


# BOSTON & CAMBRIDGE


A Visitor's Guide

May 2026

## Getting Around from Homewood Suites Arlington

You're staying at 1 Massachusetts Ave — right on the Arlington-Cambridge line, with excellent public transportation access.

 **Red Line via Alewife Station** Walking distance from the hotel. Take the Red Line into Boston or to Cambridge stops like Porter Square, Harvard, and Central Square.

 **Route 77 Bus on Mass Ave** Catch the Route 77 bus on Massachusetts Avenue for a direct ride into Harvard Square and the heart of Cambridge. Buses run every 10–15 minutes — quick, easy, and no need to go all the way into Boston.

## First Time in Boston? Start Here

- **Freedom Trail** A 2.5-mile walking path marked by a red brick line connecting 16 historic Revolutionary War sites. Download the app or join a guided tour.
- **Fenway Park** America's most beloved ballpark. Take a tour even if there's no game — the Green Monster, Pesky's Pole, and the hand-operated scoreboard are iconic.
- **Faneuil Hall & Quincy Market** Historic marketplace with food stalls, street performers, and shops. Touristy but worth a visit for the atmosphere and clam chowder.
- **Boston Common & Public Garden** America's oldest public park and the beautiful adjacent Public Garden with swan boats. Perfect for a spring stroll.
- **Museum of Fine Arts** One of America's great art museums with an exceptional collection spanning ancient Egypt to contemporary art. Plan at least 2-3 hours.
- **Harvard Square** Walk through Harvard Yard, visit the Coop, browse the bookstores, and soak in the college town atmosphere. Very accessible from your hotel on the Route 77 bus.

## Top 10 Things to Do

A curated list of the best experiences — from iconic sights to hidden neighborhood gems. These aren't all walking distance from the hotel, but all are easily accessible by public transit.


### 1. Harvard Museum of Natural History — The Glass Museum *(Cambridge • Daily 9am–5pm • \$15)*

One of the most extraordinary museum experiences in the country. The Glass Flowers collection features over 3,000 hand-blown botanical models created in the 1800s — impossibly delicate and still scientifically accurate. The museum also houses dinosaur fossils, minerals, and taxidermy specimens. A one-of-a-kind collection.

 **Nearby:** Tatte Bakery, Harvard Square — excellent pastries, shakshuka, and coffee. A local favorite.


### 2. Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum *(Fenway • Closed Tuesdays • Late Thursdays until 9pm)*

A Venetian-style palazzo filled with masterworks — Titian, Rembrandt, Sargent — arranged exactly as Isabella Stewart Gardner left them in her will. The central courtyard is stunning, and the museum is famous for the unsolved 1990 art heist (the empty frames still hang on the walls). Deeply atmospheric.

 **Lunch:** Café G — the museum's own restaurant, open to non-museum visitors. Excellent seasonal menu in a beautiful setting.


### 3. MIT Museum *(Kendall Square • Daily 10am–5pm)*

Newly relocated and renovated — robotics, holograms, and AI research exhibits that brilliantly capture MIT's spirit of invention. Pairs naturally with a walk through the Kendall Square tech campus.

 **Lunch:** Flour Bakery + Café (Kendall Square) — legendary sticky buns, excellent sandwiches and quiche. A Boston institution.


### 4. Harvard University Tour *(Cambridge)*

Explore Harvard Yard, see the statue of John Harvard (actually not John Harvard), visit the Widener Library steps, and walk through the historic campus. Free student-led tours are available, or simply wander on your own. Combine with a visit to the Harvard Book Store and the Brattle Theatre nearby.

 **After:** Algiers Coffee House, Brattle Street — a wonderfully eccentric Cambridge institution with Middle Eastern coffee and lentil soup. Cash only, unhurried vibe.


### 5. Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) *(Seaport • Closed Mon • Late Thu & Fri until 9pm)*

A stunning cantilevered building over Boston Harbor with top-notch rotating contemporary art. The harbor views from the top floor are spectacular — a great evening option on Thursdays or Fridays.

 **Lunch:** Sportello, Congress Street — Barbara Lynch's casual Italian counter in Fort Point. Excellent house-made pasta, ideal before or after the ICA.


