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40 Ways to Celebrate 40 Years of *Virginia Is For Lovers*

-Virginia's tourism slogan celebrates 40th anniversary in 2009-

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RICHMOND, Va. – *Virginia Is For Lovers*, one of the most enduring tourism slogans among American states, celebrates its 40th anniversary in 2009. In honor of this landmark anniversary Virginia presents 40 ways to create your own celebration when you visit Virginia. Find out why Virginia brings out the passion in travelers by experiencing the very best of the Commonwealth:

- America Began Here: In 2007 Virginia celebrated the 400th anniversary of English settlers establishing the Jamestown Colony, the first permanent English settlement in the New World. Two sites now tell the story of America's beginnings. Historic Jamestowne encompasses the site of the original settlement and includes fascinating archaeological digs and museums. Nearby is Jamestown Settlement, a sprawling attraction with recreations of the Jamestown Fort, the colonists' ships and Virginia Indian village. Its incredible museum contains thousands of priceless artifacts.
- Celebrate an Anniversary: In 2009 the Blue Ridge Parkway will celebrate its 75th anniversary, and what better occasion to experience its splendors. You'll find that what's great about the Blue Ridge Parkway is not just what lies along it but also just a stone's throw away. Crabtree Falls, the largest vertical drop waterfalls east of the Mississippi are just a quick jaunt off the Parkway. You'll also find some of Virginia's best wineries adjacent to or just a short distance from the main road. Mabry Mill has been a family photo op for generations.
- Flights of Fancy: The Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail is the first statewide birding trail in the country. Trail loops can be found in every part of the Commonwealth, leading trekkers to up-close-and-personal encounters with more than 400 species of birds, 250 species of fish and 150 species of marine and land animals.
- Row Your Boat: Paddle sports are big in Virginia. From whitewater rafting to coastal kayaking tours, you can spend hours seeing the best of Virginia from the vantage point of your personal craft. Finding a guide service is easy or you can rent a canoe or kayak and spend a day afloat for a special look at a part of Virginia only the most fortunate get to see.
- Wild Horses Can't Drag You Away: Imagine a morning on a pristine white sandy Atlantic beach followed by an afternoon hike through a grassy natural wildlife preserve populated by a herd of wild ponies. That's a perfect description of a day at Assateague Island National Seashore – a sanctuary for nature and you. Wild horses can also be found at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge in Virginia Beach. Once you've seen them in the wild in natural habitats, the spirit of wild horses will bring you back to Virginia.

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- Mr. Jefferson's Capitol: Completed in 1788, Virginia's capitol building is home to the oldest legislative body in the United States, the Virginia General Assembly, and is the site where the Bill of Rights was ratified. Thomas Jefferson designed the building and would be pleased by the newer additions to it – including a stunning new underground visitor center.
- Wings of History: The Stephen F. Udvar-Hazy Center, located near Dulles International Airport, houses the Smithsonian Institute Air and Space Museum's collection of some of America's most historic aircraft including the *Enola Gay* and the space shuttle *Enterprise*. With its companion site on the National Mall, the Air and Space Museum showcases the world's largest collection of air and space artifacts.
- Travel a Crooked Road: American root music – bluegrass and old time – was spawned in the mountains and hollows of Southwest Virginia and remains the sound track for the region and its people. The Crooked Road – Virginia's Heritage Music Trail connects eight music venues including the Ralph Stanley Museum, the Floyd Country Store, the Rex Theater and the Carter Family Fold.
- Walk in Historic Footsteps: Generations of American kids can remember a vacation to Colonial Williamsburg and may even have a souvenir tri-cornered hat somewhere in their closet. The experience at Colonial Williamsburg is alive, vibrant and better than ever with new interpretive programming, tours, great restaurants, legendary lodging and even a first-class spa. Walk down Duke of Gloucester street in the steps of Jefferson, Washington and other famous Americans.
- Virginia On Stage: Theatrical performances and live music venues are a big part of the Virginia experience. The Barter Theater in Abingdon is where legendary American actors and actresses got their professional starts and remains a favorite destination of theater fans. Farther north, the American Shakespeare Center in Staunton showcases the best of the Bard as well as traveling musical acts. Charlottesville's Paramount Theater hosts worldwide touring acts such as Bobby McFerrin, The National Acrobats of China and Ravi Shankar. Richmond's Landmark Theater is home to favorite annual performances of The Nutcracker Ballet. Bigger venues such as Wolf Trap or Virginia Beach's Verizon Amphitheater host the world's top headliners.
- African American History: Africans first came to Virginia as slaves after the first European settlers arrived and since have formed one of the cornerstones of Virginia history and culture. The city of Hampton is one destination filled with African American history sites such as Fort Monroe, known as Freedom's Fortress during the Civil War. Richmond's Jackson Ward neighborhood was home to entertainer Bill "Bojangles" Robinson and Maggie Walker, the first female bank president in the United States. Richmond's American Civil War Center is the first to thoroughly tell the story of the Civil War through an African American perspective as well as Confederate and Union.



