

# VIRGINIA

2021/2022 EDITION

GROUP TOUR GUIDE

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# Welcome to Virginia!

**O**n behalf of the Virginia Tourism Corporation and our statewide tourism partners, we look forward to working with you and welcoming your groups to Virginia when they are ready to travel.

We are excited to show off new attractions such as Apex Entertainment, The Pledge Monument and Great Bridge Battlefield & Waterways Museum. We have great new and renovated hotels such as Tru by Hilton, The Landing @ Hampton Marina, Sheraton Reston and The Moxy Hotel to name just a few.

Virginia is easily accessible by major highway systems, Amtrak rail service, nine airports and this summer - Metrorail service connecting Washington, D.C. and the Northern Virginia stations in between to Washington Dulles International Airport.

Virginia offers unparalleled history, cultural and performing arts, outdoor adventures and scenic vistas, music and artesian trails, an exciting culinary scene and craft beverages to customize an unforgettable tour experience! Our commitment to customer service, safe travel, quality tours and partners with years of experience are a few reasons why groups come back year after year.

Please contact me at [jjohnson@virginia.org](mailto:jjohnson@virginia.org) for personal assistance or visit [Virginia.org/groups](https://www.virginia.org/groups) for more information and resources to plan exciting group tour experiences.

Safe travels,



**Joni Johnson,  
Director of Domestic Sales & Marketing  
Virginia Tourism Corporation**

Photo courtesy of Virginia Beach CVB



**King Neptune statue overlooks the Virginia Beach Boardwalk.**

Photo courtesy of Crater District Planning Commission



**Night time view of downtown Petersburg.**

Photo courtesy of Virginia Tourism Corporation/ Sarah Hauser



**Monticello is the autobiographical masterpiece of Thomas Jefferson.**

# VIRGINIA

2021/2022 EDITION

GROUP TOUR GUIDE

Virginia Aquarium and  
Marine Science Center  
whale watching tour.

Courtesy of Virginia Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau



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**ON THE COVER:** To commemorate the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the first enslaved Africans in English North America, the Fort Monroe Visitor and Education Center was renovated in 2019 to include two galleries detailing the history of enslaved people at Fort Monroe.

Courtesy of Virginia Tourism Corporation/Sarah Hauser

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# TELLING THE UNTOLD STORIES OF VIRGINIA'S BLACK HISTORY

Once a story of white history only, many of Virginia's leading historic sites are telling the tales of enslaved individuals and their families

By Dave Bodle

**T**he Commonwealth of Virginia has as rich a history as any state in the Union. The first English-speaking permanent settlement was established in Jamestown and there were seven Virginians who put everything on the line when they signed the Declaration of Independence. Eight United States presidents listed Virginia as their birthplace and Virginians' contributions to the Civil Rights Movement are legendary.

Unfortunately, the 1619 arrival of the first slaves serve as the ugly underbelly of all that's good about Virginia. Long before the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests were heard, Virginia attractions accepted their part in slavery and began to share that historical narrative. Here's a peek at what four leading attractions are doing to complete the story.

Photo courtesy of Virginia Tourism Corporation/Sarah Hauser



**Stories of some of the enslaved at Monticello. Guided tours are offered daily throughout the year; outdoor gardens and plantation tours are offered daily April-October.**



Experience an inspiring story of an African-American family becoming citizens and landowners after years of slavery. Gilmore Cabin and Farm is the home of George Gilmore, born a slave at Montpelier about 1810. Gilmore built the cabin in 1872, after his emancipation following the Civil War.

# UNTOLD STORIES OF VIRGINIA'S BLACK HISTORY

Photo courtesy of Virginia Tourism Corporation/Mark Atkinson



Colonial Williamsburg's Historic Area features dozens of original buildings, homes, and shops reconstructed on 301 acres - most on their original foundations. Rare animal breeds, historic trades, reenactors, and lovingly restored gardens add layers of authenticity to the Colonial Williamsburg experience.

## THOMAS JEFFERSON'S MONTICELLO

During Jefferson's lifetime, more than 400 slaves worked the 5,000-acre plantation with 130 enslaved individuals there during any given year. Details of their lives are sparse since they were denied education and white historians made little effort to document their existence.

