

SECTION 3 TRAVEL ISSUE

BOSTON



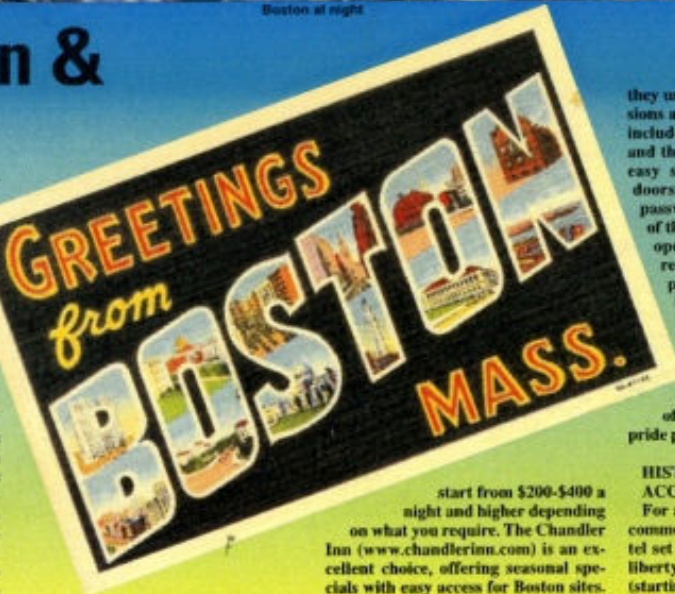
Boston at night

To Boston & back

by Eric Andrews-Katz
SGN Contributing Writer

Being one of America's oldest cities, Boston is steeped in rich heritage and offers an endless list of activities for any traveler. Boasting a long list of entertainment, dining, and historical perspectives, it quickly becomes an issue of too many things, and too little time in which to do them. There is Fenway Park's "Green Monster," home of the Red Sox, as well as many theater companies ranging from Broadway to fringe and museums housing famous and infamous reputations alike. But, for the most part, Boston holds the claim to hosting the beginnings of the American Revolution.

Only two airlines offer direct service from Seattle to "Bean Town," JetBlue being one of the two, which flies an easy red eye that will allow you to get an early start for your adventure. Stretching your legs in JetBlue's extra legroom will definitely help once you land and get moving. Going from the airport to the city is a simple commute



by either subway or an inexpensive taxi ride. He warned, that will be one of the few inexpensive things about Boston.

Hotel choices decorate the city accommodating any lifestyle. For staying within the city limits price ranges can

they use their space. Flatscreen televisions are present, with cable channels included. The beds are comfortable and the showers have great pressure, easy settings, and decorative glass doors. WiFi is offered and once a password is obtained from any one of the extremely friendly front desk operators, network access can be reached in-room for business or pleasure online surfing. Adjacent to the Inn (hotel residents don't have to leave the building) is the Fritz Bar, which holds the honor of hosting the Gay Pride Brunch for the past 15 years. Pictures on the walls offer glimpses into these previous pride parties.

HISTORICAL ACCOMMODATIONS

For a different sort of historical accommodation there is the Liberty Hotel set in Boston's Beacon Hill (www.libertyhotel.com). This plush hotel (starting prices about \$300/night) was Boston's old jail and still used until the early 1990s until its transformation a little over three years ago. The hotel

