

Washington Museums

National Gallery of Art

4th and Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20565
(on the National Mall between 3rd and 7th Streets at Constitution Avenue)

Information: 202-737-4215

Admission is Free

Hours:

Monday - Saturday: 10-5
Sunday: 11-6

Closed on December 25 and January 1

Nearest Subway Station: Smithsonian station

Disabled access: All Stations on the Metro System are accessible. Check at any station for information about broken elevators, etc.

The National Gallery of Art is one of the world's great Museums. It was created in 1937 for the people of the U. S. by a joint resolution of Congress, accepting the gift of financier and art collector Andrew W. Mellon. It has a fabulous collection of fine art from the early Renaissance to the present. Art from the early Renaissance through the Impressionists is exhibited in the main, or West Building. This building is sprawling limestone structure where the art is accompanied by courtyards and fountains where you can recover from your extreme case of museum fatigue, if you attempted to see all the art in one trip.

The West Building also has a shop in the basement that offers products from postcards to framed reproductions. It also has a wide range of fine art related books and items that offer reproductions on stationary, tote bags, umbrellas etc. (In fact other museums on the mall, notably Natural History and American History, have similarly high quality shops.)

The East Building, a 1978 building designed by I.M. Pei, is the National Gallery's contemporary art museum. The collection is also spectacular, a must see for anyone visiting the Nation's Capitol. This museum also has many blockbuster shows.

The underground floor has another big shop. It also has a cafeteria during lunch hours. The food is high priced and ok, and if you don't take your used tray to the carts they will call you to do so. The Museum of The American Indian, Natural History or Air and Space museums have better food. The best food is in the high end and fast food restaurants around the mall are better deals.

On May 23, 1999 the National Gallery opened an outdoor sculpture garden designed to offer year-round enjoyment to the public. Located adjacent across the street from the West Building, the garden provides an informal, yet elegant setting for works of modern and contemporary sculpture. It's nice to get a snack and take a break there.

<http://www.nga.gov/>

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden

Independence Avenue at Seventh Street SW
Washington, DC 20565
Information: 202-633-1000

Admission is Free

Hours:

Museum: 10-5:30

Plaza between the legs of the museum: 7:30 am to 5:30 pm

Sculpture Garden: 7:30 am to dusk

Closed December 25

Nearest Subway Station: Smithsonian station

Disabled access: All Stations on the Metro System are accessible. Check at any station for information about broken elevators, etc.

Across the mall from the National Gallery you can find the doughnut shaped Hirshhorn Museum, another museum of contemporary art. This museum is focused on more recent art than the National Gallery's East Building. The work from the permanent collection exhibited in the galleries devoted generally to 2D work is high in quality. You will also find good work that is less well known of many major artists, giving you a chance to get a deeper understanding of each artist's oeuvre.

The sculpture garden in front of the museum is a good place to enjoy important work in a beautiful setting. The sculpture garden is matched by a large collection of smaller sculpture in galleries closer to the interior of each of the ring shaped floors.

Those who have been victims of New York's Guggenheim museum will find that this round building gives you a radically more comfortable experience. This is a more tiring museum than most, however. Under the museum, which stands on large legs, is a plaza with a nice fountain. Around the plaza you will find more sculpture in the museum's collection.

<http://hirshhorn.si.edu/>

The National Museum of the American Indian

Fourth Street & Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20560
Phone: 202-633-1000

Admission is Free

Hours:

Daily: 10-5:30

Closed Dec. 25

Exhibition spaces, café, and stores begin closing at 5:15 p.m

Nearest Subway Station: Smithsonian station or L'Enfant Plaza Station

Disabled access: All Stations on the Metro System are accessible. Check at any station for information about broken elevators, etc.

The National Museum of the American Indian is a museum of Native American Culture, and in addition to its fine art galleries, the building is ornamented with Native American Art throughout. The architecture of the building also reflects many aspects of Native American Culture.

A visit to this museum is a beautiful experience. On the top floor there is a series of displays teaching the viewer the story and legends of each tribe. You can also find artifacts in another section of this floor. Unfortunately the artifacts would be a better experience with better labeling.

The second floor is devoted mostly to visual art galleries and the auditorium. The ground floor has a cafeteria of Native American food, a shop, and a large lobby with a designed to reference a kiva.