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- Put Your Foot on the Pedal: Virginia is home to superb biking trails and among the favorites is the Virginia Creeper Trail. Located in Southwest Virginia, the Creeper Trail is 34 miles long and winds through some of the most scenic landscape in the Commonwealth. Ride from the trailhead on White Top Mountain to the town of Damascus. It's a 17-mile trek, downhill or level all the way.
- Go Tell It On The Mountain: The mountains of western Virginia are more than just beautiful to behold. They are filled with moments to capture in your memory. Whether in the Blue Ridge or Alleghany Mountains you'll find waterfalls, hiking and biking trails, winding roads, wonderful small towns, country stores and welcoming people. The views are great, too, whether looking up or looking down.
- Home of Presidents: More American presidents have been born in Virginia than any other state, and many of their homes are painstakingly preserved to be enjoyed today. George Washington's Mount Vernon now wows visitors with a new \$50 million underground education center and museum. A new visitor center has just opened at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello while James Madison's Montpelier has just been returned to its original appearance. James Monroe's Ash Lawn Highland, William Henry Harrison's Berkeley Plantation and the Woodrow Wilson Birthplace in Staunton continue to welcome visitors in style.
- Experience a Natural Skyline: Skyline Drive, one of America's most treasured scenic roads, winds along the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Shenandoah National Park. Long noted for its stunning panoramic vistas, Skyline Drive has much more to offer. Stay overnight at Skyland Lodge or at rustic cabins at Lewis Mountain. Attend a ranger program on wildlife or native plants. Hike along scenic trails and keep an eye peeled for deer, bear and other native species.
- Meet Virginia's Favorite Daughter: Virginia Indians named it Shenandoah, a word meaning Daughter of the Stars. The great Valley between the Blue Ridge and Alleghany Mountains is both historic and beautiful – and fun to travel. Historic hotels, great restaurants, quaint small towns and magnificent scenery are among the best things of the Shenandoah Valley – and you'll discover more.
- Stand on Hallowed Ground: More Civil War battles were fought in Virginia than in any other state. Today Virginia is home to preserved battlefields, outstanding Civil War museums and historic sites. Pamplin Historical Park is a great place to begin your Civil War history adventure, and don't miss the new USS Monitor Center in Newport News or the United States Civil War Center in Richmond. The Virginia Civil War Trails system ties the story together with more than 400 sites marked and interpreted throughout the Commonwealth.
- Enjoy Vintage Virginia: Virginia's booming wine industry welcomes you to tour any – or all – of its more than 130 wineries. Welcoming, hospitable staff will take you on a winery tour and walk you through a tasting of a variety of wines. You can meet the winemakers and learn

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about their craft. Relax on the winery patio with a glass of Virginia wine and an afternoon breeze.

