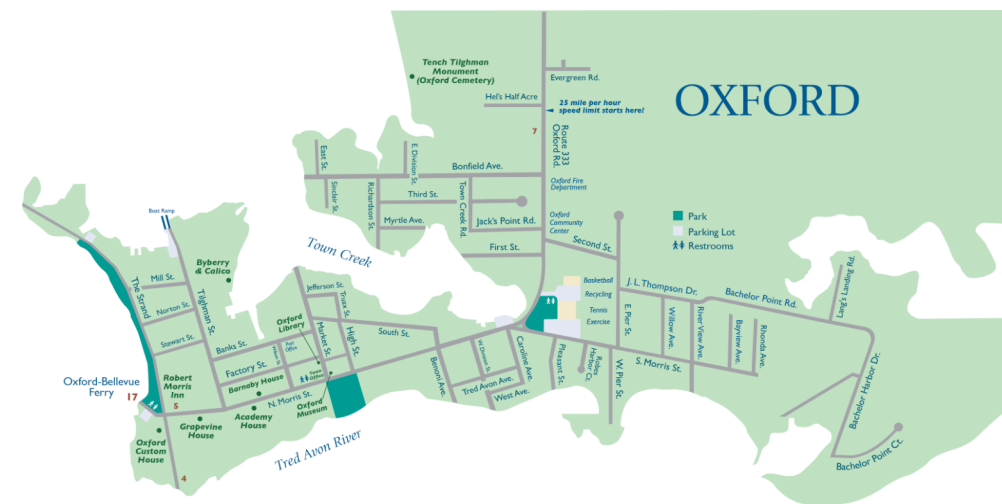




A STROLL THROUGH OXFORD-TOWN: HIGHLIGHTING THE HISTORY, HERITAGE, AND CHARM OF THE TOWN OF OXFORD, MARYLAND



An historic waterside town with a heart as big as the Chesapeake

Oxford, MD – Nestled on the Eastern Shore, the Town of Oxford, Maryland is tiny, family-friendly, and oh-so-serene ... until you scratch the surface, that is. Select a weekend when the town is hosting one of its many community events; make a reservation at one of its lovely hostelrys; and enjoy the scenic drive (by car or boat) to the center of town. There you'll begin a destination experience loaded with history, heritage, and charm – perfectly sized for a satisfying walk.

A bit of background: The Town of Oxford may be one of the smallest municipalities listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It's certainly had more than its fair share of historic reinventions over the centuries: it was founded in 1683; thrived as an international shipping center and tobacco farming hub until the American revolution; endured a century-long slumber when wheat replaced tobacco as a cash crop; emerged from the Civil War as America's capital of oyster farming and processing; slipped back into quiescence for many years, sustained only by the watermen who continued to work the Tred Avon River; and today is a haven for residents and visitors who savor its timeless, tranquil, and intimate style.

The perfect way to explore it is by foot, using the Self-Guided Walking Tours pamphlet and map provided by the Oxford Museum, as well as tips provided by the town and county websites (information below) and Oxford's ever-friendly residents.

Just a few of the must-visit spots:

- Some of the historic homes and other edifices on Morris Street date back to the 1770s, and most have fun and interesting histories. The crown jewel may be Robert Morris Inn, located at the foot of Morris Street near the ferry dock. Originally constructed in the early 1700s, by 1863 it was a boardinghouse, then a dining and dancing tavern, and later a hotel, a function it still serves today (with a few other uses along the way). The Dining Room at the Inn, overseen by celebrity chef and proprietor Mark Salter, occupies the original 1710 public rooms, complete with antique paneling and timber beams; Salter's Tap Room and Tavern and the Verandah also offer atmospheric settings for plotting a course through town.
- Across the street is an exact reproduction of the original United States Customs House once located on a plantation across the river from Oxford. (Oxford was the first port of entry to the United States on the entire Eastern Shore.)
- The Oxford-Bellevue Ferry has a storied history unto itself, which captain-owners Tom and Judy Bixler will be happy to share with interested visitors.
- Heading back towards the heart of town, take a right at Lover's Lane (between the Sandaway bed and breakfast and the Tred Avon Yacht club). At its foot is a lovely bench overlooking the Tred Avon River; on Friday evenings from May through October, strollers can catch the start of the weekly sailboat race as it launches from the club.
- The Town Park is a lovely place to relax, have a picnic (Oxford Market has all the fixins, from groceries to wine to a tasty deli), and enjoy the water views from a spot under a gracious and stately tree.
- Other beautiful and historic houses are located on Benoni and Tred Avon Streets.
- Schooner's Restaurant, with its view of Town Creek, is the perfect place to relax and enjoy a refreshing drink while watching the workboats ply their trade,
- South Street was platted as early as 1707; it retained a traditional character of modest vernacular cottages built by watermen and shipwrights, and even some agricultural plots, until very recently.
- St. Paul's Methodist Church, at the corner of Morris Street, was built in 1856. It features a rose window and gabled roof, among other interesting architectural details.
- The Oxford Museum itself has more than 2,000 artifacts illustrating the lives of residents since the late 1600s; over 4,500 visitors come through the Museum each year.
- The structure at 303 Market Street truly embodies the town's enduring commitment to reinvention: it was built in 1920 as a shirt factory, then lived successive lives as a nylon hosiery factory, a dance hall, a wooden mast production shop, and then an apartment building. Currently it houses condominium units.
- The tall yellow building at 208 Tilghman was the school for Oxford's African-American children. Later the building was used as a sail loft where Downes Curtis, a well-known sailmaker, plied his trade.
- The outdoor dining area at Masthead at Pier Street offers the ideal vantage point for enjoying a stunning sunset. For light offerings, drop by Pope's Tavern at Oxford Inn between 5 and 6 p.m. to sample its Oxford Happy Hour.
- For dessert, there's no better treat than an ice cream at Scottish Highland Creamery, voted the Best Ice Cream on the Eastern Shore for two years in a row.
- For more information on Oxford, Talbot County, and the Eastern Shore, as well as many fine fiction offerings, Mystery Loves Company Booksellers is a perfect port of call.

The sights and stories of this little town with a long history and even bigger heart – not to mention festivals, celebrations, cultural events, recreational opportunities, and fine lodging and dining options – promise to entertain the whole family. A walk about town is just the beginning!

The Town of Oxford, Maryland: docks, daydreams, discoveries, and so much more

About Oxford, Maryland:

The historic town of Oxford, Maryland, founded in 1683, is located in Talbot County on the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay. Until the American Revolution, Oxford was an international shipping center, surrounded by tobacco plantations and home to a number of prominent national figures. Later it thrived on oyster harvesting and packing and other watermen's trades, even as tourism and leisure activities increased. It guards its peaceful personality, architectural integrity, and small-town virtues to this day, while warmly welcoming visitors from right next door and around the world. The Oxford Business Association welcomes inquiries by telephone (1-410-745-9023) and at its website (www.portofoxford.com); and the Talbot County Office of Tourism offers comprehensive information and trip planning services and can be reached at: 1-410-770-8000 and on its website (www.tourtalbot.org).

PRESS INFORMATION

Carlyle Fairfax Smith
Carlyle International
Ph: 703.898.1333
Carlyle@CarlyleInternational.us

March 2011