<http://www.nmai.si.edu/>

Freer and Sackler Galleries

The Freer Gallery of Art
Jefferson Drive at 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20560

Information: 202-633-4880

The Sackler Gallery
1050 Independence Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20560

Information: 202-633-4880

Although their collections are stored and exhibited separately, the two museums share a director, administration, and staff. The two museums are connected by an underground exhibition space.

Admission is Free

Hours:

Daily: 10-5:30

Closed Dec. 25

Nearest Subway Station: Smithsonian station

Disabled access: All Stations on the Metro System are accessible. Check at any station for information about broken elevators, etc.

The Freer Gallery

The gallery houses a world-renowned collection of art from China, Japan, Korea, South and Southeast Asia, and the Near East. Visitor favorites include Chinese paintings, Japanese folding screens, Korean ceramics, Indian and Persian manuscripts, and Buddhist sculpture. A highlight of Whistler holdings is the Peacock Room, a dining room that was once part of a London townhouse. In 1876, Whistler lavishly decorated the room with a blue and gold peacock design. After the owner's death, the room was brought to the United States and permanently installed in the Freer Gallery.

The gallery was founded by Charles Lang Freer (1854–1919), a railroad-car manufacturer from Detroit who gave to the United States his collections and funds for a building to house them. The Italian-Renaissance-style gallery, constructed in granite and marble, was designed by American architect Charles Platt. When the gallery opened to the public in 1923, it was the first Smithsonian museum for fine arts. In subsequent years, the collections have grown through gifts and purchases to nearly triple the size of Freer's bequest.

The Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

The gallery opened in 1987 to house a gift of some 1,000 works of Asian art from Dr. Arthur M. Sackler (1913–1987), a research physician and medical publisher from New York City. Among the highlights of his gift were early Chinese bronzes and jades, Chinese paintings and lacquerware, ancient Near Eastern ceramics and metalware, and sculpture from South and Southeast Asia. Since 1987, the gallery's collections have expanded to include the Vever Collection, an important assemblage of the Islamic arts of the book from the 11th to the 19th century; 19th- and 20th-century Japanese prints and contemporary porcelain; Indian, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean paintings; arts of village India; contemporary Chinese ceramics; and photography. The gallery has also exhibited major international loan exhibitions.

<http://www.asia.si.edu/>

Smithsonian American Art Museum

8th and F Streets, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004
Information: 202-633-1000

Admission is Free

Hours:

Daily: 11:30-7

Closed December 25

Nearest Subway Station: Gallery Place/Chinatown

Disabled access: All Stations on the Metro System are accessible. Check at any station for information about broken elevators, etc.

The Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM) has an excellent collection of American art housed in one of the most beautiful historic buildings in the city, and which is shared with the National Portrait Gallery. In addition to a fine art collection covering all major eras of American art history from the early days of Independence to the present, the museum has an extensive folk art collection.

The vast and comprehensive permanent collection is complimented by a schedule of high quality temporary exhibitions which include retrospectives of little known American artists that easily deserve our attention.

http://americanart.si.edu/museum_info/index.cfm

National Portrait Gallery

Eighth and F Streets, NW
Washington, D.C., 20001

Information: 202-633-8300

Admission is Free

Hours:

Daily: 11:30-7

Closed December 25

Nearest Subway Station: Gallery Place/Chinatown

Disabled access: All Stations on the Metro System are accessible. Check at any station for information about broken elevators, etc.

The Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery tells the story of America through the individuals who have shaped U.S. culture. The vast collection casts a wide net to include those in every niche of American culture. Here presidents and philosophers rub elbows with the entertainers, artists and sports heroes who all have in common the fact that they have enhanced our lives in some way, and who should therefore be remembered. The Museum shares its beautiful and historic building with the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

<http://www.npg.si.edu/>

Renwick Gallery

1661 Pennsylvania Avenue NW (at 17th Street)

Washington DC 20006

Information: 202-633-2850

Admission is Free

Hours:

Daily: 10-5:30

Closed December 25

Nearest Subway Station: Farragut North or Farragut West

Disabled access: All Stations on the Metro System are accessible. Check at any station for information about broken elevators, etc.

The Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery collects, exhibits, studies, and preserves American crafts and decorative arts from the nineteenth to twenty-first centuries. Housed in a historic architectural landmark across the street from the White House, the Renwick features one-of-a-kind pieces created from clay, fiber, glass, metal, and wood.

