Maryland

By Tom Kirvan

A CHESAPEAKE STATE JOURNEY THROUGH HISTORY AND NATURE

Tucked into the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States, Maryland is a state that offers a little bit of everything: bustling cities, serene mountains, coastal beauty, and deep American history. Though modest in size, Maryland is rich in diversity and character. With a population of approximately 6.2 million people, it stands as a microcosm of the entire country, earning its nickname "America in Miniature."

Maryland's geography is as varied as it is beautiful. To the west, the Appalachian Mountains rise over forested hills, while in the east, the flatlands spill into the Chesapeake Bay, the largest estuary in the United States. The Atlantic Ocean borders the state's eastern edge, offering miles of sandy beaches, while rivers like the Potomac, Patapsco, and Susquehanna weave through the land.
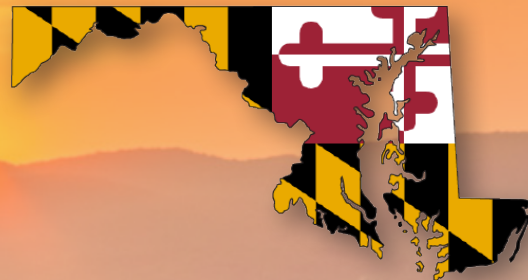
The state capital, Annapolis, sits along Chesapeake Bay and is known for its well-preserved 18th-century architecture and strong maritime culture. Home to the United States Naval Academy, Annapolis is both quaint and stately, filled with brick-lined streets, sailboats, and seafood restaurants. Though smaller than Baltimore, it is the symbolic and political heart of the state.

Maryland's highest natural elevation is Hoye-Crest, located on Backbone Mountain in Garrett County in the far western panhandle. At 3,360 feet above sea level, Hoye-Crest offers sweeping views of the Appalachian landscape and is accessible via a short but rewarding hike. It's a peaceful escape into the state's highlands, far removed from the urban bustle of the east.

Maryland played a pivotal role in American history from its founding in 1632 as a haven for English Catholics to its critical position during the Civil War. It was a border state, deeply divided between North and South, and its proximity to Washington, D.C. made it strategically vital.

The state is home to Fort McHenry, where the Star-Spangled Banner was born. During the War of 1812, Baltimore's successful defense against the British inspired Francis Scott Key to write the poem that later became the national anthem.

Maryland also figured prominently in the Underground Railroad. Harriet Tubman, born into slavery in the state's Dorchester County, led dozens of enslaved people to freedom and became a national hero. Her legacy is honored at the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

Fast Facts

Capital: Annapolis
Population: 6.2 million
Economic engines: Technology, life sciences, international trade, and tourism
Highest Point: Hoye-Crest (3,360 feet)

Primerus Member: Thomas & Libowitz, P.A.

Thomas & Libowitz, P.A., a full-service law firm located in Baltimore.

Maryland

Five Must-See Destinations

- **Baltimore's Inner Harbor:** The city of Baltimore, Maryland's largest urban center, is best known for its Inner Harbor – a revitalized waterfront district filled with attractions. Visitors can explore the National Aquarium, tour the historic USS Constellation, or enjoy waterfront dining and/or live music. The nearby neighborhoods of Fells Point and Federal Hill offer cobblestone streets, pubs, and local charm.

- **Assateague Island National Seashore:** Along Maryland's Atlantic coastline lies Assateague Island, a barrier island famous for its wild ponies that roam freely along its beaches and marshes. The island offers camping, kayaking, birdwatching, and some of the most natural and unspoiled beaches along the Mid-Atlantic shore. It's a dream destination for nature lovers and photographers.

- **Antietam National Battlefield:** History comes alive at Antietam, the site of the bloodiest single-day battle in American history during the Civil War. Located near Sharpsburg, the battlefield is now a peaceful park, with walking and driving tours that interpret the events of September 17, 1862. The Antietam National Cemetery and visitor center add solemn depth to this must-visit historical site.

- **Deep Creek Lake:** In western Maryland, Deep Creek Lake offers year-round outdoor recreation. In summer, the lake is perfect for boating, fishing, and paddleboarding. In winter, nearby Wisp Resort provides skiing and snowboarding. The surrounding Garrett County countryside is rich with hiking trails, waterfalls, and cozy cabins for a true escape into nature.

- **Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum (St. Michaels):** Located in the charming town of St. Michaels, this waterfront museum offers an immersive look into the history, culture, and ecology of the Chesapeake Bay. Exhibits include restored boats, lighthouses, and hands-on maritime experiences. St. Michaels itself is a delightful small town with boutique shops and renowned crab houses.