



travel



HAWAII'S BACKYARD

'Twilight at Kalahuipuaa' recalls old Hawaii gatherings to sing, dance and talk story >> G3

SIGNS OF HAWAIIAN LIFE >> G4
LAS VEGAS ADVISOR >> G5



The plebes of the Naval Academy fall into their noon formation in front of the institution's Bancroft Hall.

Story and photos by Julie L. Kessler

Special to the Star-Advertiser

If you are visiting the East Coast, a wonderful sojourn is historic Annapolis, Md., an easy 45-minute drive from Washington, D.C., or Baltimore, two hours from Philadelphia and under four hours from New York. Annapolis is one of the most charming state capitals in the country, home to the newly restored Maryland State House — recognized as the nation's oldest statehouse in continuous legislative use and the only statehouse to have served as the nation's capital. It's also where, in 1783, George Washington resigned as commander in chief of the Continental Army, and where, on Jan. 14, 1784, Congress ratified the Treaty of Paris, thus ending the American Revolution.

Known as America's sailing capital, Annapolis is also home to the U.S. Naval Academy. Founded in 1845 and known as the "Yard," it's where 4,400 midshipmen prepare for naval careers. (Women were finally admitted in 1976, and in September 2014 it frocked the first female four-star admiral from its alumni.) The Yard is also home to the largest collection of Beaux Arts-style buildings in the U.S.: the Naval Academy Museum in Preble Hall, which contains impressive displays of naval history and the Pearl Harbor attack; a massive chapel with a 6,710-pipe organ; and the crypt of naval hero John Paul Jones. If you're there at noon, you can see the plebes' impressive formation.

The bed

Historic Inns of Annapolis has three separate, boutique-style, landmark properties, all in the heart of downtown: the Maryland Inn, the Robert Johnson House and the Governor Calvert House, where I stayed. All are within a stone's throw of each other and walking distance to all sites in Annapolis and the nearby, quirky "Republic of Eastport." Say hello to the lovely and indefatigable Miss Peg, an octogenarian who has worked at the Calvert House for more than four decades and is a wealth of local knowledge and legislative lore. 58 State Circle, 800-847-8882, historicinnsfannapolis.com

The meals

We breakfasted on mouthwatering crab cake eggs Benedict at Chick & Ruth's Dolly, 165 Main St., 410-269-6737, chickandruths.com.

Please see HISTORY, G6

The U.S. Naval Academy chapel is a national historic landmark. The campus itself spans 338 acres.

3 days in Annapolis

Maryland's capital, home to the U.S. Naval Academy, is a treasure trove of history, sightseeing and dining



Get the full experience of Chesapeake Bay with sailboat races that take place Wednesday nights for several months starting in April.

HISTORY

Continued from G1

If you're there during the week at 8:30 a.m., all diners stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance. (The pledge is recited at 9:30 a.m. on weekends.) The Delly recently celebrated its 50th anniversary, and its charming owner, Ted Levitt, often performs magic tricks while you eat: make sure to check out the bakery as well. Creamy homemade eggnog (15 percent alcohol) and delicious crab cakes on mixed greens were thoroughly enjoyed at Galway Bay Irish Restaurant & Pub, 63 Maryland Ave., 410-263-8333, galwaybaymd.com.

The Federal House Bar & Grille (22 Market Place, 410-268-2576, federalhouserestaurant.com) has a half-price "Happiness Hour" and live music Monday-Thursday, with a weekend DJ. The best pork ribs I've ever eaten anywhere — marinated in a mango sauce — and served with cornbread and crab macaroni and cheese were relished at Boatyard Bar & Grill, 400 Fourth St., 410-216-6206, boatyardbarandgrill.com.

Homemade Pop-Tarts, buttermilk-marinated fried chicken and cornmeal waffles were devoured at The Iron Rooster, 12 Market Space, 410-990-1600, ironroosterallday.com.

However, Annapolis' dining piece de resistance was Level Small Plates Lounge, 69 West St., 410-268-0003, levelsmallplateslounge.com, where chef Josh Brown is truly a rock star. Locally sourced, farm to table, tapas-style Mediterranean- and Chesapeake-inspired plates were served with handcrafted cocktails in a relaxed, hip setting. The black bean hummus plate and pan-seared scallops over gazpacho with pickled cucumbers were sublime, but the spicy tuna tartare, with cilantro, chili and wasabi tobiko, caused me to request a cot in the kitchen.

The finds

To fully appreciate Chesapeake Bay, it must be seen from the water, and there's no better way than aboard the 74-foot schooner Woodwind during Wednesday night sailboat races (they start up again in mid-April 2016). This is the same schooner that made an ap-



JULIE L. KESSLER / SPECIAL TO THE STAR ADVERTISER

pearance in the 2005 movie "Wedding Crashers." Our experience was captained by Jennifer, whose able hands steered the Woodwind to victory in our sunset race with several minutes to spare. Annapolis Sailing Cruises, 80 Compromise St., 410-263-7837, schoonerwoodwind.com

After a visit to the State House, 91 State Circle, mean-

der nearby Maryland Avenue, where quaint boutiques and galleries like Dear Annie promote local designers, 65 Maryland Ave., 410-267-6930, dearannieboutique.com. Also nearby are the restored home and gardens of William Paca, signer of the Declaration of Independence and Revolutionary-era governor, 186 Prince George St., 410-267-7619, Annapolis.org.

The lessons learned

Spending a few days in charming Annapolis will fill you with American colonial history and gorgeous architecture; give you bottomless pride in and remind you of the great courage, skills and sacrifices made by Navy sail-

The heart of Main Street in historic Annapolis.

ors; make certain that crab cakes can be eaten multiple ways, many times daily; and remind you that "diet" is a four-letter word.

Julie L. Kessler is a travel writer and legal columnist based in Los Angeles and author of the award-winning book "Fifty-Fifty: The Clarity of Hindsight."



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VS


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