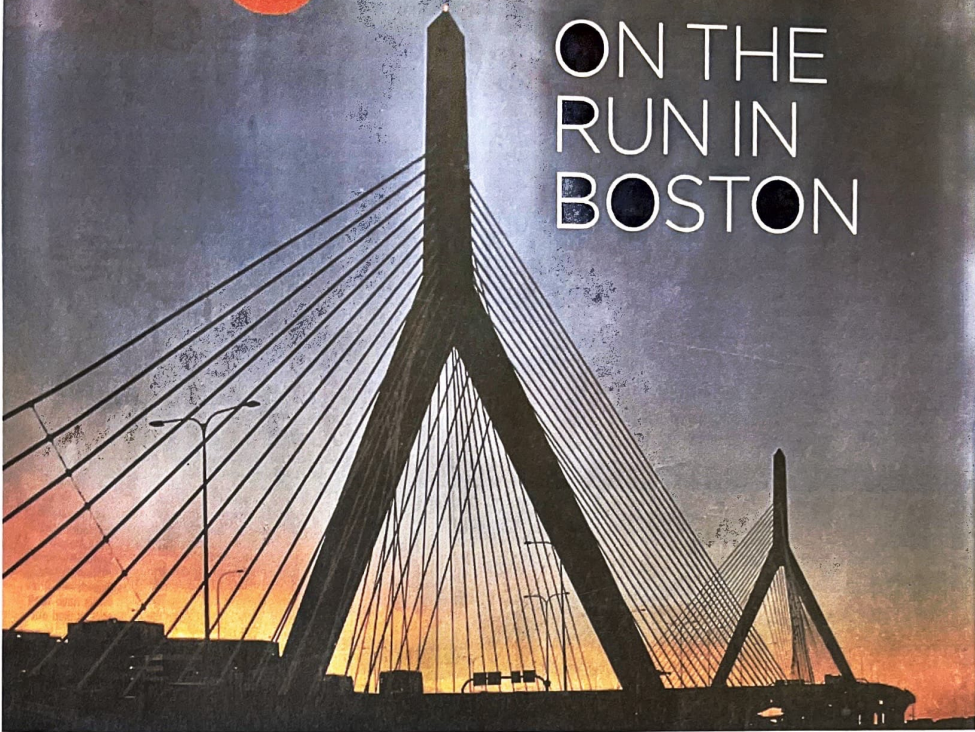


ON THE RUN IN BOSTON



The Leonard P. Zakim Bunker Hill Bridge across the Charles River in Boston was part of the city's Big Dig Project. It is the widest cable-stayed bridge in the world.

Photo provided by USPhotoGroup

By Steve Slosarek

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Whether you're in Boston for a marathon or a sprint, running around the city while on vacation is an endeavor of historic proportions.

Vacationers who spend a week or just a few days in this "compact-in-size-but-large-in-scope town" come home with the same feeling: Wow.

History oozes from the city's epicenter (Freedom Trail) to the suburbs (Lexington, Concord). From Paul Revere to Samuel Adams, patriots are lionized on monuments and in halls that serve as annals of our country's Revolutionary past.

Experiencing Boston is not an adults-only affair. Because of Indiana's fifth-grade curriculum on U.S. history, families of tweens may be delighted to discover that Boston is as cool as Disney. Our 11-year-old marveled at how history was brought to life in a way that textbooks could not touch.

Grab your walking (or running) shoes for a fun-filled visit to this historic town

Start delving into the city via Boston Duck Tours. The amphibious sightseeing vehicles provide a humorous, informative overview of the entire area and finish with a 20-minute picturesque float on the Charles River.

Then, it's time to dig into the specifics that make Boston famous. For that, purchase a Go Boston Card, which admits visitors to more than 70 attractions for \$49.99 (children \$34.99).

Put on your walking shoes for the Freedom Trail, a 2.5-mile red-brick walking trail that can be finished in one ambitious day or spaced over several days. The trail leads participants to 16 indoor/outdoor historic sites — museums, churches, meetinghouses, burying grounds, parks, a ship and more — not to mention Italian restaurants and bakeries on the acclaimed North End.

Freedom Trail highlights include the Paul Revere House (the famous hero departed from it in 1775 to begin his famous ride; today, it's downtown Boston's oldest building), the USS Constitution (you can walk on "Old Ironsides," the world's oldest commissioned warship afloat), the Bunker Hill Monument (a 221-foot granite obelisk with re-enactments on the grounds) and Faneuil Hall (a beautifully adorned meeting place that led to the "no taxation without representation" doctrine and the Boston Tea Party).

Because Boston is compact and has an abundance of trolleys and a subway system, staying in the "outskirts" of the traditional downtown is actually a plus. We roomed at the Royal Sonesta Hotel, on the other side of the Charles River in Cambridge. We were rewarded with a spectacular view of Boston, including the Zakim Bridge, the world's widest cable-stayed bridge.

The 400-room Sonesta is a two-minute walk from not only the Duck Tours, but also the Museum of Science, which combines the attributes of Indianapolis' Children's Museum with Chicago's Field Museum and Museum of Science and Industry for a can't-miss attraction. It features an IMAX theater, planetarium and dozens of fascinating exhibits, including the permanent "Mathematica," which turns dull subject matter into joyful knowledge.

Another lodging gem just outside the loop is the 148-room Hotel Commonwealth, an elegant cornerstone to Kenmore Square. We switched midway through the trip for reasons of proximity. The hotel, which features oversized rooms, is across the street from storied Fenway Park. In less than five minutes by foot, we were at the 98-year-old stadium for a tour, including sitting in the bleachers behind the fabled Green Monster outfield wall. The hotel features baseball suites with great views of the park, and packages for games and tours, including this fall.

The Commonwealth is also accessible to roads leading to Harvard University, Lexington and Concord. We perused the Harvard Co-op bookstore and the Harvard Museum of Natural History, featuring a collection of more than 3,000 glass flowers, before exploring more



Photo provided by Greater Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau

The Boston Duck Tours offer visitors a chance to hop an amphibious vehicle, which roams the city by land and finishes with a 20-minute float on the Charles River to see Boston from a unique view.

glories of the past in Lexington and Concord. Minute Man National Historical Park, between the two cities, features in its visitors center a stirring movie about the 1775 battles.

What would a trip to Boston be without feasting on its famous clam chowder and fresh seafood? Established in 1826, the Union Oyster House is America's oldest restaurant, a National Historic Landmark that serves a mean clam chowder. Legal Sea Foods (nicknamed Boston Legal) offers outstanding seafood and lobster bisque. One of its locations is at the base of the 50-story Prudential Center, which treats visitors to a panoramic view from atop.

Other restaurants worth a try are the Russell House at Harvard Square (including Sunday brunch) on the foot of campus, Eastern Standard at the Hotel Commonwealth, and Cheers Boston (two locations — original and replica — of the pub that inspired the setting of the hit TV show "Cheers").

Boston features many more attributes, including the 24-acre Boston Public Garden with its 130-year-old Swan Boats tradition; Samuel Adams brewery tours; the striking John F. Kennedy Presidential Library &

Museum; the glass towers of the New England Holocaust Memorial; and the nearby and incomparable Cape Cod.

With fall leaves beckoning and history in place, the land of Revere is, indeed, a place to revere.

★ Call Star reporter Steve Slosarek at (317) 444-6038.

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