Getting Word is a 25-year research project conducted through personal interviews of descendants of families owned by Jefferson. The results have made a significant impact on the interpretation of life of the enslaved at Monticello. The participants in Getting Word are from families dating back to the 18th century. Jefferson has been dignified for the ideals he set forth in the Declaration of Independence, however his acknowledgment of slavery and racial attitude still affects many Americans.

Sally Hemings' name is well-known and linked to Jefferson, but the facts are vague and little is known about this African-American woman. The details of Jefferson and Hemings' relationship are unknown, but we do know she gave birth to three sons and a daughter.

More than two dozen additional enslaved individuals including domestic workers, skilled trade workers and field workers have their stories told in part. A dozen have the Hemings lineage while six were born into slavery at Monticello.

Monticello has made a commitment to presenting an honest narrative of the plantation's history, through both the contributions made by our third president as well as the people enslaved at Monticello. Exploring both Monticello stories is a must visit for all Virginia tours. [monticello.org/slavery/?ref=homeblock](http://monticello.org/slavery/?ref=homeblock)

## JAMES MADISON'S MONTPELIER

The author of the Bill of Rights enslaved more than 300 individuals. Those men, women and children made the plantation function, but their most basic human rights were denied. Through ongoing slavery interpretation and a 2017 groundbreaking exhibition "The Mere Distinction of Colour" Montpelier is honoring the lives of the enslaved.

Six ways of understanding slavery at Montpelier will challenge what you understand about American freedom. Through archaeological discoveries, it became clear enslaved people were more than property. Slavery was a \$3 billion industry and at its height, 80 percent of American exports came from slave labor.

From 2000, Montpelier began engaging its descendant community on a journey to present a more accurate American story. Many stories of the enslaved live through their descendants. Through stories of the enslaved at Montpelier, that legacy of slavery impacts today's conversations of race, civil and human rights. [montpelier.org/learn/tag/enslaved-community](http://montpelier.org/learn/tag/enslaved-community)

## COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG

During the 18th century, more than 50 percent of Williamsburg inhabitants were black and there was a mixture of freemen and enslaved. Colonial Williamsburg's position as the leading living history museum places it in the perfect spot to share the stories of African Americans.

Before preparing any itinerary that looks at the Virginia enslaved, visit Colonial Williamsburg's African American Experience website and link to the online resource, Slavery and Remembrance. This UNESCO Slave Route Project reckons with the legacy of slavery and the slave trade.

Take time on the site and understand the inhumane treatment and challenges

the Atlantic slave trade had on leaving an old world and living in a new one. Sixty North America, Central America, Caribbean, West Africa and Europe sites and museums are referenced.

Colonial Williamsburg's African American Experiences is a series of regular events that share the daily life and culture of African Virginians. Members of the Actor Interpreter Program craft their stories including that of Will Aggy, of Turkey Island, who along with her two young children were promised their freedom. After three years, Aggy won a legal battle and the freedom was granted.

Gowan Pamphlet was an enslaved tavern worker in Williamsburg. His faith was his passion and a calling to the ministry. At great risk to himself, he preached equality and went on to build Williamsburg's First Baptist Church, which continues today.

During the Revolutionary War, James Armistead Lafayette was pressed into service by Marquis de Lafayette and provided valuable intelligence on the British forces from Portsmouth to Yorktown. He was granted his freedom at the end of the war.

Edith Cumbo was a resourceful black woman in Williamsburg. She tells the story of the challenges Williamsburg's free blacks faced. [Colonialwilliamsburg.org/visit/itineraries/african-american-experience/](https://colonialwilliamsburg.org/visit/itineraries/african-american-experience/)

## FORT MONROE NATIONAL MONUMENT

Fort Monroe, preserved as Fort Monroe National Monument, is located at the southernmost point of the Virginia Peninsula. Its history spans 400 years from Captain John Smith's explorations in the New World to the first arrival of enslaved Africans in English North America. The story of the fort begins with the arrival of the slave ship White Lion

at Point Comfort. Its cargo was "20 and odd" enslaved Africans.

The slave ship was headed to the Spanish Caribbean where slavery was already well established. In the Virginia Colony, slavery did not exist, but the "20 and odd" were traded as enslaved humans. This landing at Point Comfort began 246 years of slavery in the United States and a racial division that continues today.

