

## Your Tour of the Capitol



What is **E Pluribus Unum**?  
(It is Latin for "Out of Many, One.")

The main entrance to the Capitol is the center stairway on the east side. The cast iron dome rises 288 feet and is the most well-known part of the Capitol. It cost \$1,047,291 in 1865 when it was finished and weighs almost 9 million pounds. On top of the dome facing the east is **Freedom**, a bronze statue of a woman with a sword and shield. In 1993, a helicopter was used to temporarily remove the 19-1/2 foot, 7-1/2 ton Statue of Freedom for a cleaning.

### Stop #1: The Rotunda

The **Rotunda** is a ceremonial room with statues and paintings of important people and events in America's history. The statues around the room include those of several presidents, **Martin Luther King**, and three women who fought for women's voting rights (called **suffrage**). Presidents **Abraham Lincoln** and **John F. Kennedy** and the **Unknown Soldiers** of World War I and II, Korea, and Vietnam have lain in state in the Rotunda where people viewed their coffins covered by the U.S. flag.

On the dome canopy, or ceiling, is the painting "**The Apotheosis of George Washington**," (ah-poth'-ē-ō-sis) meaning glorification. It shows Washington rising to heaven.



**TO BEGIN YOUR TOUR:** Walk up the East Front steps (the main center staircase) and pass through the large bronze doors. Go through security and enter the Capitol Rotunda (1).

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Other works of art in the Rotunda include eight framed paintings that represent events in the nation's history. The first two paintings, on your right as you entered the Rotunda from the east side, show **DeSoto's** discovery of the Mississippi River and **Christopher Columbus** landing in the Americas. The two pictures on the left side of the entrance are of the Pilgrims' departure from Europe for America and the last one is "**Baptism of Pocahontas**." (Pocahontas is shown two more times in this room.)

On the far side of the Rotunda are four pictures that tell the story of the American Revolution. From left to right: "**Signing of the Declaration of Independence**," "**Surrender of General Burgoyne at Saratoga**," "**Surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown**," and "**General George Washington Resigning His Commission**."

The **Frieze** is the painting around the Rotunda just below the windows. It shows historical scenes including the "Reading of the Declaration of Independence, 1776" and "The Birth of Aviation in the U.S. in 1903." (Look for another picture of Pocahontas here).



**NEXT STOP:** Exit the Rotunda past the statue of Andrew Jackson at the north door, into the Small Senate Rotunda (2). Follow the signs to the Old Senate Chamber (3).



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