



discover New England **REVOLUTIONARY HISTORY: 14-Day Itinerary**

July 4, 2026 is the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, which happened during the Revolutionary War. The war ended with the signing of the Treaty of Paris in September 1783. New England was where it all began. This was a very contentious time in our history with British Loyalists in the Settlements having rising tensions with Patriots. New England Patriots were in the forefront from raids on gunpowder magazines to the Boston Tea Party to privateering in the Atlantic and the first shots setting off a full out war. Across New England, the six states will host monumental celebrations beginning in 2024 to commemorate the United States Semiquincentennial.

DAYS 1-4: MASSACHUSETTS

Learn more with the [Massachusetts Historical Society](#) and [Massachusetts 250](#).

Learn more about visiting [Massachusetts](#)

Lodging Ideas: [Omni Parker House](#), Boston Marriott Copley Place, Copley Square Hotel, Hilton Boston Park Plaza, Newbury Guest House, The Revolution Hotel, The Whitney Hotel, Inn at Hastings Park (Lexington), Residence Inn Westford, North Bridge Inn B&B, Concord's Colonial Inn. Wayside Inn in Sudbury (Inspiration for volume of tales by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow). In Plymouth: Hotel 1620 Plymouth Harbor, John Carver Inn, Hilton Garden Inn

Begin your travels with a guided or self-guided tour of [The Freedom Trail](#). This 2.5-mile (4km) walking tour brings visitors to 16 nationally significant historic sites including Paul Revere's home, the Boston Massacre Site, Boston Common, the Old North Church, Faneuil Hall, Quincy Market, and the USS Constitution. Shops and restaurants abound along the way – including the [Union Oyster House](#), Boston's oldest restaurant.

Reenact the Boston Tea Party at the [Boston Tea Party Museum](#), one of the most defining moments in American history when Patriots dumped 342 chests of tea into the Atlantic in defiance of taxation and tyranny. The museum offers a multi-sensory experience, complete with live actors.

If your legs still have steps in them, climb the 221-foot (68m) monument at the site of the [Battle of Bunker Hill](#).

Just a short ride from Boston are the picturesque towns of Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts. They are filled with green spaces, artists, authors, local shops and restaurants. During the night of April 18, 1775, Paul Revere and William Dawes raced on horseback to warn these towns of the approaching British Army troops and were captured before reaching Concord. Fortunately, a local Patriot named Samuel Prescott was able to relay the message the rest of the way which was critical to the victories in the first battles of the Revolutionary War on April 19, 1775.

Re-experience the first shots of the Revolution with tours by the [Lexington Visitor Center](#) offering a costumed guided Battle Green Colonial walking tour, a trolley tour, customized private tours stopping at sites along the Black Heritage Trail as well as self-guided resources. See where the British Army continued to [Concord's Old North Bridge](#), now surrounded by the trails and stone walls of the [Minute Man National Historic Park](#), where the British were met by colonial militia just given their first orders to fire upon the British soldiers. Learn about the [Patriots of Color](#) with a stop at the [Robbins House](#) in Concord, built by the children of the formerly enslaved African American Revolutionary War veteran Caesar Robbins. The [Concord Museum](#) has Paul Revere's actual lantern! Be sure to ask about arranging a walking tour of the museum and the surrounding revolutionary and literary sites. [Concord250](#) is a great resource for your planning needs.

DAYS 5 & 6: RHODE ISLAND

Learn more about visiting [Rhode Island](#)

Lodging Ideas: [Newport Harbor House & Marina](#), Gardiner House, [Francis Malbone House](#), [Forty 1 North](#), [Hotel Viking](#)

Rhode Island played a major role in naval battles and privateering, privately owned ships authorized by the government to attack enemy vessels – and they succeeded in disrupting maritime trade and captured enemy vessels. Rhode Island is where the French made their debut at what is now [King's Park](#) and whose Commander-in-Chief Rochambeau became strategically vital to General George Washington's fight for freedom from Britain across all 13 colonies. A short drive around the cove from King's Park is [Fort Adams](#) offering tours and events, most notably the Newport Folk and the Newport Jazz Festivals.