### 6. Beacon Hill Deep Dive *(Boston)*

Go beyond the usual stroll. Tour the Boston Athenaeum (one of America's oldest private libraries), browse Charles Street antique shops, and wander Acorn Street. One of the most beautiful urban neighborhoods in the country.

 **Lunch:** Toscano, 47 Charles St — rustic Italian, open for lunch Friday–Sunday. Excellent pastas and warm atmosphere.

### 7. Newbury Street *(Back Bay)*


Eight blocks of shops, galleries, and sidewalk cafés stretching from the Public Garden to Massachusetts Avenue. May is perfect for window shopping and outdoor café seating.


 **Coffee:** Trident Booksellers & Café, 338 Newbury — independent bookstore-café. Great coffee, full breakfast and lunch menu. Open daily from 8am.

### 8. The North End *(Boston)*

Boston's oldest and most atmospheric neighborhood — the historic Italian neighborhood. Duck into Parziale's Bakery, browse Salumeria Italiana for provisions, and stop by Shake the Tree (67 Salem St) for beautiful gifts and unique fragrances. Walk the quieter residential streets away from Hanover, and end with a cannoli — locals swear by Modern Pastry over Mike's.

**Lobster Roll:** Neptune Oyster — the most famous lobster roll in Boston, and for good reason. Generous portions of fresh lobster on a toasted brioche roll, served hot with butter or cold with mayo. Expect a wait, but it's worth it.

 **Lunch:** Galleria Umberto, 289 Hanover St — cash only, opens at 10:45am and sells out by ~2:30pm. The best arancini and Sicilian pizza in the city. Arrive before 1pm.

 **Coffee:** Caffè Vittoria — the oldest Italian café in Boston. Marble tables, espresso, tiramisu. Cash only. Perfectly old-world.

### 9. Charles River Esplanade Walk *(Boston)*

Beautiful in early May — sailboats on the water, runners and cyclists on the paths, and the Back Bay skyline reflected in the river. Cross the footbridge into Cambridge for a Kendall Square detour.

☕ **Nearby:** Thinking Cup, Tremont Street — one of Boston's best independent coffee shops. Stumptown beans, great pastries and breakfast sandwiches. Open daily from 7am.

### 10. Harvard Square + Brattle Street *(Cambridge)*

Harvard Square rewards slow exploration — the Harvard Book Store (a genuine indie institution), the Brattle Theatre (one of America's great revival cinemas), and the leafy residential streets of Brattle and Trowbridge.

🍸 **Evening:** The Longfellow Bar, Brattle Street — excellent cocktails and great bar food. Opens at 5pm. A perfect Cambridge wind-down.

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## Affordable Dining Near Your Hotel

Great restaurants within easy reach of Homewood Suites Arlington — all budget-friendly, all delicious, most on the Route 77 bus line or a short walk from Porter Square or Harvard Square. Note: Both Porter Square and Harvard Square have many more affordable restaurants beyond what's listed here — these are just some highlights to get you started.

### PORTER SQUARE — Just a Few Stops on the Route 77

#### Cafe Mami

*1815 Mass Ave • Price: \$ • Open Mon, Wed–Sun 11:45am–9pm, closed Tuesdays*

Excellent Japanese comfort food at unbeatable prices — the pork tonkatsu set is \$14 and massive. Cozy, casual, and worth a short wait. Cash preferred but cards accepted.

#### Cambridge Common

*1667 Mass Ave • Price: \$\$ • Open daily from noon (11am Sundays)*

Classic American restaurant and bar with solid food at fair prices. Great burgers, mac & cheese, and vegetarian-friendly options. Big beer menu, relaxed atmosphere, and a Porter Square staple since forever.

#### Yume Wo Katate

*1923 Mass Ave • Price: \$ • Open Wed–Fri 4:30–9:30pm, Sat–Sun for lunch & dinner*

Cult-favorite ramen shop with huge bowls and a unique atmosphere — you share your dreams with the room at the end of the meal (optional!). Rich, salty pork broth and generous portions. Expect a line, but it's fast and totally worth it. Vegan ramen available.

