

New Hampshire

By Tom Kirvan

THE GRANITE STATE'S RUGGED CHARM AND BEAUTY

Located in the northeastern corner of the United States, New Hampshire is a small but mighty state packed with natural splendor, colonial history, and a fiercely independent spirit. Known as the Granite State, it has long been a haven for outdoor enthusiasts, history buffs, and anyone seeking a slice of classic New England charm. With a population of about 1.4 million people, New Hampshire offers quiet towns, wild mountains, and a strong sense of place – all in a compact footprint.

New Hampshire is bordered by Maine to the east, Massachusetts to the south, Vermont to the west, and Quebec, Canada, to the north. Though it boasts only 18 miles of Atlantic coastline (the shortest of any U.S. coastal state), it more than makes up for that with its dramatic interior – especially the White Mountains, home to the most rugged terrain in the northeastern United States.

The capital city, Concord, sits in the south-central part of the state along the Merrimack River. It's a small, approachable city with a classic New England feel, complete with a gold-domed State House, quaint shops, and locally owned cafés. While quieter than cities like Manchester or Portsmouth, Concord's charm lies in its accessibility and rich sense of civic pride.

Rising to 6,288 feet, Mount Washington is the tallest peak in the northeastern United States and a legendary landmark in New Hampshire. Located in the Presidential Range of the White Mountains, it is known for its extreme weather, holding the record for the fastest surface wind speed ever observed (231 mph). Adventurers can hike to the summit via the challenging Tuckerman Ravine Trail, take a scenic drive up the Mount Washington Auto Road, or ride the historic Cog Railway, which has been chugging up the mountain since 1869.

New Hampshire was one of the original 13 colonies and played a pivotal role in the American Revolution. In fact, it was the first state to establish an independent government and constitution in 1776, even before the Declaration of Independence. It earned its nickname, the Granite State, not only from its geological formations but also from the sturdy character of its citizens.

The state's "Live Free or Die" motto reflects a long-standing emphasis on individual freedom and self-reliance – traits embedded in its refusal to implement a general sales or income tax, a rarity in the U.S.



Fast Facts

Capital: Concord
Population: 1.4 million
Highest Point: Mount Washington (6,228 feet)
Motto: "Live Free or Die"

Primerus Member: The Bennett Law Firm, P.A.

The Bennett Law Firm, P.A., a full-service business firm based in Concord.



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One of the most influential events in modern history also occurred in New Hampshire: the Bretton Woods Conference of 1944, held at the Mount Washington Hotel, which established the post-World War II international monetary system and created the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank.

Five Must-See Destinations

- **Franconia Notch State Park:** Nestled in the heart of the White Mountains, Franconia Notch is a dramatic mountain pass offering a wealth of outdoor experiences. Highlights include Flume Gorge, a narrow chasm with boardwalk trails and waterfalls, and Cannon Mountain, which features an aerial tramway with sweeping views. The park is also the former home of the Old Man of the Mountain, a beloved rock formation that collapsed in 2003 but remains an enduring symbol of the state.
- **Lake Winnepesaukee:** New Hampshire's largest lake, Winnepesaukee, spans over 70 square miles and is dotted with more than 250 islands. Popular towns like Meredith, Wolfeboro, and Laconia offer beach access, boat rentals, and lakeside dining. Visitors can cruise the lake on the M/S Mount Washington, kayak, or relax in a cabin, making Lake Winnepesaukee a quintessential summer destination.
- **Portsmouth:** On the short but scenic coastline lies the port city of Portsmouth, rich with maritime history and colonial architecture. Cobblestone streets, red-brick buildings, and historic homes like those in Strawberry Banke Museum give visitors a sense of early American life. Portsmouth also offers vibrant restaurants, art galleries, and harbor cruises along the Piscataqua River.
- **Kancamagus Highway:** Known affectionately as "The Kanc," this 34.5-mile scenic byway winds through White Mountain National Forest, offering panoramic views, hiking trails, waterfalls, and vibrant foliage in autumn. It's one of the best leaf-peeping routes in the country, drawing thousands every fall, though its beauty is on display year-round.
- **Mount Monadnock:** Often cited as one of the most climbed mountains in the world, Mount Monadnock in southern New Hampshire stands at 3,165 feet and offers sweeping views of all six New England states from the summit on a clear day. With well-marked trails, it's accessible to both beginners and experienced hikers, making it a favorite for day trips.