Newport was occupied by the British Army. A must stop is America's oldest operating tavern and the 10th oldest in the world, [The White Horse Tavern](#). Established in 1673, it served as a meeting place for sailors, traders, and townspeople. The [Newport Historical Society History Tours](#) offers private and group tours of downtown Newport retracing colonial life including lantern tours, visits to the Colony House, exploring burying grounds, tracing notable people and places in African American history, experiencing the French influence and more.

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Two of the most notable sites are the Trinity Church built in 1725 where General George Washington worshipped and the Touro Synagogue which opened in 1790 making it the oldest synagogue in the United States.

Newport is located on the southern seaside of Aquidneck Island. This island is referred to by historians as the [Battle of Rhode Island Historic District](#). Visitors to the northern part of the island towards the town of Portsmouth on their way to popular attractions like the [Newport Car Museum](#), the [Green Animals Topiary Garden](#) and the [Rail Explorers](#), can stop at multiple Revolutionary sites of significance. [Patriot's Park](#) is one of the stops where the 1st Rhode Island Regiment of African American and Native American soldiers courageously saved the American line in 1778.

One of the earliest attacks of the war was in the waters of coastal Narragansett Bay where Aquidneck Island is located. A Royal Navy schooner, HMS Gaspee had been enforcing British trade and ran aground while chasing a packet boat, a medium sized boat designed for domestic mail and freight. A group of men referred to as the *Sons of Liberty* raided and burned the Gaspee to the waterline. Every June, [Gaspee Days](#) are celebrated on Narragansett Bay in Warwick. The [Sons of Liberty Spirits](#) in South Kingston, named for these rebels, is an award-winning distillery.

DAYS 7 & 8: CONNECTICUT

Lodging Ideas: [New Haven Hotel](#), [Hotel Marcel](#), [Blake Hotel](#), [Courtyard by Marriott New Haven at Yale](#)

The original New Haven Colony on Long Island Sound, settled in 1638 were Freemen seeking economic and religious liberty. Most were wealthy merchants and farmers who had the disdain of King Charles II for harboring fugitives. Patriotism was very strong here and they quickly assembled Foot Guard soldiers to march to Lexington to join the fight. It didn't take long for the British to rob and burn towns along the Connecticut coast which were met by the Foot Guard and fighting Yale University students. You can learn more by doing a guided tour of their 300-year history with the [Yale University Visitor Center](#). Yale is the alma mater of ten Founding Fathers; five of whom signed the Declaration of Independence.

Though largely free of occupation, it was a sight to see in 1781 when George Washington's troops and the French allies marched 120 miles (193 km) through Connecticut along what is now the [Washington Rochambeau National Historic Trail](#). Soldiers were able to stock up on food and other goods, giving Connecticut the name "The Provision State."

Later on that same year, the British sent 1,600 men to the [Fort Griswold Battlefield](#) in Groton and across the river in New London led by the traitor General Benedict Arnold, destroying more than 140 homes and businesses and an unfortunate British massacre of colonial militia. New London still has a tradition of burning a Benedict Arnold effigy every September. A visit to the battlefield includes original fort ramparts, a tour of the [Ebenezer Avery House](#) where wounded soldiers were taken, a Revolutionary War museum, and astounding views of the harbor and [Fort Trumbull](#) across the Thames River. The [Thames River Heritage Park & Water Taxi](#) is a collection of 30 historic sites along the Thames River linked by water taxi that includes the mentioned battlegrounds as well as historic homes and burial grounds, such as of the [Nathan Hale Schoolhouse](#) named for a teacher and soldier who volunteered to spy on the British for George Washington before he was hanged in 1776.

