

# AMAZING HAVRE DE GRACE

THERE'S PLENTY TO SEE ON A TRIP TO THIS CHARMING TOWN ON THE CHESAPEAKE BAY



Credit photo? courtesy of Harford County Tourism??

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STORY BY Libby Zay

With nearby day trip competitors like Annapolis, Frederick and Washington, D.C., it could be easy to overlook Harford County. The area might not be on everyone's travel list, but

it is well trodden by horses, historians and hikers. Take a drive through Baltimore County's northeastern neighbor and you'll pass wineries set on expansive horse farms, historic harbor towns and woodlands worth wandering into.

One of the most well-known stops in the area is Rocks State Park, where a short hike takes you to the King and Queens Seat, a cliff that was once a ceremonial gathering place for Native Americans and now offers spectacular views of the rolling hills and farmland of Harford County. Deer Creek, which cuts through the park, is a popular place for fishing and tubing.

If your idea of getting back to nature is more like a stroll, try Ladew Topiary Gardens, where 100 whimsical sculpted bushes and 15 manicured gardens are set on 22 acres. Naturalists can show you around the butterfly house, and the former stable has been turned into a cafe. The gardens also host a summer concert season called Groovin' in the Grass from 6 to 8 p.m. on Sundays.

For more fun in the sun, baseball fans can catch the Aberdeen IronBirds, a minor league team owned by retired Oriole Cal Ripken, Jr., who grew up in Harford County. The team plays at Leidos Field at Ripken Stadium, just off of I-95.

To cool down, stop for ice cream at one of the old-fashioned dairy farms in the area. Broom's Bloom Dairy and Keyes Creamery are two on-farm ice cream shops that are also featured on Maryland's newly created Ice Cream Trail. Adults can also relax with a drink from one of the independent breweries or vineyards in the area.

With its iconic lighthouse, fresh-plucked seafood and cozy B&Bs, Havre de Grace is perhaps the most well-known town in the area. The historic charm is evident as soon as you drive into the neatly laid out downtown, where window shopping is plentiful. Tibetan prayer flags flutter outside of Doodads, which is stocked with carefully curated fair trade treasures. Nearby, JoRetro Vintage Market has an impressive amount of vintage Pyrex, fashions and more from the 1950s, '60s and '70s.

The postcard-perfect Concord Point Lighthouse is undoubtedly the most photographed spot in Havre de Grace — and perhaps all of Harford County. Climb the stairs (April through October only) for a birds-eye view of the town and the water that surrounds it. From here, you can clearly see the Susquehanna River feed into the Chesapeake Bay and understand the geography that makes the lighthouse the northernmost structure of its kind on

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the bay. Built in 1827, the lighthouse is also the oldest?? still standing in Maryland.

From the lighthouse, you can take a half-mile walk along a promenade that passes the Decoy Museum, where 1,200 decoys and decorative carvings are on display, and at the Maritime Museum, where you can learn about the region's maritime heritage. The promenade ends at Tydings Memorial Park, a nice green space to spend some time watching the boats go by.

Of course, Havre de Grace isn't the only place to stay awhile in Harford County. Picturesque Bel Air is perhaps most well-known for hosting the Maryland State Barbeque Bash each August. More than 50 teams from the mid-Atlantic area compete for top honors, drawing more than 30,000 attendees over a single weekend to the streets of the small town. If you like street festivals, you'll enjoy the vibe of Bel Air's First Fridays, when the downtown area turns into a giant block party — complete with live music. A free, family friendly outdoor summer movie series also takes place on Fridays in the summer.

From downtown, the Ma & Pa Heritage Trail is a walking, running and bicycling trail that follows the former Maryland and Pennsylvania railroad corridor. It ends at the Harford County Equestrian Center, where antique car shows, flea markets and dog shows take place, as well as the Annual Harford County Farm Fair each summer.

Bel Air was incorporated as a town in the 18th century. Today, there are more than 20 buildings within the city limits that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This includes Tudor Hall, the childhood home of John Wilkes Booth, and Hays House, where visitors can find out what daily life was like during the Federal Period of American history.

History lovers will enjoy Jerusalem Mill Village, a former revolutionary war-era village that is now a living history museum in Kingsville. On weekends, volunteers in period attire give blacksmith demonstrations and re-enact the life of soldiers. The village also serves as the headquarters for Gunpowder Falls State Park, where a half-mile trail leads you to one of the few covered bridges left in Maryland. The park has more than 100 miles of trails that span both Harford and Baltimore counties.\*

## EAT

**Broom's Bloom Dairy**  
1700 S Fountain Green Road  
Bel Air  
[bbdairy.com](http://bbdairy.com)

**Coakley's Pub**  
406 St. John Street  
[coakleyspub.com](http://coakleyspub.com)

**Concord Point Coffee**  
217 N Washington Street  
[concordpointcoffee.com](http://concordpointcoffee.com)

**Laurrapin Grille**  
209 N Washington Street  
[laurrapin.com](http://laurrapin.com)



**Keyes Creamery**  
3712 Aldino Road  
Aberdeen  
[keyescreamery.com](http://keyescreamery.com)

**Tidewater Grille**  
300 Franklin Street  
[thetidewatergrille.com](http://thetidewatergrille.com)

## STAY

**Spencer Silver Mansion**  
200 S Union Avenue  
[spencersilvermansion.com](http://spencersilvermansion.com)

**Vandiver Inn**  
301 S Union Avenue  
[vandiverinn.com](http://vandiverinn.com)

## LOVE

**Concord Point Lighthouse**  
700 Concord Street  
Havre de Grace  
[concordpointlighthouse.org](http://concordpointlighthouse.org)

**Decoy Museum**  
215 Giles Street  
Havre de Grace  
[decoymuseum.com](http://decoymuseum.com)



**Harford County Equestrian Center**  
608 N Tollgate Road  
Bel Air



**Hayes House**  
324 Kenmore Avenue  
Bel Air  
[harfordhistory.net](http://harfordhistory.net)

**Jerusalem Mill Village**  
2813 Jerusalem Road  
[jerusalemmill.org](http://jerusalemmill.org)

**Ladew Topiary Gardens**  
3535 Jarrettsville Pike  
Monkton  
[ladewgardens.com](http://ladewgardens.com)

**Leidos Field at Ripken Stadium**  
873 Long Drive  
Aberdeen  
[ripkenbaseball.com](http://ripkenbaseball.com)

**Maritime Museum**  
100 Lafayette Street  
Havre de Grace  
[hdgmaritimemuseum.org](http://hdgmaritimemuseum.org)

**Rocks State Park**  
3318 Rocks Chrome Hill Road  
Jarrettsville

**Tudor Hall**  
17 Tudor Lane  
Bel Air

## SHOP

**Bahoukas Antique Mall and Beer MuZeum**  
408 N Union Avenue  
[bahoukas.com](http://bahoukas.com)

**Doodads**  
308 St John Street  
[doodads.us](http://doodads.us)



**JoeRetro Vintage Market**  
467 Franklin Street  
[joetro.com](http://joetro.com)

**Seneca Cannery Antiques**  
201 St John St # 2



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