

# *Welcome Home to Williamsburg*

## **Fun Facts**

Did you know **Williamsburg** was originally named **Middle Plantation**? Williamsburg began as a settlement between the York and James Rivers and was founded as the capital of the Virginia Colony in 1699. The new city was renamed Williamsburg in honor of England's reigning monarch, King William III.

**Colonial Williamsburg** spans 301 acres and was restored by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. in 1926. 80 of the original buildings were preserved, including the courthouse, governor's palace, and taverns, to name a few.

***Tip:** Carriage Rides in Colonial Williamsburg* - Book your ride at the ticket booth, early in the morning as they fill up quickly.

**The Peyton Randolph house** (built in 1715) is considered to be one of the most haunted houses in America. Throughout the course of its existence, the house has seen more than 30 deaths, ranging from freak accidents to bizarre medical issues.

**The Governor's Palace**, home to seven royal governors and the first two elected governors in Virginia, Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry.

***Tip:** Don't miss the palace's breathtaking gardens and maze.*

**The Capitol** building you see today is not the first. This important building is where the House of Burgess and the government met in colonial times. However, the original Capitol building burned to its foundation in 1747, with almost nothing left standing. In 2008, **The Today Show** was broadcast live in front of the Capitol building and I was there to see it happen. Matt Lauer and Al Roker drove up in a horse and carriage.

**The Virginia Capital Trail** is a 52-mile-long paved pedestrian and bicycle trail that connects the Commonwealth's past capital Jamestown, to its present capital Richmond, along the scenic Route 5 corridor.

***Tip:** There are restrooms and restaurants along the way,*

**Busch Gardens** has been voted the world's most beautiful theme park with nine villages centered around six countries to explore. Enjoy attractions for the whole family including rides, shows, animal encounters & more. The theme is classic Europe with artfully landscaped villages, like the Parisian streets of France, the hamlets of Scotland and the Oktoberfest celebrations of Germany.

**Tip:** Christmas Town is a seasonal holiday event not to be missed.

**Water Country** is Virginia's largest waterpark with fun for the whole family.

**Tip:** You can buy passes for both parks, be sure to plan time to visit both.

**Historic Jamestowne** is home to the first permanent English settlement in the New World. Established in 1607, visitors are invited to walk in the footsteps of Captain John Smith, Pocahontas, colonists, and native peoples who discovered the land more than 400 years ago.

**Tip:** Don't miss Jamestown Church, one of the oldest surviving remnants of the original thirteen colonies.

**Jamestown Settlement** is a living history museum next to Historic Jamestowne, which portrays 17th-century Virginia history and culture through film, immersive galleries, and outdoor re-creations including a Powhatan Indian village, three English ships that first arrived here, and a 1610-14 based Colonial Fort.

**Tip:** There is an eagle's nest right above the Indian village

**Jamestown Island** is a 1,561-acre island in the James River in Virginia and is connected via a causeway to the Colonial Parkway. The paved three- and five-mile loops are accessible to cars, bicycles, and pedestrians. **Wildlife** is abundant, including migratory birds and bald eagles who live on the island year-round.

**Tip:** At Black Point on the island's eastern tip, take time to park and walk the footpath to the James River for an incredible panoramic view. Also don't miss the glass blowing house before you enter the Island, truly one of my favorites places to visit.

**Yorktown Battlefield** is the site of the last major battle of the Revolutionary War where General George Washington defeated General Charles Lord Cornwallis's British Army. Walk in the footsteps of American history where Cornwallis' surrendered on October 19, 1781, effectively ending the war and securing America's independence from British rule.

**The American Revolution Museum at Yorktown** is just minutes from the battlefield, and has interactive exhibits, films, and outdoor living history. The ultramodern museum tells the story of our nation's founding from the colonial period through the Constitution. The re-created Constitutional Army encampment and Revolution-era farm are a must see on your next visit.

**Riverwalk Landing** in Yorktown is a beautiful place to shop or dine and take a romantic stroll along the river front and beach with special events throughout the year featuring live music, artisans displaying their work, local food, living history, and fireworks.

**Tip:** Come at sunset and watch the sunset over the York River Bridge

**Colonial Parkway** - Connects Yorktown, Jamestown and Colonial Williamsburg. A very scenic drive.

**Williamsburg Winery** With over 50 acres of vineyards, a bountiful on-site garden, a hotel and two restaurants, The Williamsburg Winery is more than just a Winery. Wessex Hundred, the 300 - acre farm that is home to The Williamsburg Winery, Wedmore Place, Café Provençal and The Gabriel Archer Tavern, offers an unforgettable wine and culinary experience in the heart of Colonial America

The **Williamsburg Farmers Market** is in the heart of historic Williamsburg, Virginia on the second block of Duke of Gloucester Street and the P4 Parking Lot. Over 40 vendors offer a variety of local products on Saturday Mornings starting in February thru December.

**Tip:** This is a not to be missed event. It is also dog friendly.

**William and Mary College** is one of the oldest institutions in America, and it has the popular Wren Building, which is the oldest university building in all of the United States.

**Tip:** Don't miss the Crim Dell bridge and bring your camera. It is very picturesque.

**York River State Park** is known for its rare and delicate estuarine environment, where freshwater and saltwater meet to create a rich habitat for marine and plant life. Programs, activities and visitor center displays focus on the history, use, wildlife and preservation of the York River and its marshes. More than 30 miles of hiking, mountain biking and equestrian trails allow visitors to explore the marsh, river shoreline and forests. A boat ramp, fresh and saltwater fishing spots, a fishing pier, playgrounds, picnic shelters, and seasonal boat and recreational equipment rentals are available.

**Tip:** This is a wonderful place to bring your horse and ride the trails.

**Waller Mill Park** is a 2,705-acre park situated around a 60-acre lake open for fishing, boating, pedal boating, and kayaking with a tunnel connecting the upper and lower sections of the lake. Numerous picnic tables, picnic shelters,

play fields, and playground equipment are nestled among the trees providing a scenic picnic area. Boat rentals and disc golf are also available.

***Tip:*** There is also a dog park, perfect for your fur babies.

**Freedom Park** is one of James City County's most historical parks with history dating back to the 1650s. Freedom Park is 600 acres and includes 2 miles of multiuse trails, including a 1-mile ADA accessible paved trail, and more than 20 miles of mountain bike trails winding through historical sites, forests and along creeks and open meadows. Within Freedom Park, there are also ziplining courses provided by Go Ape for both adults and children.

***Tip:*** The **Williamsburg Botanical Garden** is also found at Freedom Park. Members of the Garden developed and maintain the area which features more than 800 species of native vegetation. The Garden also offers monthly educational programs, and special events throughout the year.

**Jamestown Beach Event Park**, located across from Jamestown Settlement, offers a variety of outdoor activities and is close to the James City County Marina. The park features picnic areas (some shaded) with charcoal grills; a designated fishing area (a freshwater license is required); an observation pier (for viewing only); outdoor rinse stations; paddle craft launch/loading area; and concession facility where ice cream, drinks, snacks, and bags of ice are sold Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day. This fully accessible park features an ADA accessible walkway, parking, restrooms, showers, picnic area and beach mat providing direct access to the river.

***Tip:*** It is also dog friendly.



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