail Foundation Walking Tour. I'd thought we'd be trekking all over the city to see the sites firsthand, but after over an hour of listening to a long-winded history lesson by a lady dressed in colonial garb and seeing only the Granary Cemetery, we'd had enough, and ditched the walking tour in favor of a 45-minute cruise, courtesy of Massachusetts Bay Lines. The double-decker boat was nearly empty, and although most of the narration was in French (I'm still not sure why), the trip was peaceful, pleasant and provided many scenic views of Boston and Charlestown.

Next we took the T to Cambridge, where we wandered through Harvard Yard and Harvard Square, and mingled with the students and locals. The area gives off a liberal vibe, and it's nowhere near as uptight as its reputation suggests. We finished off the day with a tasty dinner at Temple Bar, which is more gourmet restaurant than it is bar.

Sadly, our time in Beantown was up, and while there's certainly more ground to cover than humanly possibly in 24 hours, I felt content leaving, knowing I gained at least an overview's worth of insight into Boston's history and present-day culture. I can appreciate the striking architecture, clean streets and abundance of commerce. I enjoy the varied culinary options, the numerous activities available and the liberal attitudes. I'll certainly be back for more someday, but for now, we came, we saw, and we experienced. And in 24 hours, that's all you can ask for. —Carly Felton



Paul Revere statue

DAVID DANZIG