

BALTIMORE

Free Pass

HUNDREDS OF ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS ARE FREE IN BALTIMORE THROUGHOUT OCTOBER

WHEN THE SUMMER ENDS, Baltimore heats up. In conjunction with October's National Humanities Month, Charm City is hosting the 10th annual Free Fall Baltimore, a monthlong, citywide cultural celebration showcasing both popular and lesser-known diversions in town. Museums, galleries and theaters are among the many venues for the celebration, which offers more than 300 free events, shows and hands-on activities.

Just about anyone can find something fun to see and do. Sit in on a private rehearsal of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. During Doors Open Baltimore day, tour dozens of revamped (and often restricted-access) architectural gems from the city's storied industrial past, including the new Baltimore Design School, which once housed beverage bottler Crown Cork and Seal Co. Try Geo-Poe, the citywide literary scavenger hunt for recently hidden stories and (mobile) readings of reimagined explanations surrounding Edgar Allan Poe's mysterious death. Get free admission at the Maryland Zoo and the National Aquarium.

Join workshops teaching bookmaking, puppet design or creative writing from the masters. Learn improv from local theater company actors. Hear lectures and see special performances at the Baltimore Shakespeare Theater. Take a contra dance lesson at the Baltimore Folk Music Society. Discover off-the-beaten-track historic sites, galleries, sporting events, film presentations and more. None of it will cost you a penny, not even parking: The always-free Charm City Circulator transports folks practically anywhere around the city. freefallbaltimore.org

Members of the Baltimore Concert Opera perform during Free Fall Baltimore.



A competitor in the Squeakness, the pig race at the Pigtown Festival.

Go Hog-Wild

Baltimore's Washington Village, the neighborhood where Babe Ruth was born, is also called Pigtown. In the 19th century, livestock arrived there via the B&O Railroad and were herded through the street to the city's butcher shops.

Nowadays, Washington Village is a diverse, downtown (and swine-free) neighborhood. But it becomes hog heaven again during the annual Pigtown Festival on Oct. 10. Local food vendors cook up sausage and barbecue fare, while attendees can enjoy live music and pick up themed tchotchkes like strap-on snouts. But the highlight is the Squeakness, in which pigs race around a track for an Oreo reward. Spectators purchase raffle tickets to bet on their favorite. Competing oinks are soon replaced with baas and quacks when duck and goat races take over the track. pigtownmainstreet.org

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



SAVE the DATE

HAMPDEN

HAMPDEN FEST

Sept. 19

Baltimore's idiosyncratic hipster culture drives this colorful festival. Along with iconic Baltimore food (think crab everything) are quirky events like a toilet bowl race and mac-n-cheese bakeoff. hampdenfest.blogspot.com

MOUNT VERNON

BALTIMORE BOOK FESTIVAL

Sept. 25-27

B'more's celebration of literary arts includes local and nationally acclaimed authors doing readings and signings on multiple stages, workshops, cooking demos and more. **877-BALTIMORE;** baltimorebookfestival.org

CITYWIDE

BALTIMORE BEER WEEK

Oct. 9-18

Natty Boh started it all. Now 35 regional breweries tap into Baltimore's brew-ha-ha culture, represented in this week of tastings, demonstrations, history tours and contests. baltimorebeerweek.com

CITYWIDE

BALTIMORE RUNNING FESTIVAL

Oct. 17

As Charm City's marathon turns 15 this year, spectators line the streets to cheer on racers past Baltimore's historic sites to the finish line. thebaltimoremarathon.com

PATTERSON PARK

GREAT HALLOWEEN LANTERN PARADE & FESTIVAL

Oct. 24

At dusk, thousands of animated lanterns light up the landscape amid stilt-walkers, marching bands and dancers in Baltimore's most luminous parade. creativealliance.org