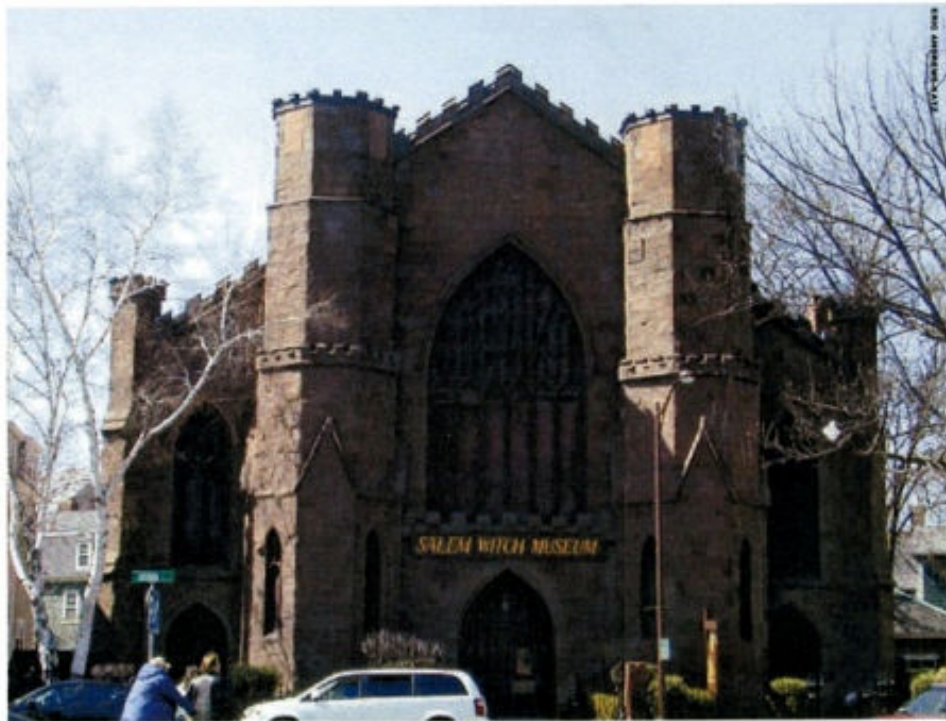
start from \$200-\$400 a night and higher depending on what you require. The Chandler Inn (www.chandlerinn.com) is an excellent choice, offering seasonal specials with easy access for Boston sites. Located in the Back Bay section of the city, the eight-floor hotel (elevator service available) is just finishing its modernistic renovations. Each floor offers a different color scheme with complimenting art in the hallways. The rooms are smaller but very efficient with how

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Salem Witch Museum

Visiting beyond Boston

by Eric Andrews-Katz
SGN Contributing Writer

While Boston may be the largest city in Massachusetts, it is far from the only city worth visiting. In the area there are many historical and cultural places to vacation or at least make a side trip journey. Two examples are the town of Salem or the resort town of Provincetown. Either is easily accessible from Boston and can be reached by car, train or ferry, depending on the time of year.

SALEM

Salem, Massachusetts has a history all to itself. A 30-minute drive north of Boston, this historical town is very charming despite the black mark put there by history. Most known for the Salem Witch Trials of the 17th century, the town was founded by Puritans trying to find freedom from religious persecution. During the year of 1692, a small group of bored schoolgirls sent the town into a panic with the cries of witchcraft. Within a short period, more than 100 people were accused, while 20 of them were found guilty and put to death.

The town is easy to get to by car and even easier by train. The time difference between the two is minimal (driving takes approximately 30 minutes, 45 minutes by train) and the train makes parking a moot situation in what can be a very touristy area.

Located across from the Salem Common is the Salem Witch Museum (www.salem-witchmuseum.com). Set up in an old brick church, the museum educates the public on the history of witchcraft, through the colonial New England states and modern times. Using dioramas and voiceovers, the hysteria is explained and suggestions are made as to why it happened. It is believed that a fatal combination of repression and fear combined with the theory that the wheat of the time had developed ergot, a disease that

grows in the grain causing mental illness with side effects of hallucinations similar to LSD.

The second part of the museum presents the true story of witchcraft. The ancient, nature-based theology is brought out of its broom closet and explained throughout history, including the 1980s, when the United States finally accepted Wicca as a legitimate religious belief. There is also a section that shows the different "witch hunts" throughout United States history including: the Red Scare of McCarthyism, the internment of West Coast Asian-Americans, the false blame cast on the homosexual community for AIDS and the newest addition, how the United States looked at Muslim-Americans after the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Not far from the museum is a small graveyard with stones marking these early settlers of Salem including witch trial judges. At the back is a small stone courtyard memorial to those executed that was opened in 1992 and dedicated by Nobel Prize-winner and Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel. The memorial has won national awards for its simple but honest representation. Since the bodies of those convicted were refused burial with markers, small lips of stone come out from the walls representing the condemned, complete with name, year, crime and punishment for each.