During the Civil War, Fort Monroe was in Union control, an island in seceded Virginia. The story tells of the arrival of three escaped enslaved men that rowed a small boat through the Chesapeake Bay. Union General Benjamin Butler allowed them to stay under what would be known as the "Contraband Decision." Simply stated,

the general declared the three men contraband, an item that is illegal to be possessed or sold. Within the year, more than 10,000 enslaved people found refuge in the fort. Soon the fort became known as Freedom Fort.

On February 19, 2021, Fort Monroe National Monument was named a UNESCO Slave Route Project site. The initiative to share the history of slavery has three main objectives: Understanding the causes and consequences, highlighting global transformation and cultural interactions and promoting cultural inclusion and dialogue. [nps.gov/fomr/index.htm](https://nps.gov/fomr/index.htm)

There are so many wonderful stories to discover in Virginia. Begin planning your itinerary here at [virginia.org/groups/](https://virginia.org/groups/). ■

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# DOMESTIC SHOWCASE TO VISIT VIRGINIA BEACH

The 2022 Southeast Tourism Society showcase will give a chance to experience Virginia Beach like never before

By Dave Bodle

**A**lthough the Southeast Tourism Society's Domestic Showcase is still 10 months away (it will take place February 13-15, 2022), the Virginia Beach team is hard at work putting together four outstanding city tours for buyers. Spoiler alert, here's a look at what's in the works.

## COASTAL CULINARY ADVENTURE

Virginia oysters have long been a staple even before the first settlers arrived in Jamestown. Some of the state's best oysters come from the 5,100-acre shellfish harvesting set aside on Lynnhaven River in Virginia Beach. There's history to be told and sampling of these large, gorgeous oysters to be enjoyed. With the 2022 Domestic Showcase taking place over Valentine's Day, it seems appropriate a chocolatier is visited.

## WHALE WATCHING ADVENTURE

Between December and March, whales migrate to Virginia Beach. Even whales know a good destination when they see one. These beautiful creatures migrate based on water and air

temperatures. January and February are generally the best months for a sighting. With STS Domestic Showcase in February, you're likely to see them on this excursion. You'll have plenty of opportunities to get up close with ocean life at an evening function at the Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center.

## LIGHTHOUSES, SHIPWRECKS AND MILITARY ADVENTURE

Sitting on the edge of the continent, Virginia Beach has a rich history dating back to the early 18th century as the home of thousands of sailors and airmen. You'll start at Fort Story and the Cape Henry Lighthouse. The latter is the first federally funded public works project and was authorized by George Washington. The Virginia Beach Surf & Rescue Museum and the "Surfman

Chronicles" tell the story of shipwrecks from another time. There's a stop at the Thoroughgood House, a National Historic Landmark built in 1719 and Lynnhaven House, an early 18th-century plantation. A highlight is an evening event at the Military Aviation Museum with its awesome display of World War I and World War II aircraft.

## MURALS, MUSE & THE ARTS ADVENTURE

If the sunrise over the Atlantic Ocean isn't enough for your art fix, Virginia Beach has a fun day planned for you. There is plenty of art to be found in the shops, galleries and coffee shops in the ViBe District. There is a mile-long display of colorful murals that welcomes you to this wonderful area. A fun stop is the Mermaid Factory, where you can extract your inner creative. Muse Paintbar combines painting instruction with a restaurant bar. This afternoon, it's on to the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art. The museum exhibitions regularly change while displaying paint, sculpture, photography, glass, video and other visual media of international and domestic artists. Watch for registration information and final itineraries at [southeasttourism.org/domestic-showcase](https://southeasttourism.org/domestic-showcase) ■

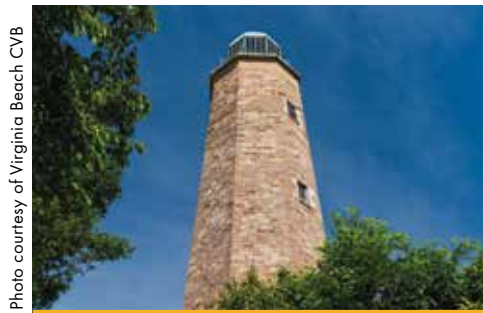


Photo courtesy of Virginia Beach CVB

Historic 18th century Cape Henry Lighthouse features outstanding ocean vistas.