- Virginia's Indian Heritage: Long before European settlers found their way to Virginia, native Indian civilizations flourished along Virginia's waterways. Pocahontas is best remembered among Virginia's Indians of history but much more native culture can be experienced in Virginia today. Powwows take place in the Hampton Roads region, near Lynchburg and elsewhere in the Commonwealth. These are fine opportunities to meet members of Virginia's Indian tribes, hear their music, see elaborate costumes and watch intricate dancing routines. Museums at Jamestown and at the Pamunkey Indian reservation tell the story of these first Virginians.
- A Culinary Destination: Is there another state with as many great restaurants per capita as Virginia? From Virginia Beach to Alexandria to Roanoke to Richmond and all points in between, great modern cuisine is taking its place comfortably alongside traditional restaurants serving historic Virginia dishes. Five-Star spectaculars such as the *Inn at Little Washington* join stars in the making such as *1 North Belmont* in Richmond, *Stove* in Portsmouth and Virginia Beach's *Terrapin*. When packing for your trip to Virginia, don't forget to bring your appetite.
- Undiscovered Treasure: Virginia's Eastern Shore lies just far enough off the beaten path to offer a new world of discovery for travelers. Amazing small towns such as Cape Charles and Onancock are filled with cool shops, unforgettable restaurants and cozy inns and Bed & Breakfasts. Take a kayak adventure trip with Dave Burden of Southeast Expeditions and you may end up at a winery. Some of Virginia's best artists call the Eastern Shore home, and you can visit them in their studios.
- Sun, Sand and Surf: Virginia's Atlantic beaches are awash in adventures for families, couples and groups of friends. Virginia Beach is America's longest commercial beach. Its famous Boardwalk is lined with new hotels, trendy restaurants and shops. Its clean, white sands are a haven for sunbathers, sandcastle builders and kite flyers. Its waters are fine for swimming and splashing. Want to hang ten? Surfing lessons are available. On the Eastern Shore, Assateague Island National Seashore's beach is absent commercial development but filled with fun-loving beach goers. Whatever style you prefer, Virginia's beaches are your summer destination.
- Rivers Run Through It: Rivers are a critical part of Virginia's heritage but today they serve as a place of recreation, a sanctuary for wildlife and as history trails. The mighty James River flows from gurgling mountain rapids to a mile-wide at its mouth, and its path through the fall line at Richmond produces Class III rapids, the only such in any American city. The New River in Southwest Virginia is a haven for fishing, kayaking and canoeing. The historic Rappahannock River is another paddler's paradise and at Fredericksburg a strapping youngster named George Washington is said to have thrown a half-dollar piece

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across it. The two forks of the Shenandoah River are celebrated in song and are idyllic places to visit.

