

BALTIMORE



Steamed crabs at Riptide by the Bay.

Going for Crabs

CRAB HOUSES ARE CHARM CITY'S FAVORITE SUMMERTIME INDULGENCE

FEW DINING EXPERIENCES are more emblematic of summertime in Baltimore than “going for crabs.” Maryland’s famous blue crabs are served steamed, bright red and slathered with gritty Old Bay seasoning. This social dining ritual involves dressing casually and heading to a crab house to feast at a picnic table that’s covered in brown butcher paper and garnished with mallets, a roll of paper towels, buckets for discarded shells and ice-cold pitchers of Natty Boh. Crab houses are lively dining joints, filled with the sounds of hammers cracking claws, beer mugs clinking and happy banter.

The wait staff speaks jargon familiar only to locals: “Larges are 75, Hon” means that large crabs (measuring 5½ to 6 inches) cost \$75 per dozen, dear. But more important is the staff’s answer to the question “How’re they running?” to determine which crabs are the meatiest. Availability, sizes and prices of crabs constantly fluctuate based on the day’s catch. Feeling daring? Try a soft-shell crab resembling a giant spider—fried or broiled and eaten whole, including the dangling legs. Given the location of Baltimore’s Inner Harbor, some of the region’s best crab houses are situated near downtown.

CANTON DOCKSIDE, 410-276-8900; cantondockside.com

LOCUST POINT STEAMERS, 410-576-9294; locustpointsteamers.com

RIPTIDE BY THE BAY, 410-732-3474; riptidebythebay.net

CAPTAIN JAMES SEAFOOD PALACE, 410-327-8600; captainjameslanding.com

NICK'S FISH HOUSE AND GRILL, 410-347-4123; nicksfishhouse.com

The Original Washington Monument

Did you know that America’s oldest memorial to George Washington is not the one in the nation’s capital? Baltimore is home to the first Washington Monument. Although the obelisk in Washington, D.C., is taller, construction of Baltimore’s memorial began 33 years before the start of construction of the D.C. version. Baltimore’s Washington Monument, topped with a statue of G.W., celebrates its 200th birthday this year. With “A Monumental Bicentennial” July 4, the city will stage an official rededication of the monument and host an American citizenship naturalization ceremony. Also planned are family-friendly activities, picnic food, music and tours of the monument, which recently underwent a \$5.5 million renovation. Fun fact: During the renovation, a time capsule from 1915 was discovered. [facebook.com/mountvernonplace](https://www.facebook.com/mountvernonplace)



Baltimore’s Washington Monument is the centerpiece of the four squares of Mount Vernon Place.

For additional event, attraction, restaurant and hotel information, visit baltimore.org



SAVE the DATE

INNER HARBOR

FIREWORKS ON THE WATER

July 4

Few celebrations top Baltimore’s Independence Day festivities, featuring free live entertainment and ending with a fireworks display choreographed to music. **410-752-8632**; promotionandarts.org

MOUNT VERNON

ARTSCAPE

July 17-19

Artscape is America’s largest free arts festival, featuring more than 150 fine artists and craftspeople, along with art cars, international foods and live performances of music, dance, opera, theater and film. **410-752-8632**; artscape.org

CAMDEN YARDS

PIANO MAN

July 25

Looking for a rocking outdoor summer concert? Billy Joel plays M&T Bank Stadium in his first Baltimore show in nearly four decades. **800-653-8000**; ticketmaster.com

LITTLE ITALY

OPEN-AIR FILM FEST

Through August

Every Friday at 9 p.m. an Italian-related film is screened on the outside wall of a restaurant. Arrive early for live music and a picnic with food from Little Italy’s finest eateries. littleitalymd.com/t/open_air_film_fest

INNER HARBOR

PIER 6 PAVILION CONCERTS

Through Sept. 26

The outdoor music pavilion brings headline acts such as Santana, The Band Perry and Third Eye Blind to the Inner Harbor all summer long. **410-783-4189**; piersixpavilion.com