

## Why I Love ... Baltimore

Comedian  
**Wanda Sykes**  
loves clowning  
around in  
Charm City



Wanda Sykes and her comedic talent continue to defy categorization. The Portsmouth, Va., native spent her formative years in outerlying communities of the D.C. region. She burst onto the stand-up circuit in Washington and Baltimore in the late '80s and later landed in the national spotlight when Fox gave her a starring role in the weekly sitcom *Wanda at Large*, which she also wrote and produced. A sampling of her résumé includes hosting her own late-night talk fest, *The Wanda Sykes Show*; appearing in the hit show *Curb Your Enthusiasm*; playing opposite luminaries such as Jane Fonda and Uma Thurman in feature films; producing two eponymous HBO comedy specials; and lending a sardonic touch to cartoon voices such as that of Gladys Murphy on Comedy Central's *Crank Yankers*.

Up next for Sykes is a cameo appearance in *The Muppets*, out Nov. 23, as well as another voice role in this summer's *Ice Age: Continental Drift*. But her most cherished art form is

stand-up, and Sykes returns to her comedic roots as often as she can. She's currently in the midst of a cross-country tour that has her as one of the headliners in the New York Comedy Festival (Nov. 9–13) in New York City.

"I love doing live shows and getting that immediate response from an audience," says Sykes. "There's no script and if something goes wrong, it's all on you. It's the most challenging, but also the most rewarding."

The free-falling thrill of monologing isn't the only thing she loves returning to. Whenever time permits, Sykes visits her former playground of Baltimore, where she'll spend an afternoon strolling the Inner Harbor and savoring a crab dinner at a waterfront restaurant.

"Growing up near Baltimore, I loved hanging out at the harbor ... and I still do," she says. "And especially now with the kids (her 2½-year old twins), they want to be outside. When we visit Baltimore, the first place they want to go is the harbor." —STACEY MORRIS

### The best places to ...



#### ENJOY MARYLAND CRAB

##### Shoreline Seafood

1034 Route 3 N.;  
410-721-7767 • "I lived  
in Gambrills so, to me,  
Shoreline Seafood is still  
my favorite spot for crabs,"  
says Sykes. "When you go  
to Baltimore, you just gotta  
get your hands dirty and  
eat some crabs."

#### TAKE AN OPEN-AIR STROLL

##### The Inner Harbor

"You can just spend hours  
walking around, checking  
out all the great restau-  
rants," says Sykes. "And  
the people-watching is  
great here."

#### EMBRACE AQUATIC WONDER

##### The National Aquarium

501 E. Pratt St.; 410-576-  
3800; [aqua.org](http://aqua.org) • "The kids  
love the aquarium. It's their  
favorite spot in the city.  
Their favorite thing to do is  
watch anything with color,  
especially those big, colorful  
schools of tropical fish."

#### TAKE PART IN THE ALL-AMERICAN PASTIME

##### Oriole Park at Camden Yards

333 W. Camden St.;  
888-848-2473 • "I just like  
baseball. Anytime you can  
sit out and have a hot dog  
and drink a beer, that's a  
good thing."