But the witches are not the only history that Salem has to claim. There is a long account of pirates in the area as well and museums and shops alike cater to those wanting another adventure. For the literature lover, the infamous House of Seven Gables resides within the city limits. Often hailed as America's first gothic tale, the haunting story by Nathaniel Hawthorne was written to help relieve some of the burden of his ancestors' part as a Salem Witch Trial judge. To distance himself from their shame, the author added the "c" to the end of his name and spent most of his writing career relieving his ancestral guilt through novels and short stories.

Salem is definitely worth the trip if for no other reason to escape the crowded city and see a different part of Colonial history. Be warned: people walk about in black cloaks and costumes and at Halloween, crowds flock to the little hamlet causing huge traffic backups and lending itself to a more mundane kind of mischief.

PROVINCETOWN

For a much different kind of escape, go

south instead of north to the edge of the Cape and into Provincetown. The ferry service (starting May 1 and running through September) can take the same 2-3 hours as a drive around, and offers different views depending on personal taste. For a more expensive and expedited route, planes leave from Boston as well as a high-speed ferry service.

The season starts in April and continues through the summer becoming a haven for Gay men, Lesbians, and all those friendly to each. The lines segregating Gay/Lesbian

to relax and any guest can feel completely at ease with them as well as within the tasteful décor of the establishment. There is even complimentary parking (limited) for those staying at the guesthouse.

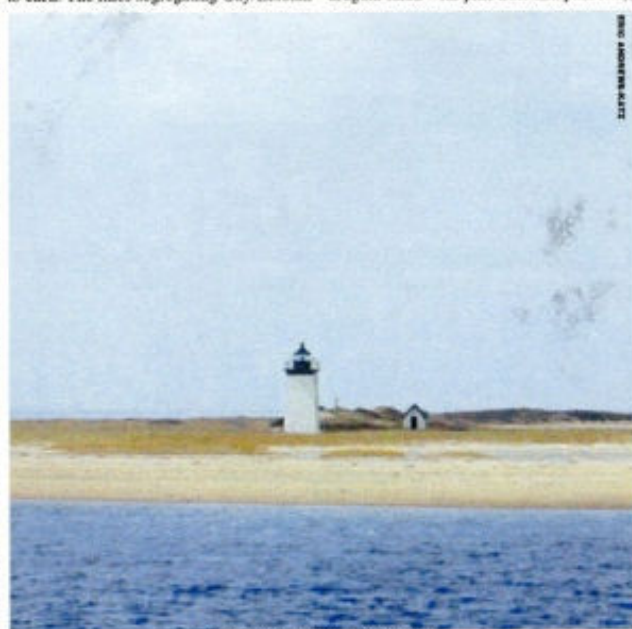
While many rooms have their own baths, there are a few on the top floor that have a shared, European-style bathroom with two shower stalls and a separate room for the toilet. Even in season, these rooms can be reserved for an inexpensive rate (about \$100/night) in comparison with others on the strip. WiFi is accessible by asking for the password. Continental breakfast consisting of homemade pastries, coffee, juice and yogurts are put out every morning. A common area with books, overstuffed chairs, a chessboard and complimentary port are present to encourage familiarity between the owners and the guests. Bring your pet along and ask about the "pet-friendly accommodation": a downstairs room with a private exit for pet conveniences. There is no wonder they have won awards for their hospitality.

A special note to Seattle's large deaf community: There is an on-residence gentleman, Doug, fluent in ASL.

ACTIVITIES AND RESTAURANTS

The choices of activities are long and offer something for everyone. Whale- and dolphin-watching expeditions can be arranged from the docks (www.whalewatching.com), with the season starting April 1. Humpback whales and harbor dolphins can be seen spouting, breaching and diving during the four-hour journey around the Cape.