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# VIRGINIA'S BIG WIN

Four Virginia cities are slated to build casino resorts

By Gabriela Bittencourt

It's no surprise games of chance were brought to the colonies by the first settlers. In the early years of our nation, social stigma against gambling contributed to the federal restrictions imposed on gambling houses. But its popularity never ceased. Nevada was the first state to revive the gambling industry in the United States by legalizing gambling in the 1930s. The legalization of gambling in Atlantic City in the 1980s turned it into America's second most popular gambling city and today, 44 states welcome the casino-gambling industry.

Most recently, Virginia state legislation approved **Norfolk, Bristol, Danville and Portsmouth** as locations to build casino resorts. Virginia's first four casinos will start construction in 2021 and will open to the public in late 2022 and early 2023. A fifth casino approved by the state's legislation designated for **Richmond** will be approved or rejected by Richmond voters November 2021. Virginia will remain a state with no Indian gaming casinos, however the Norfolk casino will be operated by the Pamunkey Indian Tribe while the Bristol casino will be operated by the Seminole Tribe of Florida under their Hard Rock subsidiary.

That's right: baccarat, blackjack, twenty-one, poker, craps, dice, slot machines, sports betting, roulette wheels, klondike tables, punchboards, faro layouts, keno layouts, numbers

tickets, push cards, jar tickets, pull tabs and online gaming can be found in the **Hard Rock Casino Bristol, Caesars Virginia, Norfolk Resort & Casino, Rivers Casino Portsmouth** and the **Richmond casino**. If your big win at one of these locations isn't enough of a reason to come visit, here are some more reasons:

## NORFOLK

Norfolk is known for its vibrant harbor and its booming downtown. This waterfront city is home to the world's largest Naval base and historical attractions such as the **USS Wisconsin**, the last and largest battleship built by the U.S. Navy. Today, Norfolk is considered one of our nation's fastest growing ports. Beside history lessons, visitors will not run short of dining and entertainment options in downtown Norfolk. Norfolk's performing arts center, **Chrysler Hall**, holds performances by the Virginia Symphony and touring Broadway plays and **Chrysler Museum of Art**, which holds some of the world's most ancient artifacts.

"VisitNorfolk is thrilled that a prospect of a casino could bring a new market of visitors to our vibrant city. Not only will this expand our local economy and increase job opportunities in the region, but the casino will provide a new, fantastic



Photo courtesy of Visit Norfolk/David Hills



Photo courtesy of Visit Bristol & Seminole Tribe of Florida/Hard Rock Subsidiary

#### Bristol Hard Rock Casino

way for visitors, groups and locals alike to enjoy our booming waterfront destination,” said Kurt Krause, VisitNorfolk president and CEO.

### BRISTOL

Bristol is known as a great place to visit for plenty of reasons. Sights of the **Appalachian Mountains**, the **South Holston Lake** and the **Holston River** soothe sore eyes and have persuaded many to stay longer than they expected. This city, which borders Tennessee, is no stranger to live music and authentic American cuisine. **Burger Bar** is a historic eatery located in downtown Bristol. This classic diner has been flipping patties since 1942. Another historic gem that can be found in Bristol’s downtown is **Bristol Train Station**, which was built in 1902 but recently restored.

### DANVILLE

Danville is a small town with an urban appeal. The **Danville Museum of Fine Arts & History**, which was once the home of Major William T. Swutherlin and Jefferson Davis, is a museum with exhibits on Danville’s role in the Civil War. **Ballad Brewing**

revitalized Danville’s sense of community as this former tobacco warehouse was renovated to craft sophisticated beers. Ballad Brewing not only invites visitors for a cold one, it invites them into the community.

### PORTSMOUTH

Portsmouth is one of Virginia’s treasures. This coastal town, which is just a ferry ride away from Norfolk, is known for its genuine hospitality. Portsmouth is a pleasant place to go for a walk, as blocks of three-centuries-old homes and buildings tell the story of this ancient seaport. Visitors can go on the **Path to History**, a self-guided tour that features the **CSS Virginia** and the **USS Langley**. Or, tour **Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Museum**, which displays artifacts related to our Armed Forces.

