

48 Hours in Boston — DIY Weekend Itinerary

By Ashley & Serge

This walkable, budget-friendly plan hits the Freedom Trail, North End, Public Garden, Back Bay, and a choose-your-own museum or Fenway stop. Transit-first (MBTA), lots of easy eats, and realistic pacing.

Where to Stay (walkability first)

- Back Bay / Copley — central for Day 2 sights and Newbury Street cafés.
- Beacon Hill — charming streets, quick walk to Public Garden/Common.
- North End or Waterfront/Seaport — great for Day 1 and harbor sunsets.
- Cambridge (Harvard/MIT) — quiet base; hop the T (Red Line) downtown.

Day 1 — Freedom Trail, North End, Harbor Sunset

- Morning: Start at Boston Common and follow the red-brick Freedom Trail to Park Street Church → Granary Burying Ground → Old South Meeting House → Old State House → Faneuil Hall.
- Lunch: North End — quick pizza (Regina) or pasta; cannoli at Modern or Mike's.
- Afternoon: Paul Revere House → Old North Church. If energy allows, cross to Charlestown for USS Constitution views.
- Golden Hour: Harborwalk to Seaport from Long Wharf for skyline + sea breeze.
- Dinner: Casual chowder/lobster roll along the waterfront (or Seaport fast-casual).

Day 2 — Gardens, Back Bay, Museum or Fenway

- Morning: Public Garden (lagoon bridge) and Beacon Hill stroll (Acorn Street).
- Brunch: Back Bay cafés on Newbury Street.
- Midday (pick one): Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum • MFA • Fenway tour • Charles River Esplanade walk/Bluebike.
- Late Afternoon: Copley Square loop — Boston Public Library courtyard, Trinity Church exterior, Newbury to Commonwealth Ave Mall.
- Dinner: South End small plates or a cozy bistro.

Getting Around (T-first)

- Grab a CharlieCard/CharlieTicket at stations; load stored value or a day pass as needed.
- Walking + T usually beats rideshares downtown. Driving/parking is pricey.
- Check schedules, service alerts, and late-night times before you go.

Carry-on Economy Packing (2 days)

- Bag: 35–40L carry-on + small under-seat daypack.
- Clothes: 3–4 mix-and-match pieces; light tee, mid-layer, packable shell.
- Footwear: 1 comfy sneaker (20k-step days); optional dress-casual.
- Liquids: TSA 3-1-1 bag; refillable bottle (empty through security).
- Comfort: earplugs/eye mask, lip balm, sanitizer, compact pillow.
- Electronics: phone, small power bank, dual-USB charger, short cables.
- Health: tiny first-aid, blister pads, any meds.
- Docs & money: ID, card, transit card/app, a little cash.

Seasonal Adds

- Fall/Winter: beanie, gloves, warm mid-layer; waterproof shoes for slush.
- Spring: light rain shell (wind makes umbrellas annoying).
- Summer: sunscreen, hat, breathable layers; indoor AC can be chilly.

DIY Budget & Time Savers

- Start Freedom Trail early to beat crowds.
- Mix one sit-down meal with two quick bites (food halls, cafés).
- Buy museum timed tickets on weekends/holidays; otherwise, go earlier in the day.
- Build a Google Maps list (“Boston 48h”) and pin these stops for offline use.

Rain Plan

- Museums: Isabella Stewart Gardner or MFA.
- BPL (Copley) reading rooms, New England Aquarium on the waterfront.
- Long lunch in the North End + dessert crawl; brewery taproom detour.