DAYS 9 & 10: VERMONT

Learn more about visiting [Vermont](#)

Lodging Ideas: [Hotel Vermont](#), [Courtyard Burlington Harbor](#), [Hilton Burlington Lake Champlain](#)

During the Revolutionary War, Vermont was not one of the original thirteen colonies – it was a part of the disputed territory known as the New Hampshire Grants. Vermont organized itself as an independent republic in July 1777. The Continental Congress refused to acknowledge that Vermont was a separate state independent of New York until 1791 when it joined the Union as the 14th state. Still, those living in what was to become Vermont played a significant role in the fight of independence.

The Green Mountain Boys, a militia organized by Ethan Allen in 1770 to resist New York's attempts to control the territory, were particularly renowned for their military exploits during the American War. Sharing command with Colonel Benedict Arnold, Allen successfully led 200 Vermont troops to capture British-held Fort Ticonderoga, Crown Point, and Fort George in New York and the King's ship *Betsy* on Lake Champlain in 1775. Over a year before the signing of the Declaration of Independence, American forces on Lake Champlain were in complete control of a water highway that led directly to the heart of Quebec, making Vermont's strategic location a crucial crossroads for military operations in the region.

Spend a day in Burlington, strolling along the [lakefront of Lake Champlain](#), shopping on [Church Street](#), and visiting the graves of great Revolutionary War fighters like [Ethan Allen](#) and [reinterred soldiers](#) of the War of 1812. From there, take a drive along the shore of Lake Champlain to Vergennes and the [Lake Champlain Maritime Museum](#) to explore multiple wars in American history including the French and Indian, the Revolutionary, and the War of 1812.

A little further south along the shore is [Mount Independence State Historic Site](#) in Orwell, with six miles of walking trails along the archaeological remains of a Revolutionary War site where battles raged that ultimately forced the American soldiers to retreat. Visit [Hubbardton Battlefield State Historic Site](#), considered by military historians as the most evocative of the war's battlefields. This was the site of the only Revolutionary War battle fought entirely in what would become Vermont soil and one of the most successful rear-guard actions in American history.

In Southern Vermont, [Bennington Battle Monument](#) rises as the second tallest unreinforced masonry structure in the United States to commemorate the 1777 Battle of Bennington, a key turning point in the Revolutionary War. Standing 306 feet, the 1891 monument provides spectacular views of Vermont, New York, and Massachusetts.

DAYS 11 & 12: NEW HAMPSHIRE

Learn more about visiting [New Hampshire](#)

Lodging Ideas: [Wentworth by the Sea](#), [Hotel Thaxter](#), [Hotel Portsmouth](#), AC [Hotel by Marriott Portsmouth Downtown/Waterfront](#), [Janmere Motel](#)

New Hampshire has the distinction of being the first colony to declare independence, first to approve a State Constitution and the colony that made the United States a nation by ratifying the Constitution. General John Stark, one of New Hampshire's boldest commanders, is known as 'the hero of Bennington' (Vermont) having led that victory. He also gave New Hampshire its motto: "Live Free or Die" when he offered that phrase as a toast to veterans of the Battle of Bennington, adding, "there are worse things than death."

On December 13, 1774, four months before his historic "Midnight Ride", Paul Revere rode 55 miles from Boston to Portsmouth, New Hampshire to warn of the imminent seizure by British troops of ammunition stored at Fort William and Mary which was guarded by a small contingent of just 6 British soldiers. This led to one of the first acts of rebellion as 400 townspeople raided the garrison's gunpowder to prevent the takeover. The Fort was later renamed Fort Constitution, and visitors can browse ruins and wander the [Fort Constitution Historic Site](#) in New Castle, overlooking the Piscataqua River and the Atlantic Ocean.

Portsmouth, New Hampshire, designated one of *America's Dozen Distinctive Destinations* by The National Trust for Historic Preservation has everything visitors look for in a destination: award winning restaurants, living history, music, theater and boutique artisan shops. As a colonial settlement, Portsmouth was inhabited by both wealthy Royal merchants and active Patriots such as John Langdon (later Governor of the new state of NH) who led the raid on Fort William and Mary and whose home is open to public tours.