### RICHMOND

Richmond has it all: historical and cultural attractions, music entertainment and outdoor recreation. Visitors will love the **Virginia Museum of Fine Arts’** displays of worldly artifacts such as the Lewis Collection of Art Nouveau. Besides touring Broadway shows, Richmond runs regular productions of the **Richmond Symphony** and the **Concert Ballet of Virginia**, in nearby Ashland. Make sure to make advanced reservations to get a table at **Lemaire**. This New American restaurant is the taste of Richmond. Looking for a place to enjoy the outdoors? On either side of the James River, guests have more than 10,700 acres of park land to enjoy or rent a canoe and stride down this magnificent Virginian wonder.

Take a chance on Bristol, Danville, Norfolk, Portsmouth, and/or Richmond. Whether you spend your days rolling dice at the casino, or touring these cities visitors that come to the state of Virginia always leave as winners. ■

# EXPERIENCE VIRGINIA BIRDING AT THESE TWO COASTAL DESTINATIONS

Groups can observe hundreds of species of birds  
both mid-flight and in their resting places

By Isabella Wilkes

Virginia's coastal shores are some of the best locations in the country for bird watching enthusiasts. Located in a prime position along the Atlantic Flyway, a major north-south migration path for birds, visitors can observe hundreds of species of birds as they take advantage of Virginia's marshy forests as a resting place. Virginia's protected preserves make for an ideal location to spot some of America's most iconic and rare species of birds.

## DISMAL SWAMP NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

The **Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge** expands to cover 112,000 acres of undisturbed wildlife in the Chesapeake Bay region. Home to more than 213 species of birds, the many trails and overlooks this national preserve offers are ideal for anyone wanting to experience the best of Virginia birding. Along with the miles of hiking trails spanning throughout the preserve, visitors can enjoy one of the guided kayak tours that take you through the untouched waterways of the cypress swamp.

The Dismal Swamp, with its easily accessible trails and ideal location in the **Atlantic Flyway**, make it a perfect location for any birding expertise level. In the fall, bird watchers are able to witness a multitude of exotic birds migrate south for the winter. This includes two of the rarest birds in North America – the **Swainson's Warbler** and the **Wayne's Warbler**. For more than one million birds like swans, geese, and ducks, Dismal Swamp is their final destination for the winter season.

Spring is the most popular time for birders to visit the Dismal Swamp for a combination of the pleasant weather and to hear the songs of the 35 species of neotropical warblers that travel through. Some of the season's rarer birds to spot during this time are the **Mourning Warbler** and the **American Pipit**.

If you're looking for more involved events to round out your Dismal Swamp experience, every spring the preserve hosts the **Dismal Swamp Stomp Running Festival**, which offers races for every expert level and age. Also held every year from December 14 through January 5 is the **Audubon Christmas Bird Count**. Birdwatchers from

Photo courtesy of Virginia Tourism Corporation/Trevor Frost



Lake Drummond is located inside the **Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge**, a nature preservation with hiking trails, birdwatching, biking, fishing, boating, and hunting.

around the country participate in this competition to see how many birds they can hear or see during the duration of the competition. You can either compete from Dismal Swamp and the Chesapeake region or sign up to compete from your hometown. There is no expertise level or fee to join, but donations are highly recommended. Near the Dismal Swamp the cities of Chesapeake and Suffolk have a wide variety of accommodation and amenity options.

Photo courtesy of Virginia Tourism Corporation/Rachel Stevens



Kiptopeke State Park is one of the jewels of the Eastern Shore offering recreational access to the Chesapeake Bay, cabins, a beautiful beach area, migratory bird study and viewing facilities, boat ramp, playground and beach facilities.

## EASTERN SHORE

The Eastern Shore of Virginia is a chain of islands situated between the **Chesapeake Bay** and **Atlantic Ocean**. Just minutes north of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge tunnel, this location is easily accessible to anyone living in the urban areas nearby. Eastern Shore is gorgeous to visit throughout the year, with its breathtaking views of the ocean and the native landscape. Throughout the year, birders can spot Virginia's many shorebirds who habit this region year-round, including **Black Skimmers**, **American Oystercatchers**, **Wilson's Plovers**, and **Gull-billed Terns**.