<http://americanart.si.edu/renwick/index.cfm>

Corcoran Gallery of Art

500 Seventeenth Street NW
Washington, DC 20006

Information: 202-639-1700

Admission:

General Admission: \$6

This allows access to the Permanent Collections galleries only.
All reciprocity agreements will be honored.
Members of the Corcoran and children ages six and under admitted free of charge.

Special Exhibition

Adults: \$14
Senior/Military: \$12
Students: \$10

Members of the Corcoran and children ages six and under admitted free of charge.

Hours:

Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday: 10-5

Thursday: 10 -9

Closed Monday and Tuesday

Nearest Subway Station: Farragut North or Farragut West

Disabled access: All Stations on the Metro System are accessible. Check at any station for information about broken elevators, etc.

The Corcoran Museum is linked to the Corcoran school of fine art. The combined institutions have been a major force in the Washington DC visual arts community for some time. The collection is housed in an architecturally beautiful building that is also a bit exhausting to explore. The strength of the collection is in late 19th to early 20th century painting and sculpture. The Corcoran sponsors an important Biennial of American painting. They also exhibit temporary exhibitions that are excellent.

<http://www.corcoran.org/index.asp>

The Phillips Collection

1600 21st Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009
Information: 202-387-2151

Admission:

Tuesday-Friday: Admission to the permanent collection is by donation; admission to temporary exhibitions pay the fee for that show.

Saturday-Sunday: Adults \$10
 Seniors: \$8 (62 and over)
 Students: \$8

all weekend visitors pay the special exhibition fee.

Hours:

Tuesday-Saturday: 10-5

Thursday: 10-8:30

Sunday: 11-6

Closed: Monday
 New Year's Day
 Independence Day
 Thanksgiving Day
 Christmas Day

Nearest Subway Station: Farragut North or Farragut West

Disabled access: All Stations on the Metro System are accessible. Check at any station for information about broken elevators, etc.

The Phillips collection is a private collection that became one of the country's first museums of modern art. With an excellent collection of painting from about 1750 to the present, and galleries that are well arranged and comfortable, the museum is a wonderful place to go to see terrific art.

<http://www.phillipscollection.org/>

National Museum of Women in the Arts

1250 New York Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005-3970
Information: 202-783-5000, 1-800-222-7270

Admission:

Adults: \$10
Seniors: \$8 (60 and over)
Students: \$8
NMWA members: Free
Youth 18 and under: Free
Free Community Days on the first Sunday of every month.

Hours:

Monday-Saturday: 10-5.
Sunday: noon-5

Closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day

Nearest Subway Station: Metro Center

Disabled access: All Stations on the Metro System are accessible. Check at any station for information about broken elevators, etc.

The National Museum of Women in the Arts is the only museum in the world dedicated exclusively to recognizing the contributions of women artists. The collection is housed in a Washington landmark near the White House, formerly a Masonic Temple, and refurbished it in accordance with the highest design, museum, and security standards. It won numerous architectural awards.

You will see work by many women artists in museums throughout the city. Nevertheless, this is a nice museum to visit to these women's work together, to find artists whose work you are unfamiliar with, and for their temporary shows.

<http://www.nmwa.org/>

The Kreeger Museum

2401 Foxhall Road, NW
Washington, DC 20007
Information: 202-338-355

Hours:

Tuesday-Friday: Reservations are required for weekday visits to the museum. Visitors may choose to make reservations for the 10:30 am or 1:30 pm tour. Call 202-338-3552 or email visitorservices@kreegermuseum.org.

Saturday: 10-4 No reservations needed. Optional guided tours are given at 10:30 am, 12:00 pm and 2:00 pm.

Admission:

Adults: \$10
Students: \$7 (with ID)
Seniors: \$7 (65+)
Members: Free

The museum is distant from the Metro System, so it is best to visit the website for directions, and chart your course based on that information.

The Kreeger Museum is a private, non-profit art museum located in the former residence of David and Carmen Kreeger. Designed by Philip Johnson, it showcases the Kreeger's permanent collection of 19th and 20th century paintings and sculptures. Highlights of the collection include works by Monet, van Gogh, Picasso, Renoir, Cezanne, Chagall, Rodin, Miro, Moore, Kandinsky and Washington artists Gene Davis, Sam Gilliam, William Christenberry and Kendall Buster as well as examples of traditional African and Asian Art.

<http://www.kreegermuseum.org/>