

## MARYLAND

Hello, I'm Ambassador Eacho from the U.S. Embassy in Vienna, Austria. I want to tell you about my home state, Maryland.

Maryland is a small state on the eastern seaboard. But don't let its size fool you. The landscape of Maryland is very diverse – from the low lying eastern shore and Chesapeake Bay area to the metropolitan city, Baltimore, to the forested Appalachian foothills and the mountains in the western part of the state.

Maryland is one of the original 13 colonies. It was established in 1632 when Cecilius Calvert, the baron of Baltimore, received a charter for the land. Calvert named the colony Maryland, in honor of Henrietta Maria, the wife of England's King Charles the first.

In 1788, Maryland became the 7<sup>th</sup> state.

Maryland earned the nickname, Old Line State, in 1776 when one General stood firm against British troops in the Battle of Long Island, during the Revolutionary War.

Today, Maryland is better known for its beautiful beaches and boardwalk in Ocean City. Have you tried Boardwalk fries doused in vinegar? That's a staple of this seaside town.

Maryland is also known for its crabs steamed in Old Bay Seasoning. In 1989, the Maryland Blue Crab was designated as the official State Crustacean.

During lunch hour on the Chesapeake, vendors sell more crab cakes than hot dogs and hamburgers. And picking crabs is as much fun as eating them.

Further down the coast is the barrier island, Assateague, famous for the free-roaming ponies, the only actual wild ponies in the United States.

The state has 31 miles of coastline on the Atlantic Ocean. However, much of Maryland's 12,400 square miles consists of inland water, including some 400 manmade lakes. The Chesapeake Bay that splits the state is the largest estuary in the United States. It's no wonder that sailing is a favorite pastime in my state. In fact, the capital city, Annapolis, is known as the sailing capital of the world.

In 1980 Baltimore opened Harborplace, a shopping, dining and entertainment complex, and another hot spot for tourists. The National Aquarium, one of the largest and most technologically advanced, is located in Baltimore's Inner harbor.

Every year, the world hears the state song, "Maryland, My Maryland." It's sung at the Preakness Stakes, the second leg of the famous Triple Crown thoroughbred race, held at the Pimlico Racecourse in Baltimore.

A more famous song was written by Marylander Francis Scott Key, while he watched the British bombardment of Fort McHenry during the War of 1812. “The Star Spangled Banner” was officially adopted as America’s national anthem in 1931.

Maryland is home to many famous people.

Baseball slugger Babe Ruth was born in Baltimore, not far from Oriole Park at Camden Yards. You can visit the Sultan of Swing’s birthplace museum. Swimmer Michael Phelps, of Towson, was the first American to win 8 medals in a single Olympic games.

The Clara Barton National Historic site in Glenn Echo commemorates the life of the founder of the American Red Cross.

Other famous Marylanders include jazz-blues singer Billie Holiday and rock singer Frank Zappa, as well as author Upton Sinclair and abolitionist Harriet Tubman.

Marylanders are as diverse as the state they live in.

My favorite thing about my home state is...crabs...hard shell crabs, soft shells, crab cakes, you name it.

The Maryland blue crab is the best tasting crab in the world, and you can never get enough!