The Eastern Shore has 22 marked locations within the park for guests to

explore, and many visitors opt to visit multiple locations in one day by riding their bikes down the interconnected trails. Park rangers recommend the best places to visit in the park for birders are **Chincoteague**, **Magothy Bay Natural Area Preserve**, **Savage Neck Dunes**, and **Wachapreague Interpreted Marsh View**.

One of the best times to visit is during the **Eastern Shore Birding and Wildlife Festival** in October. Along with being able to witness the millions of birds that are making their way south, the preserve offers keynote presentations, guided tours, and boat trips. Many of the birds you can spot from the Eastern Shore Refuge are endangered, so the park urges visitors to be mindful of proper trash

disposal and refrain from feeding the gulls. Along with the miles of trails the park offers, visitors can see a preserved **World War II bunker**, the **Assateague Lighthouse** and the **Eastern Shore Railway Museum**. Or, you can stop by the **Eastern Shore Welcome Center** to explore their interactive exhibit for children where they can hold geological finds like turtle shells, marine life bones, and small fossils. There are many amenities for birders hoping to stay at Eastern Shore, including multiple hotels and inns, campgrounds restaurants along the entire Eastern Shore. For more information on birding statewide visit online at [virginia.org/birdingandwildlifetrail/](http://virginia.org/birdingandwildlifetrail/) ■

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# Experience Virginia's Proud Military History

Groups can pay tribute to those who protect our freedom

A Civil War guide dressed in uniform leads you on a tour of **Manassas National Battlefield Park**, site of the First Battle of Bull Run fought on July 21, 1861, just 30 miles from **Washington, D.C.**

Located near the Manassas National Battlefield Park, the **Ben Lomond Historic Site** served as a Civil War hospital. After the Battle of First Manassas/Bull Run, wounded soldiers were taken there to recover. Signatures on the walls proving they were there are still visible.

A presentation at your hotel by a member of the Marine Corps History Division shares the history of **Marine Corps Base Quantico**. The creation of the base during World War I, expansion during World War II, historic buildings and the Town of Quantico are included. Pay your respects at **Quantico National Cemetery** with a private flag placing experience. At the **National Museum of the Marine Corps**, you'll uncover the history of the Corps, test your Marine skills and get insight into the lives of those who fight for our freedom.

## Wine & Dine in Prince William County

**Harbour Grille** has a great view of the marina while you sample a menu of lump crab cakes, grilled salmon, a certified Angus

ribeye and awesome dessert. Craft beer, craft food and great local music are found at **2 Silos Brewing Company**. Enjoy dinner with the owners of **Murlarkey Distilling** in the distillery or tasting room.

## From Battlefields to Norfolk Battleships

A guided bus tour of **Naval Station Norfolk** promises to be a memorable experience. Naval Station Norfolk is situated in the Sewells Point area, near the site of the Civil War battle between the Monitor and Merrimac (CSS Virginia).

In downtown Norfolk, **Nauticus**, a maritime themed science center and museum, is adjacent to the **USS Wisconsin**, an Iowa-class battleship with a strong WWII history. Through education and impactful experiences, groups visiting Nauticus come to know the power of the sea through fascinating exhibits. The Battleship Wisconsin is one of the last and largest battleships built by the U.S. Navy. The ship earned five battle stars during WWII. Groups are invited to explore its deck through a self-guided tour.

## Delicious Food Options

With Norfolk's dramatic waterfront and Naval Station Norfolk, a brunch, or dinner

cruise on the **Spirit of Norfolk** is all about dining with a view.

**Strippers Waterside Restaurant** is a group favorite with a menu of award-winning options served in a relaxed atmosphere. **Mermaid Winery** will do a Blind Wine Dinner, or a Blending Dinner for groups.

## Add the Virginia International Tattoo to your itinerary

These dates have been set for the 2021 through **2024 Tattoo** event. Part of the **Virginia Arts Festival**.

- June 3 - June 6, 2021
- April 28 - May 1, 2022
- April 20 - 23, 2023
- April 18 - 21, 2024

## VISIT PRINCE WILLIAM

Mark Kowalewski  
703-792-8423  
MKowalewski@PWCgov.org  
visitpwc.com/groups

## VISIT NORFOLK

Melissa Hopper  
757-403-5802  
Mhopper@visitnorfolktoday.com  
Visitnorfolk.com/group-tours

# THREE VIRGINIA DOWNTOWNS THAT SHINE

History, culture and delicious food merge in the 'burgs

By Jason Paha

**T**raditionally, downtowns across America tend to be bustling locales filled with restaurants, theaters and exquisite dining. Virginia is no exception as the Old Dominion State is home to downtowns renowned for historic architecture, Southern hospitality, and, of course, exemplary cuisine.