Restaurants are as common as the sand dunes surrounding the serene town. The Mews Restaurant & Café (www.mews.com) offers a wide selection of delectable dishes, including a roasted duck breast with rosemary potatoes that will melt in your mouth, or try the warm feta plate over greens and accentuated with spiced olives. Along with the house specialty lemon drop or cosmopolitan martini, you will be all set to watch a glorious sunset. The Central House (www.onlyatthecorner.com/centralhouse), found at the Crown & Anchor, offers not only tasty fare (salt cod pan-seared with potatoes or an arugula salad with pine nuts and pancetta),



Lighthouse off Provincetown harbor

bars, restaurants or guest houses tend to disappear, making it a lot easier to socialize, which made traveling with my Lesbian consultant Jama a lot easier. Opportunities to socialize are presented in abundance.

Guest houses of all different price ranges are as popular on the three-mile main drag as are restaurants, bars and copious amounts of quaint art galleries and shopping opportunities. Christopher's By the Bay is located right off the main road (www.christophers-by-thebay.com). Run by 10-year couple Jim Rizzo and Dave McGlothlin, this guesthouse keeps with the theme of an artist's colony, naming each room after individual painters. The very soft-spoken owners make it easy

but also a specialty blood orange martini that can be made with either gin or vodka. The drink is delicious, making it easy to enjoy more than one. Later on, a pianist playing songs from stage and screen gets the crowd to collectively sing along until the late hours of the night.

No matter what your tastes are, anyone is bound to enjoy either of the two side trips out of Boston. With so much to offer, why not take advantage of low fares and package specials? And if your destination is to Salem, Provincetown or any of the charming colonial towns outside of Boston, you are bound to have a great trip.

Bon voyage.

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Boston Common

BOSTON

continued from cover

received its name as homage. While The Liberty is trickier to get to (Boston is full of one-way streets and an unfamiliar driver can get easily confused), the delay in arriving is worth the spectacular sights both inside and out. Documentation of the transformation is on posters in the luxurious lobby or in a 10-minute documentary on the hotel's private television channel. The "Alibi" lounge is decorated with some of the original jail cell bars and houses celebrity mug shots with their "alibis" upon their arrests. The restaurant Scampo is run by celebrity chef Lydia Shire and serves a mixture of Italian and Mediterranean flavors, including a wide range of mozzarella appetizer plates and a specialty of lobster meat pizza that made my friend Jama's eyes roll back. There are over eight business facilities located within the hotel or, for a fee, internet connections can be achieved from the privacy of your room. With sweeping views of the Charles River and its esplanade, the Liberty Hotel earns its "four-diamond" rating.

ENJOY BEING A TOURIST

To become familiar with Boston, the city's Duck Tour (www.bostonducktours.com) is not only fun, but also a good way to get a brief orientation around the city. A companion to Seattle's own, the Boston's amphibious landing vehicle was renovated for sightseers traveling on both land and water. ConDUCKtors, with names such as Frim "DucKarma" Jolly, offer humorous and informative views about the city's layout. Once on the water, the driver urges fellow travelers to take a turn at driving the Duck. Since you don't live there, just enjoy being a tourist.

If staying on dry ground is better, try the Freedom Trail (www.thefreedomtrail.org) for either a group guided tour or a rented au-

dio one for going at your own pace. A red brick path is easy to follow as it meanders throughout the city and tours many prominent sites. Starting in the famous Boston Commons, the tour includes accessible graveyards with markers for Paul Revere, John Hancock, Crispus Attucks and Mary Goose - "Mother" of beloved nursery rhymes. The guided tour allows the small group following to ask questions and offers more informational opportunities than a self-guided one. The guided tour covers many sites but ends half way, while the path continues through the North End's "Little Italy" and past many more monuments. The House of Paul Revere, the ship "Old Ironsides" and the Bunker Hill Memorial are visited as well as Boston's own Holocaust Memorial. Six glass columns tower upward, each with a million numbers etched into their sides representing the death camps and victims claimed.