- **Small Town Splendor:** There are so many surprises waiting in Virginia's small towns. World-class restaurants, fine inns, great shopping, live theater, historic homes, small colleges and even resorts and spas can be found in smaller locales. The pace is relaxed, the people are friendly. But be careful – you might end up moving here.
- **Beautiful Back Roads:** Like Virginia's small towns, its scenic back roads lead to unexpected pleasures. Just around the next turn you may find a winery, luxury country inn, fine dining, antique shopping, wildlife and inspiring landscapes. They wind around mountains, through rolling hills and along riverbanks and Chesapeake shores. Take the road less traveled and discover some of Virginia's best things.
- **Indulge Yourself in Ultimate Relaxation:** A visit to a Virginia spa is simply a doorway to rejuvenation and relaxation. Spa Minerale at Lansdowne Resort uses local minerals and botanicals from the dogwood to captivate your senses. Wintergreen Resort's Wintergarden Spa has a gentlemen's spa and hot tubs in a facility at the resort's highest mountaintop. At The Homestead Spa, a soak in natural 104 degree waters relieves every ounce of stress. Thomas Jefferson himself enjoyed the waters at the nearby Jefferson Pools in 1818. You can take a Monticello Dream Soak in bubbling goat's milk at the Boar's Head Inn Spa. The Spa at Colonial Williamsburg includes herbal treatments used in colonial times.
- **Virginia is the First Resort:** Whether you ski, golf or just like to relax, Virginia's resorts have your choices in mind. *The Homestead* is one of America's oldest resorts and has outstanding golf and skiing. *Wintergreen Resort* is also has mountain and valley golf courses as well as tennis and high speed ski lifts. *Massanutten Resort*, another golf/ski destination, has added a huge indoor water park. *Lansdowne Resort* features a Greg Normal golf course, fine dining and wine tours. Charlottesville's *Boar's Head Inn* treats guests like royalty and offers hot air balloon rides.
- **Indigenous Virginia Foods:** Peanuts and ham have been staples of Virginia dining tables since earliest times. Cured Virginia hams are treasured everywhere but are best enjoyed here in the Commonwealth. Salty and pungent, Virginia ham can be found in the taverns of Colonial Williamsburg and at restaurants south of the James River. Peanuts are served literally from soup to nuts. Roasted in the shell or blanched and salted, Virginia peanuts are available at roadside stands in Southern Virginia's peanut country. Creamy peanut soup can be enjoyed in restaurants statewide.
- **A Shrine to American Heroes:** Arlington National Cemetery must be considered sacred ground. Originally a burial place for Union Soldiers during the Civil War, Arlington has grown to become known as the final resting place of presidents, generals, admirals, astronauts, Nobel-Prize winners, humanitarians and others who made their mark on

world history. Arlington House is one of Virginia's great historic homes and is an integral part of the experience here.

- Hampton Roads to Adventure: The region where the James River empties in the Chesapeake is known as Hampton Roads, and it is home to some of Virginia's great tourism cities. Virginia Beach shimmers with sand and Atlantic surf while Norfolk is a cultural landmark. Historic neighborhoods, cool restaurants and great shopping are found in Portsmouth. Across the river, Newport News has great new shopping destinations and a wealth of maritime heritage. African American history is alive in Hampton along with air and space history and pirates.
- Stop and Shop: Be sure to bring your shopping list when coming to Virginia. Trendy and quirky *Carytown* in Richmond is filled with cool shops along with some of Virginia's best antiques. There are so many stores along Alexandria's High Street that it can hardly be done in a day. Fredericksburg's historic Caroline Street is full of antique shops, book stores and art galleries. Great small town shopping is found in Lexington, Staunton, Leesburg and Culpeper. People from all over the East Coast come to Farmville to buy furniture and furnishings. Williamsburg is home to a bonanza of quality outlet stores as well as Colonial style items in the historic district.
- Park the Car and Enjoy: Some of Virginia's most inviting cities are also quite enjoyable on foot. Old Town Alexandria has a trolley that goes the length of King Street and hooks up with the DC METRO on one end and a Potomac River water taxi at the other. Much of Charlottesville can be enjoyed as a pedestrian, especially Main Street, a shopping and dining destination sealed off to vehicles. You can spend all day on Portsmouth's High Street and never need your car. Leave the driving to someone else and enjoy Virginia afoot.
- For Art's Sake: If you've got an eye for art, plan to spend a lot of time in Virginia. Art incubators such as *The Torpedo Factory* in Alexandria or Norfolk's *d'Art Center* house the working studios of dozens of artists. The small town of Floyd is a back roads enclave of highly talented artists and artisans. In the historic small city of Staunton art galleries line Beverly Street – and don't miss *SunSpots* glass blowing studio. Richmond's growing arts scene revolves around Broad Street and features up-and-coming fresh faces. Museums such as Norfolk's *Chrysler Museum of Art*, Richmond's *Virginia Museum of Fine Art* and Roanoke's *Taubman Museum* house world treasures.
- A Tradition of Hospitality: Virginia's small inns and Bed & Breakfast are the very definition of Southern hospitality and special treatment. They're found in nearly every nook and cranny of the Commonwealth and are perfect for those seeking a romantic getaway. Stunning hideaways such as *Poplar Springs Inn and Spa* in Casanova and the *Inn at Meander Plantation* near Locust Dale offer fine dining along with elegant accommodations. Smaller Bed & Breakfasts throughout Virginia bring perfect strangers together around a breakfast table for memorable conversation and the beginning of new friendships.