Groups seeking a convivial downtown outing can schedule a trip to these three Virginia cities, lovingly referred to as the 'burgs.

## HARRISONBURG

Harrisonburg's historic downtown is the center of the city's culture. Its ample 40-block downtown district can be explored on foot, bicycle or by vehicle. Downtown Harrisonburg is brimming with enticing dining options, charming locally owned shops, beautifully restored architecture and one-of-a-kind museums.

Groups aiming to explore Harrisonburg's fascinating history can visit the **Valley Turnpike Museum and Civil War Orientation Center**, both located in the **Hardesty-Higgins House** (built in 1848). The museum explores the history of the historic road now known as U.S. Route 11, a stretch where many small towns grew and prospered while the center provides an overview of the area's rich Civil War history.

Another fun stop is the **Virginia Quilt Museum**, which displays historic and modern exhibits of quilts from around the state and beyond. A short walk from the museum resides the **Explore More Discovery Museum**, which focuses on interactive, multi-sensory learning experiences for children. **James Madison University's Forbes Center for the Performing Arts** features five venues, each acoustically designed to enhance dance, theater and music performances, and is a perfect spot for groups to unwind.

Groups can also savor excellent food at one of Harrisonburg's more than 250 restaurants. Those looking to grab a bite while enjoying lively tunes can visit **The Golden Pony**, a locally owned restaurant and live music venue, or visit one of five micro-breweries all within walking distance to sample locally crafted beer or cider.



Photo courtesy of Department of Economic Development and Tourism City of Fredericksburg





Photo courtesy of Harrisonburg Tourism

Outdoor dining is a delight in Harrisonburg.

"Harrisonburg is a perfect destination for groups. We have dedicated bus parking in award-winning historic downtown Harrisonburg," said Jennifer Bell, Harrisonburg tourism manager. "Downtown Harrisonburg is a unique destination not only as an award-winning Main Street Community and one of Virginia's original arts and cultural districts, but also as the first Culinary District in Virginia."

## FREDERICKSBURG

Stroll through one of the most fascinating periods of American history in Fredericksburg's 40-block **National Historic District** located near the Rappahannock River. The district houses more than 350 original 18th- and 19th-century buildings and also contains more than 100 shops, chef-owned restaurants and boutiques. Groups can learn about this historic city on a **Fredericksburg Trolley Tour** or stretch their legs while enjoying **Traipse Walking Tours**.

Located in the heart of Old Town, **Art First Gallery** is the city's oldest artist co-op and is home to local fine art in a variety of styles.

Shopping downtown is a delightful experience with stops like **Blue Shark Antiques and Collectibles**, which sells a wealth of time-honored items;

**Fredericksburg Antique Mall and Clock Shop**, home to collectibles, jewelry, glassware and furniture; and **Caroline Square**, whose shops sell primitive, antiques, candles and crafts.

The **Shannon Air Museum** contains one of the best collections in the country of American aircraft from the early 1900s. Discover famous aviators, view historic artifacts and learn about the founding of one of the first major airlines. Located a short drive from the National Historic District, the **Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park** has been described as America's Battleground, where the Civil War reached its bloody climax.

"There is a sense of place and authenticity when visiting the Fredericksburg Region. You can envision George Washington walking down Caroline Street as teenager and he would still recognize buildings," said Victoria Matthews, tourism sales manager, Department of Economic Development and Tourism City of Fredericksburg.

## PETERSBURG

One of the oldest cities in Virginia, Petersburg dates back to 1750 and has designated seven local historic districts covering more than 6,500 acres of land and including more than 700 buildings.

The **Old Towne Historic District** encompasses three areas: The original town, which contains the largest number of 18th-century buildings of any neighborhood in the city; **New Town** (also known as High Street), home to many of Petersburg's notable houses that were built in the 18th and 19th centuries; and the heart of Petersburg's commercial development, featuring 18th century houses and mansions along with federal townhouses and downtown stores.