The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum is only one of a plethora of wonderful museums and exhibits to be found. This museum was the location of one of the most infamous art thefts in history. More than 10 masterpieces were cut from their frames and stolen, but since Mrs. Gardner was clear in her will, nothing may be changed or replaced and large empty frames still hang on the walls as a phantom tribute. Housing some of John Singer Sergeant's most incredible works as well as a courtyard of Venetian splendor, this museum is not to be missed. Just overlook the scrutinizing glares of the

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strict security as the 20th anniversary of the infamous robbery approaches.

A FOOD-LOVER'S PARADISE

The city can be a food-lover's paradise. With a long personal connection to its watery border, Boston's seafood is rated among the best along New England's Coast. For the hands-on chef, tours are offered through two of Boston's distinctive international districts (www.micheletop.com/html/marketours.html). Guided walks lead small groups through the Chinatown or Little Italy districts, giving the culinary adventurer a glimpse - and taste - of the diverse foods from either heritage.

Restaurants in Boston are among the best and the choices are endless. Inside the Fairmont Hotel at Copley Plaza, the Oak Room (www.theoakroom.com) has been voted home of Boston's finest steaks, and the buffalo steak will melt in your mouth and leave you with a blissful expression. Originally opened in 1912 by Patrick Kennedy (grandfather of John Fitzgerald), the room contains its majestic dark wood décor and lives up to its preceding reputation. And for a home-

ing pan-seared scallops with truffle mashed potatoes. The Fireplace filters and bottles its own water, uses only the freshest locally grown produce, and delivers a wonderfully comfortable atmosphere with fantastic food to match.

For lighter food fare and good martinis, the M Bar (www.mandarinoriental.com/boston) offers plates of delicious food that can be shared among intimate groups of friends or enjoyed on your own. Platters of cured ham, salami, and garlic sausage are found among assorted cheese fondues and seafood platters, including ahi tuna tartar and shucked native oysters.

For the brunch crowd (although opened for lunch and dinner), Upstairs on the Square (www.upstairsonthesquare.com) sits nestled within the Harvard University limits. With a uniquely pink interior, the building overlooks Harvard Square and offers a brunch menu of different fruit platters or a brioche French toast with caramelized banana that will leave your tongue tingling. To help accentuate your meal, try one of their signature drinks: the spicy or mild House-Made Bloody Mary or The Floriano, a drink



Statue of George Washington

town connection, they had bartenders flown in from Seattle's own Zoë to show them how to make their signature Sage Martini.

If going "green" is your style, The Fireplace in the Boston suburb of Brookline is for you (www.thefireplacereast.com). A short ride on the oldest subway system in America will take you to the door of Boston's first green restaurant. Chef/owner Jim Solomon takes great pride in using recipes that are distinctive to the New England area, includ-

consisting of passion fruit puree, Barenjager honey liquor and champagne.

Whatever your interests are, Boston can cater to them and leave you wanting for more. And as far as comfort for the Gay/Lesbian traveler, Massachusetts has already legalized Gay marriage and the evidence of the city's community are present as same-sex couples publicly hold hands without a second look from their heterosexual counterparts.



GAY CRUISES FROM SEATTLE!!

<p>RSVP ALASKA AUGUST 23-30, 2009 Round trip from Seattle on Holland America's 2000 passenger "Westerdam"! Visits Juneau, Sitka, Ketchikan, and Victoria. Inside cabin from \$1109, Ocean views from \$1299, Balcony from \$1699 (Per person based on double plus port & taxes of \$195) All gay cruise!</p>	<p>PACIFIC 3 DAY OCTOBER 9-12, 2009 Round trip from Seattle visiting Victoria and Nanaimo, BC on Celebrity's beautiful "Mercury". Inside cabin from \$219, Ocean views from \$260, Balcony from \$419 (Per person based on double plus port & taxes of \$159) Gay group, not an all gay cruise.</p>
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For reservations and more information call or write:
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