[Strawbery Banke](#), the settlement's original name, is now an open-air museum with 32 historic buildings located in a historic waterfront neighborhood. The living museum interprets 350 years of history with costumed actors, demonstrations, and heirloom gardens. Visitors also enjoy the gardens at Prescott Park across the street and the free summer performances at the [Prescott Park Arts Festival](#). Prescott Park is where the historic "gundalow" vessel takes off on sailing tours by the [Gundalow Company](#). These traditional sailing vessels once filled the river during the Colonial times. Another way to experience the history of New Hampshire's coast is with the [Portsmouth Harbor Cruises](#) offering narrated tours of the many lighthouses, mansions, submarines and forts in the harbor. Back on land, the [Portsmouth Historical Society](#) offers downtown tours that provide insight to the city's role over its 400-year history including historic houses of the "Father of the American Navy" John Paul Jones and Declaration signer William Whipple.

Further north, Dover has the [Woodman Museum](#) offering the opportunity to explore and experience history and natural sciences in addition to the Damm Garrison House, the oldest house in Dover and one of the most intact displays of a fortified Garrison left in the world.

In the town of Exeter, the [American Independence Museum](#) honors the signing of the United States Constitution and proudly displays an original copy that was circulated through the colonies after July 4. Exeter was one of four original towns in the colony and served as the capital of this new state during the American Revolution.

DAYS 13 & 14: MAINE

Learn more about visiting [Maine](#)

Lodging ideas: [Aloft Portland](#), [Hilton Garden Inn Portland Waterfront](#), [Residence Inn Portland Downtown/Waterfront](#), [Nonantum Resort](#) (Kennebunkport), [Lafayette Hotels Bangor & Bar Harbor](#)

Head into Maine to what the locals call “Down East,” there you can experience three different historically significant locations.

The Battle of Machias – also known as the Battle of Margareta – took place in 1775 in Machias, Maine, which was a part of Massachusetts at the time and is the first official naval battle of the American Revolutionary War.

The actual battle was between Patriot sailors and the British schooner Margareta. The battle showcases the resolve and bravery of the local Patriots, and the battle is commemorated through historical markers, monuments, and reenactments in Machias and the surrounding area. Find more information at the [Machias Historical Society](#) and the [Burnham Tavern Museum](#).

Move down the coast to the lovely town of Castine, home to [Fort George](#), the focus of a years-long dispute among the English, French, Native Americans, and Colonialists. The fort was built by Great Britain in 1779 during the American Revolutionary War to establish a colony called New Ireland. Known as the Battle of Fort George or the Penobscot Expedition, American forces launched an expedition to drive the British out of Castine and the surrounding area.

Another coastal defense site that is the [Fort Knox Historic Site & Penobscot Narrows Bridge & Observatory](#) in Prospect, Maine. The Observatory, which is the tallest public bridge observatory in the world, is the crown jewel of coastal Maine offering spectacular 360° views of the Penobscot River, the bucolic Maine countryside, and the mountains in the distant west. Fort Knox was named for Major General Henry Knox, who played a significant role in the American Revolutionary War and was later the first Secretary of War. It was built between 1844 and 1869 to protect the Penobscot River and surrounding region. Visitors can explore the grounds, interact with the knowledgeable guides, and learn its role in regional defense.

On the southern coast in a prime location overlooking the entrance to the Piscataqua River and Portsmouth Harbor of Maine, [Fort McClary](#) in Kittery Point was created in the 1600’s to defend English settlements but was seized from Loyalist William Pepperell in 1775 and manned by Patriots until 1779. During various periods of American history, the fort has played a significant role in coastal defense, and stands as one of the state’s most important historic forts, as it was manned during five wars: The Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Civil War, Spanish-American War and World War I.

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