

Fall River Now

A 21st CENTURY CITY

Poised for the Future

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Situated on the banks of scenic Mount Hope Bay and Taunton River, Fall River is a city with a rich history and many attractions.

Once known as the “*Textile Capital of the World*”, Fall River traces its origins to the Plymouth Colony when settlers purchased land in 1659 from the Wampanoags, a Native American tribe. The advent of the Industrial Age caused large granite and brick mill structures to be erected and cloth was woven for world apparel and fabric markets. Jobs were provided for talented workers bringing “old world” skills and an unparalleled work ethic from around the globe. Water cascading from the Quequechan River and flowing into the Bay provided power for these massive mill structures that were alive with the activity of world commerce. These structures still provide a home for some of these same industries, but also serve as a welcoming environment for entrepreneurial ventures, artist galleries, festivals, and theater venues for the performing & visual arts.

Elegant Victorian-era homes displaying splendid examples of period architectural detail are evident in the Lower Highlands Historical District near the Downtown and Waterfront areas. These magnificent structures served as the homes for the mill owners, bankers, sea merchants, and other giants of commerce who frequently traveled to New York on the elegant steamships of the Fall River Line.

Artifacts and chronicles of Fall River’s rich history are preserved in the fascinating historical enclaves of the city such as the Heritage State Park, the Historical Society museum, the Marine Museum, Railroad Museum, the Lizzie Borden House, the Battleship, USS MASSACHUSETTS and its impressive naval exhibit of Destroyers including the Submarine, USS LIONFISH, and the Cultural District of Columbia Street – all located within or near the Downtown and the Waterfront.

A short walk from the USS MASSACHUSETTS exhibit, children will delight in riding an authentic period carousel. Walking along, visitors will find Heritage State Park where a Museum exhibit depicting the looms and work life in the historic mills may be viewed. Adjacent to the Heritage State Park is the waterfront boardwalk where a leisurely stroll to Bicentennial Park and a near-size replica of the Iwo Jima Monument depicting the famous WW II scene of the United States Marines placing the U.S. flag atop Mount Suribachi on the Island of Iwo Jima can all be enjoyed.

Fall River’s Downtown features further examples of unique Victorian-era architecture with balustrades and cornices, arches, and other detail. Walking along South Main Street from Government Center, you will want to view the intricate detail of the historic Academy Building. Designed by noted Victorian-era Boston Architects, Hartwell and Swazey, and once housing shops and one of the many theaters of Fall River’s “Golden Age”, this building now accommodates specialty shops and offices on street level and apartments on the upper levels.

Further along, visit the restored Cherry & Webb Building and its frequent lobby art exhibits. This building is the first example of the renovations taking place in the continuing revitalization

of Fall River's Downtown. While there, visit the Cafés, Restaurants and shops frequented by the Downtown business community and students from the University of Massachusetts (Dartmouth) Fall River Campus.

Continuing along South Main Street, you will come upon Kennedy Park – one of three parks in the City designed by landscape architect, Frederick Olmstead, and site of a Farmers Market, athletic events, and summer festivals. Opposite this splendid park, is Saint Anne's Church and Shrine – a magnificent, internationally-known double-domed edifice displaying unique architectural styles.

The foregoing are but a few of the exciting treasures in our City. There are many more to be discovered and you will want to visit the pages and links on this web site frequently to further explore the many attractions, restaurants, martini & wine bars, and arts & cultural events

Please note that some of the attractions listed in this site are open on a seasonal basis or limited basis. Visitors are therefore advised to consult the attractions directly to confirm their hours and dates of operation.



View of the Braga Bridge, across the Gates-of-the-City park, host of an early spring Portuguese Festival