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- Join in the Festival: Virginia's yearly schedule of top festivals brings tons of activities nearly every week of the year. *Oyster Festivals* in Chincoteague and Urbanna bring huge crowds every year. Wine festivals abound throughout the Commonwealth, and a particularly good one is the *Virginia Wine and Hot Air Balloon Festival* near Millwood. Virginia Beach's *Neptune Festival* includes surfing and sand castle-building competitions. The *Virginia Highlands Festival* practically takes over the town of Abingdon for two weeks. The *Richmond Folk Festival* is a relative newcomer but promises an annual gathering of some of the best traditional musicians and craftspeople.
- Saddle Up: Virginia's rich equestrian tradition spans centuries. Visit Northern Virginia's horse country to see that this fine tradition is as well enjoyed as a spectator as it is as a rider. *The Virginia Gold Cup* is held each year in Fauquier County and attracts throngs of visitors from around the world. Tablecloths and candelabras decorate tailgate spreads and ladies in bonnets and white gloves add a touch of class. Smaller point-to-point race events are good opportunities to bring out folding chairs and a picnic lunch and cheer the riders on with a hearty *tally-ho!*
- Revolutionary Times: Virginia was at the heart of the American Revolution, from the moment Patrick Henry gave his famous "Give Me Liberty or Give me Death" speech at Richmond's St. John's Church until the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown. Visitors today can tour historic St. John's Church and hear a dramatic living history recreation of Henry's stirring speech. The Yorktown battlefield is preserved as a monument to the efforts of Americans to secure their independence. At Colonial Williamsburg experience the exciting "Revolutionary City" program that places visitors in the middle of the debate for independence.
- Go for the Green: More and more travelers seek lodging, dining and entertainment facilities that do their part to conserve earth's precious natural resources. Virginia is a leader in encouraging tourism business to take on responsible ecological practices and points travelers to those facilities through its Virginia Green program. Hotels, restaurants and other facilities must voluntarily meet established criteria to be awarded the Virginia Green designation. You can find them here: www.Virginia.org/green, along with other suggestions for environmentally responsible travel.
- Motor Sports Mania: Hundreds of thousands of spectators turn out for NASCAR events, and when those events involve a Virginia locality those visitors get a double treat. Major NASCAR races are held in Richmond and Martinsville as well as Bristol and those who attend also get the added bonus of visiting some of Virginia's coolest localities. Richmond is a vibrant city brimming with history and hip culture. Martinsville is home to the new Virginia Museum of Natural History – a Smithsonian affiliate – and good Virginia barbecue. Bristol is the Birthplace of Country Music and is a good step-off site for exploring the musical roots of the region.



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- A Place for Pets: When you come to Virginia don't leave your faithful four-legged friends at home. Virginia is one of the pet-friendliest states, so bring them along for a complete family vacation. Pets can often go just about anywhere you go, indoor or out. Pets are welcomed at fashionable Stony Point Shopping Park in Richmond. Virginia's award-winning state parks welcome pets on leashes, and most of the hiking trails in Shenandoah National Park are fine for your dog on a leash. Some restaurants and hotels go out of their way for dogs. Check out "Doggie Happy Hour" in the courtyard of the Hotel Monaco in Alexandria. Pat Troy's Restaurant, also in Alexandria, has a menu especially for dogs. For information on traveling with your pet in Virginia, visit www.Virginia.org/pets.

Experience the true meaning of *Virginia is for Lovers* and celebrate its anniversary by enjoying the full bounty of Virginia in 2009. For more information on planning a trip to Virginia visit www.Virginia.org or call 1-800-VISITVA for a free Virginia Travel Guide.

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