

## Delaware

Hello. My Name is John Quintus. I once served as the Public Affairs Officer with the American Embassy in Vienna. Now I am retired and living in the state of Delaware. Delaware is located on the Atlantic Coast in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. It is the second smallest state in the Union. It ranks 45<sup>th</sup> in population among the 50 states and 9<sup>th</sup> in per capita income.

My state is named after Thomas West, 3<sup>rd</sup> Baron de la Warr, an English nobleman who was Virginia's first Colonial Governor. Delaware is bordered in the north by Pennsylvania, in the South and West by Maryland, and in the East by the Atlantic Ocean, the Delaware Bay, the Delaware River, and New Jersey.

Delaware is known as the first state because it was the first to ratify the United States Constitution on December 7, 1787. It is also known as the small wonder. Its motto is liberty and independence, and its state bird is the blue hen, a breed of chicken developed in Delaware. The state tree is the holly.

The Dutch were the first European settlers in Delaware, followed by the Swedes (the Christina River is named after Sweden's Queen Christina), and finally the British. Delaware's colonial capital city was New Castle, and the original capitol building still stands in New Castle, a lovely old city made up of many fine homes and churches that date to the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The oldest house in New Castle is the Dutch House built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Some of the homes are now museums, and many others open their doors to visitors in the month of May.

The southern countries of Kent and Sussex are chiefly agricultural, while New Castle County is home to Delaware's major industries, including the E.I. Dupont de Nemours Company, an international business that began as a gunpowder plant on the banks of the Brandywine River. The Hagley Museum tells the Dupont story. New Castle County is also home to one of America's foremost pharmaceutical companies, Astrazeneca.

The world-reknown Winterthur Museum is found in New Castle County as well. It was established by Henry F. Dupont and comprises an outstanding collection of American arts and crafts made from 1630 to 1860. The estate is surrounded by remarkable gardens planted by Henry Dupont, who was a horticulturalist as well as a collector of beautiful objects.

The Delaware Art Museum is found in Wilmington, the largest city in Delaware, and it displays not only major examples of American art, but also the largest collection of British pre-Raphaelite art in the United States.

While there is much to see and enjoy in New Castle County, including recreational areas and state parks, Sussex County in the South features some of America's finest beaches, especially those located at Rehoboth, Dewey, and Bethany. Vacationers come from all over the area to plunge into the Atlantic Ocean. Children take delight in amusement parks and often enjoy the local cotton candy and salt-water taffy.

The foremost educational institution in Delaware is the University of Delaware, located in Newark – pronounced New-Ark (not Newark). And, whose award-winning mascot is a big blue & gold chicken, is home to some 20 thousand undergraduate and graduate students who study such various disciplines as marine science, art history and conservation, chemical engineering, solar energy – a field pioneered by the university - museum curatorship, and many more.

Delaware, although small, is quite diverse. It is home to banking giants and the state of incorporation for over 50% of America's privately-traded companies. It is a major poultry producer, an innovator in alternative energy, a vacation destination, a hub of commerce and education. It is also home to the current Vice-President of the United States, Joseph R. Biden.

Being a small state has its advantages. There are very few degrees of separation. I know personally all three of Delaware's members of Congress, as well as our Governor and Lt. Governor, who work in the current capitol, Dover. It was from Dover that the revolutionary patriot Caesar Rodney rode to Philadelphia in a thunderstorm to sign the Declaration of Independence in July 1776.

So for many reasons, both historical and contemporary, I invited you to visit my adopted state, the small wonder known as Delaware.