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### HARVARD SQUARE — 10 Minutes on the Route 77

#### Mr. Bartley's Burger Cottage

*1246 Mass Ave • Price: \$\$ • Tue–Thu 11am–8pm, Fri–Sat 11am–8:30pm (closed Mon & Sun evenings)*

A Harvard Square institution since 1960 — legendary burgers with creative toppings and clever names (often celebrities or politicians). Award-winning onion rings and milkshakes. Featured on Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives. Expect a wait but it moves fast. A true classic.

#### Pinocchio's Pizza & Subs

*74 Winthrop St • Price: \$ • Open daily 11am–1am (2am Fri–Sat)*

A Harvard Square institution since forever. Great NY-style pizza by the slice, excellent Sicilian pizza, and solid subs. No frills, just good food at good prices. Watch them make the pizzas right in front of you.

#### Felipe's Taqueria

*21 Brattle St • Price: \$ • Open daily 10:30am–1am (2am Thu–Sat)*

Harvard Square institution with fantastic burritos, quesadillas, and nachos. Fresh ingredients, big portions, great value. Upstairs seating and a rooftop deck. A reliable, delicious choice any time of day.

## Grendel's Den

*89 Winthrop St • Price: \$ • Open daily 11:30am–1am*

A cozy basement pub with excellent food, great beer selection, and a legendary half-price food deal (5–7:30pm with drink purchase). Try the clam chowder and the brisket nachos. Perfect for a casual dinner.

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## WALKING DISTANCE FROM YOUR HOTEL

### Za

*138 Mass Ave, Arlington • Price: \$\$ • Open daily 12–9pm*

Excellent artisan pizza just a short walk from Homewood Suites. Individual-sized pizzas with creative toppings, cozy atmosphere, good wine selection. Gluten-free options available. A neighborhood gem.

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## Dinner Recommendations

### PLAN AHEAD — Book These in Advance

These are among the best restaurants in Cambridge but fill up quickly — book as early as possible.

### Oleana

*Cambridge • Open nightly from 5:30pm*

Ana Sortun's celebrated Eastern Mediterranean restaurant, one of the most acclaimed in New England. Deeply flavored small plates, cozy and intimate space. The Sultan's Delight and maple dumpling dessert are legendary. Books out weeks ahead.

### Giulia

*Cambridge, near Harvard Square • Open nightly except Sundays from 5:30pm*

An intimate Italian gem many consider the best restaurant in Cambridge. Outstanding house-made pasta, exceptional service, warm room. Tables go quickly even on weeknights — reserve early.

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## EASIER TO GET IN — Great Cambridge Options

Excellent restaurants with more availability — still worth reserving, but much more last-minute friendly.

### Puritan & Company

*Inman Square, Cambridge • Open nightly from 5pm (+ Sunday brunch)*

A lively, ingredient-driven American restaurant in Inman Square with a creative seasonal menu. Known for excellent oysters, bone marrow, and beautifully executed fish dishes. Warm atmosphere, great cocktails, and far easier to book than comparable spots.

### Waypoint

*Harvard Square, Cambridge • Open nightly from 5pm*

A casually elegant spot on Mass Ave with a seafood-forward menu of shareable plates. The \$1 oyster happy hour is legendary, the wood-fired pizza is exceptional, and the cocktail list is inventive. Good energy, good value, and reservations are easy to come by.

### Margeaux Supper Parlor

*North Cambridge • Open Tue–Fri from 7am, Sat–Sun from 10am, dinner until 9–10pm, closed Mondays*

A warmly elegant spot right on Mass Ave in North Cambridge — beautiful décor, a gorgeous bar, and a creative menu of smaller plates with suggested wine pairings. The tasting collections (Coastal, and Field & Farm) are perfect for sampling a range of dishes. Easy to book and convenient from the school.

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## WORTH THE TRIP INTO BOSTON

### **Toro**

*South End, Boston • Open nightly from 5pm (+ Sunday brunch)*

Lively, loud, and delicious Spanish tapas on Washington Street. Get the octopus, the gambas al ajillo, and the bone marrow. Reservations recommended but walk-ins often possible at the bar.

*Prepared for visitors • May 2026*