Political Power in Washington: California’s Capital Presence
As dramatized in “The West Wing,” “Scandal” and “House of Cards,” the U.S. political system is teeming with twists and turns, heroes and villains and scandals. But as Hollywood presents seductive fictional stories, the state of California is creating a new narrative on how state government can shape, influence and challenge the federal government. As one in every 10 Americans is Californian, the state’s influence is seen at every level, from aides working with President Trump to the largest congressional delegation led by powerful, history-making senators. Understanding California’s role in federal Washington has never been more critical.

Join L.A. Times assistant managing editor of politics Christina Bellantoni next fall for a reporter’s-eye view of Washington and learn just how accurate the dramatic portrayals of politics might be on any given day. This behind-the-scenes crash course promises special access to learn how policy is made and the opportunity to discuss the impact and intersection of the 2018 midterm elections and the new state leadership. Experience the nation’s capital as the ultimate insider, visiting D.C.’s most iconic sites, exploring the city’s favorite haunts to see where deals are made, and gaining a broader insight into the intricacies of the U.S. political system from California’s perspective.
DAY 1 Welcome to the Capital
Arrive in Washington, D.C., and make your way to your hotel in the heart of the U.S. capital. After checking in to your room, join your L.A. Times expert and fellow travelers for a quick walking tour of the Dupont Circle neighborhood, known as a pioneering alternative-lifestyle community. Then enjoy a welcome reception and dinner at a local steakhouse often visited by political wheelers and dealers. After dinner, explore the city on a night tour of illuminated monuments and memorials. (R, D)

DAY 2 An Insider’s Look at Congress (aka the Corridor of Power)
Begin this morning with a crash course on California’s preeminent issues: From sanctuary cities to healthcare, learn how California is tackling issues by opposing the federal government’s position. Understand how these issues play a role in the upcoming gubernatorial elections. After a quick walking tour of the Capitol Hill neighborhood, visit one of Washington’s most iconic buildings, the U.S. Capitol, followed by a catered lunch in a private room. Afterward, attend a live taping of “Hardball With Chris Matthews.” Conclude your day with an evening bipartisan discussion with D.C. staffers from the current and previous administrations at a private reception in a D.C. lounge. (L,R)

DAY 3 Politics Is Local
Start the morning with an orientation of the historic Georgetown neighborhood. Then head to the university that bears its name to hear experts from the Institute of Politics to discuss the impact and intersection of the 2018 midterm elections and the gubernatorial leadership polling. Midday, visit the recently revitalized and hip enclave of Shaw for lunch at a D.C. staple, Ben’s Chili Bowl. Hear the restaurant’s history from one of Ben’s family members, and learn of its roots that date back to the 1950s in this historically black neighborhood. Continue your conversation on the connections between California and Washington with a representative from the California State Society to discuss California-centric issues. Late this afternoon, see the inner workings of a newsroom while attending a live taping of “PBS NewsHour.” (L)
**DAY 4  Political Scenes and Screens**

Start your day learning more about how advocacy and policy work in Washington. Meet with a lobbying firm this morning to discuss the complexity of money, power and politics and how lobbying can influence elections and laws. Complete your adventure in Washington with a visit to the Motion Picture Association of America and hear more about Hollywood’s presence in the capital. Then discuss how U.S. politics is portrayed on big and small screens. After some time to refresh back at the hotel, join your fellow travelers for a farewell dinner at a local restaurant. (D)

**DAY 5  Departure Day**

Check out of your hotel, and return home.

**ACCOMMODATIONS**

**4 NIGHTS**  The Dupont Circle Hotel

The Dupont Circle is a four-star boutique hotel ideally located in Northwest Washington, D.C., just minutes from historical landmarks, shops and restaurants.
DATES & PRICING

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<th>DATES</th>
<th>PRICING</th>
<th>SINGLE SUPPLEMENT</th>
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<td>Sept. 22-26, 2019</td>
<td>$3,995</td>
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LAND COST

Prices are listed in U.S. dollars and are based on a person sharing a room with another. Although we do our best to maintain the listed price, because our prices are set over a year in advance, we reserve the right to increase costs due to circumstances beyond our control, tariffs, taxes and VAT received after prices are published and to reflect fluctuations in foreign exchange markets. The land cost is based on a minimum number of guests as described on the trip page.

WHAT IS INCLUDED

- Comprehensive educational program by content experts and professional on-site guides
- All accommodations and meals as outlined in the itinerary
- All ground transportation within the itinerary unless otherwise indicated
- All sightseeing as specified in the itinerary
- Entrance fees
- Gratuities to porters, drivers and guides for all included arrangements
- The assistance of an ATA expedition manager for comprehensive logistical and customer service management on the expedition
- Wireless listening devices
- The assistance of an ATA professional travel team to assist with pre-trip questions, travel arrangements, including flights, extra hotel nights or other services
- Comprehensive pre-departure information about the destination and what to expect on the expedition, including a suggested reading list

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED

- U.S. domestic or international airfare or other transportation from your home to the departure point of the trip and from the end point of the trip to your home
- Travel and trip cancellation insurance
- Passport, visa, airport departure and baggage fees
- Meals not specified in the itinerary, and food and beverages not part of the included meals
- Personal items such as telephone, fax and internet charges, laundry, room service and alcoholic or other beverages not specified as included
- Gratuities for non-group services
- Expenses you may incur resulting from delays due to bad weather, road conditions, sickness, government action and flight delays
- Expenses incurred in making individual travel arrangements in conjunction with the trip, and sightseeing not included in the itinerary
- Transfers to and from airports for those arriving or departing according to the designated itinerary (exceptions may apply)

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