

# Exploring the Life of George Washington at Mount Vernon

The estate of Mount Vernon lies to the south of Washington DC and is a must see tourist spot for many because of its numerous historical treasures and value as an educational facility. The site is many things to many people but every part of the landscape and every attraction have one simple connection – George Washington.



Washington has two key names in American history: to many he is General Washington, the strong hero leading the Americans in the Revolutionary war; to others he is President Washington, the first man to lead the nation in that role who was famous for the fable that he could not tell a lie. On top of this, he is both the grand father figure of America, who helped to shape the United States as they are today and watches over them from Mount Rushmore, and the loving husband of Martha Dandrige Custis, with whom he lived at Mount Vernon. Because of his many guises and indisputable place in American history, many American citizens and foreign visitors are drawn to Washington as a historical figure and many see Mount Vernon as the ideal place to learn about him and pay their respects.

## Reliving the Time of George Washington

Mount Vernon can be easily accessed from the city for a day trip. One of the more popular ways to visit is by boat as it means a scenic cruise on the Potomac River to the recreation of Washington's former wharf – the first of many reconstructions paying tribute to the man on his grand estate.



The heart of Mount Vernon is George Washington's former home, the creation of his father and his home from 1735. This 21-room mansion and its grounds of more than six acres were all designed by Washington with grand style and elaborate themes and have been restored to reflect their appearance at

their peak in 1799.

Exploring the man's life through his décor and gardens provides a great way to walk in his footsteps but the team behind the estate have gone even further to bring a sense of the age and some realism to the experience and surroundings. This is done in many ways, from the restoration of the many outbuildings to the work of the household and industrial endeavors to the selection of livestock that can be seen and petted.

It is said that Washington always saw himself as a farmer and farmed animals for all kinds of produce so, to celebrate this fact, many of the animals on site are breeds he would have used.

### **Pay Respects at the Grave**

The journey of Washington's life can be traced through these grounds and the final stop is the grand tomb that holds the body of the former president, Martha and other family members. George died in his home on December 14th 1799 and, in accordance with his wishes, was buried within the grounds, to later be relocated to a grand brick tomb of his own design in 1831.

The attraction of this final resting place shows the wide appeal of this tourist site; for some it will be a gentle stroll in another time, for others a chance for a close connection to the man and for others a chance to learn more about his life and impact on America.



### **Education and Preservation**

The estate is a historical site of great value and it uses its size and close links to Washington to provide great educational facilities for both kids and adults. The rooms provide great insight into the tastes of the couple and many of their personal items are displayed in the museum with more detailed information and historical context. If this is too dull for the children, there is also the educational center that has interactive displays about the man and his effect on the nation.

The deep link between George Washington and Mount Vernon may go deeper than some visitors first suspected and this makes the estate a must-see destination for many visitors to DC.

The connection between estate and president is impressive and it is no wonder that the team behind the attractions and restorations are using this to their advantage at every opportunity. Mount Vernon is equally a national monument, historical residence, educational facility and tourist attraction – with tours and a gift shop understandably added to round off the experience and give visitors greater memories

and keepsakes – and this means it successfully provides a unique and substantial experience for patriotic citizens, children and foreign history buffs alike.

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