

Walking Baltimore's Chic Side

Don't worry. It's still got enough quirkiness to go around. **By KATIE KNOROVSKY**



No work boots," dictates the sign inside Pazo, a tapas bar in Baltimore's new Harbor East neighborhood. A rough-around-the-edges city built up from shipbuilding warehouses and canneries, Baltimore is indeed shedding its work boots, pouring millions into revitalization efforts. Discover Charm City's evolution on this two-mile walking tour (plus water taxi) that traipses through a crazy-quilt of old and new, with the sparkling harbor as your lifeline. (The area code is 410.)

Start at the **1 American Visionary Art Museum** (800 Key Hwy.; 244-1900). Its nine galleries reveal colorful mosaics, matchstick sculptures, and portraits inked by Bic pen—all created by self-taught artists. (See eccentricity in motion at AVAM's annual Kinetic Sculpture Race, held May 2 this year.)

Walk toward the water to the **2 Rusty Scupper landing of Ed Kane's Water Taxi** (563-3901). The blue-and-white boats have provided transport across the harbor since 1980. Hop off at **3 Harbor East**, a gentrifying slice of Baltimore that in recent years has become a magnet for chic dining, shopping, and eager condo devel-

opers. Walk east along Lancaster Street. Turn inland on Exeter Street to explore a clutch of browse-worthy retail, like gorgeous Himalayan shawls and handmade baubles at **4 Kashmir Imports** (830 Aliceanna St.; 209-2700).

Head back to Lancaster and contin-

ue along the waterfront to South Eden Street. Walk north to Fleet Street and pop into **5 Bluehouse** (1407 Fleet St.; 276-1180), part café, part eco-conscious home goods shop. Sip a mug of organic coffee and admire chairs salvaged from wine barrels.

Back on Eden Street, continue north to the fringe of Little Italy, where you'll find cheery **6 Piedigrotta Bakery** (1300 Bank St.; 522-6900). Order a slice of tiramisu and ogle the rainbow-striped seven-layer cakes on display. Work off your indulgences next door at second-floor **Mustang Alley's** (522-2695), a polished 12-

lane bowling alley with a lengthy cocktail list and sophisticated menu (crab cake sliders, chicken satay). Try your hand at duckpin bowling, a variation allegedly invented in Baltimore in the early

Left to right: A former machine shop, Pazo is now a buzzing night spot; Cupcake sells sweet women's wear in Fell's Point; the harbor remains Baltimore's focal point.



1900s and named for how the squat pins fly through the air upon collision.

Double back down Eden Street to Eastern Avenue and turn left, then walk four blocks to the green-roofed **7 Baltimore Tattoo Museum** (1534 Eastern Ave.; 522-5800), a quirky shrine to the artistry and history of electric tattooing, as well as a working tattoo parlor. Peruse 1920s tools, original acetate stencils, and a rare Tattoo Barbie.

Keep on Eastern to South Broadway, where you're on the edge of a growing Latino enclave unofficially called Spanish Town. Head up Broadway to the **8 taco trucks** flanking both sides of the road. "Ask any chef in the area about the taco trucks, and you'll see a big smile," says Lars Rusins, president of the Baltimore Foodies club. "The best one is parked in front of the church on the east side. I always order *tres tacos lengua* [beef tongue]." Follow Broadway south to Fleet



Strolling historic Fell's Point.

and turn left, where you'll find a cluster of antiques shops. Continue until Ann Street, then head south.

Just before Thames Street stands the historic **9 Robert Long House** (812 S. Ann St.). Built circa 1765 by a local merchant, the restored colonial brick house remains Baltimore's oldest standing residence.

Cross Thames Street and duck into the **10 Robert McClintock Studio & Gallery** (1809 Thames St.; 814-2800). The renowned local artist creates energetic

street scenes by melding photography and digital painting. Thames Street is the main thoroughfare through popular Fell's Point, a National Register Historic District. (Native Olympian Michael Phelps recently bought a luxe condo nearby.)

Down the road roosts the 1770s **11 Admiral Fell Inn** (888 S. Broadway; 522-7377). The hotel formerly functioned as a sailor boardinghouse, YMCA,

and ship chandlery. Knock back a bottle of local brew Natty Boh at **12 The Horse You Came In On** (1626 Thames St.; 327-8111), legendary drinking hole of Edgar Allan Poe. Then stroll along the waterfront to Eden Street, where you've fast-forwarded through history to Baltimore's recent boom, and come to a rest for Mediterranean tapas and a killer wine list at **13 Pazo** (1425 Aliceanna St.; 534-7296)—like several of its neighbors, a former machine shop.