Those looking for top-notch regional cuisine can visit the **Dixie restaurant**, a landmark breakfast and lunch establishment that has been open since

the 1920s and specializes in traditional Southern cuisine. **DJ's Rajun Cajun and Steakhouse** features a garden patio and one of the longest happy hours in town while **Alexander's Fine Food** serves authentic Greek and Italian entrees, fresh seafood and homemade desserts.

Shopping in Old Towne Petersburg is always enjoyable, thanks to stops like **Sycamore Antiques and Architectural Art**, which sports a sizable collection of 19th century furniture, folk art and collectibles; and **The Art Room**, a working artists' studio and gallery featuring the work of local artists.

Almost one quarter of the Civil War was fought around Petersburg and the **Petersburg National Battlefield** tells the story of the nearly 10-month siege that caused the collapse of Richmond and General Robert E. Lee's army. The 2,700-acre park contains a 16-stop driving tour that takes visitors through four units of the battlefield: Ulysses S. Grant's headquarters; the Eastern Front, where battles of the Crater and Fort Stedman took place; the Western Front, where intense fighting continued; and the Five Forks Battlefield, a battle that led to the Confederates' retreat and Lee's surrender. ■



Photo courtesy of Crater District Planning Commission

Old Towne Petersburg



**Colonial Williamsburg** is the largest living history museum in the world. Witness history brought to life on the charming streets of the colonial capital and discover something beyond your grade school history books.

## Williamsburg, Virginia

# Share Something Historic at Colonial Williamsburg

## Day 1

A day in **Colonial Williamsburg** begins with a visit to the Capitol, a reconstruction of the building that served as the home for the House of Burgesses — colonial Virginia's representative government. Here visitors witness laws being passed and debates over American independence. Continue down Duke of Gloucester Street and explore the 18th-century colonial capital on the brink of the American Revolution.

Take time in the afternoon to visit craftspeople practicing over 20 trades, using 18th-century tools and techniques to apprentice in — and eventually master — blacksmithing, woodworking or gunsmithing, just to name a few.

Be sure to visit the rare historic breed animals at pasture throughout the Historic Area, from Cleveland Bay horses to Leicester Longwool Sheep. After a full day of exploring, relax at a historic tavern like **Chowning's Tavern** for a colonial-inspired meal. Illuminated by candlelight, this restaurant serves old favorites such as Brunswick stew and Welsh rarebit as well as Shepherd's Pye and Bangers & Mash. Enjoy resort amenities just minutes away from the action of the Historic Area when you stay at **Colonial Williamsburg Resorts**.

*Colonial Williamsburg*

### COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG

Dana Lupan  
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800-822-9127  
colonialwilliamsburg.org

## Day 2

Your second day begins with a journey through the **Governor's Palace**, and experience

the grandeur of royal government in Virginia just before its collapse. The Governor's Palace, home to seven royal governors and the first two elected governors in Virginia — Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry, was built to impress visitors with a display of authority and wealth.

Behind the Palace, you'll find carefully manicured decorative gardens, beautiful any season of the year and accurate to the period.

Further down the **Palace Green**, your group will find the **George Wythe House**, home to the prominent attorney who was a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Down the road, visit the **Colonial Garden**, which grows herbs and vegetables using 18th-century methods. Be sure to observe a trial at the **Courthouse**, one of Williamsburg's signature attractions. Groups witness court sessions, prosecutions and justice meted out at the pillory and stocks outside.

Don't miss the newly expanded and renovated **Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg**. Discover more of the collection on view than ever, from colorful and whimsical folk art made by amateur artisans in the **Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum** to objects that are useful as well as beautiful in **The DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Museum**.

Visit the masterfully curated exhibitions or take a tour, then commemorate your trip with a visit to the **Museum Store**. At the end of your exploration, wind down with a glass of wine and a meal in the light-filled **Museum Café** or on the outdoor dining patio.

# If you average 36 steps a day, it's time to get away.



Experience a day or weekend of adventure. Take a guided tour. Visit our world-class art museums. Relax and play. Enjoy fine cuisine. Then, unwind at one of our official hotels. Make memories knowing we're abiding by CDC guidelines for your safety.

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*Colonial Williamsburg*  
Williamsburg, Virginia



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