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***Virginia is for Lovers* Turns 40** **-Virginia's iconic travel slogan celebrates 40 years of a love of life and passion for travel in 2009-**

Media Only

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RICHMOND, Va. – Governor Timothy M. Kaine and the Virginia Tourism Corporation today kicked off the 40th anniversary of *Virginia is for Lovers*. Launched in 1969, *Virginia is for Lovers* is the official state tourism slogan. 2009 will mark its 40-year reign as one of the most recognizable and enduring tourism marketing initiatives in the country.

“*Virginia is for Lovers* is an American classic that connects with travelers of every generation,” said Governor Kaine. “A lot has changed in Virginia over the past forty years. 2009 is going to be a great time to experience Virginia’s newest destinations and exciting additions to historic favorites.”

Virginia tourism officials plan to use the 40th anniversary of *Virginia is for Lovers* as a reminder about the true meaning behind the slogan.

What started out as “Virginia is for history lovers”, “Virginia is for beach lovers”, “Virginia is for mountain lovers”, was soon shortened to “*Virginia is for Lovers*”, implying that whatever visitors loved they could find in Virginia.

“*Virginia is for Lovers* is one of the most famous slogans in the country but it’s often misunderstood,” said Alisa Bailey, President and CEO of the Virginia Tourism Corporation. “At its core, *Virginia is for Lovers* represents a love of life and a passion for travel. We invite travelers to come celebrate our 40th anniversary and live out their passions for music, history, wine, culture and adventure in Virginia.”

The first ad featuring the slogan appeared in 1969. It became extremely popular, with support from state leaders such as A. Linwood Holton, Virginia’s governor during the slogan’s early days and future father-in-law to Governor Tim Kaine.

Forty years later, *Virginia is for Lovers* is going strong in the new “Portraits of Passion” [marketing series](#). These portraits are real Virginians whose passion for history, music, wine, outdoor adventure and life make Virginia a rewarding travel destination.

The [Portraits of Passion](#) are outdoor guides, wine makers, musicians and other members of the travel industry with whom visitors can connect on vacation in Virginia. The “portraits” tell their own story in their own words in print advertisements, in the Virginia travel guide and, for the first time ever, in multi-media videos on Virginia.org/portraits.

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Online visitors can also discover their travel “passionality” through an [interactive quiz](#) that uses the latest technology to connect travelers with their ideal travel experiences in Virginia, complete with customized itineraries and trip planning resources.

Visit Virginia.org to start planning a trip during the 40th anniversary of Virginia is for Lovers. Celebrations, sweepstakes and travel deals will be announced on Virginia.org throughout 2009. For more travel information, call 1-800-VISITVA and order a free 2009 travel guide.

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Note to media: 40th anniversary Video News Release, backgrounder and Portraits of Passion images are available at www.vatravelstories.com

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