

THE BIRTHPLACE OF

American Cuisine



VisitAlexandriaVA.com



VisitVirginiaBeach.com

When the first colonists landed in Virginia, they knew they had found something special. They soon discovered the wealth of the Chesapeake Bay waters; the lush, forested mountains of the west; and the rich, fertile land that lay between. They dipped into the waters, dug into the land, and brought forth America's famed bounty to their tables, beginning our nation's long and storied love of food. Come visit Virginia and discover the origins of American gastronomy and taste how today's culinary crusaders are building on the backs of history to create a new, acclaimed American cuisine.

Come travel with us to Virginia!



DAY 1

Start your journey in Virginia Beach, just 3.5 hours from Washington D.C. and the site where the first English colonists landed in America. Work up an appetite by hiking or biking **First Landing State Park's** miles of trails and climb to the top of the lighthouse, commissioned by George Washington, for fabulous views of the Atlantic Ocean. Now you've worked up an appetite for some of the region's incredible seafood.

Combine lunch with an overview of the area's culinary scene by taking the **Virginia Beach is for Eats and Drinks Lovers** excursion with **Taste Virginia Tours**. Visit local culinary hotspots, along with a variety of Virginia spirits producers - including craft beer, wine and distilled - and get a history lesson about the birthplace of American cuisine along the way.



Time to get out on the water. If you want the absolute freshest fish, there's no better way than to catch it yourself. Enjoy an afternoon of world-class fishing on a charter trip, then bring your catch to one of the beach's **Catch and Cook** restaurants and

they'll prepare it exactly how you want. Don't worry if you strike out, the local fishermen have you covered.

Virginia Beach offers a wealth of wonderful places to lay your head for the night. From the oceanfront rental homes in the laid back **Sandbridge** area, to the bustle of the **Oceanfront Resort Boardwalk**, it's easy to find a place that suits your ideal beach style. Make sure to catch the sunset with **King Neptune**. With a majestic presence only he can muster, the 24-foot-tall bronze statue presides over Virginia Beach's newest oceanfront park at 31st Street and Atlantic Avenue, where you'll often find live music and entertainment to serenade the day's end.



DAY 2

Farm-to-table is readily available in Virginia Beach. **Commune**, a sustainable eatery, bakery and cafe in the heart of the **ViBe Creative District**, sources more than 90% of their ingredients from local farms and producers that use sustainable techniques. Every morsel is made from scratch! Afterwards do a little shopping and taste testing in the ViBe Creative District. Find treasures like **Three Ships Coffee**, who roast their own beans, and **Chesapeake Bay Distillery**, featuring local-made vodka and rum.

You've experienced the fresh local food, now it's time to head for the farms to discover its origins. Take a **New Earth Farm Tour** and get your hands a little dirty, just like the colonists, while learning about local produce, sustainable farming and cooking. You can learn to make cheese, shear sheep or take a cooking class led by some of the area's top chefs.



Once coveted by the English aristocracy for its size and salinity, the famous Lynnhaven oyster is a local legend. You can try yours, pulled fresh from the Chesapeake Bay, direct on a table placed in the water. Just take a boat tour with **Pleasure House Oysters** out to their oyster farm where you'll learn all about the tasty little bivalves that are making a major comeback in Virginia.

Then take a kayak tour out to **Blue Pete's**. Located on five gorgeous acres near the **Back Bay Wildlife Sanctuary**, Blue Pete's has been serving up fresh seafood since 1972, in a cozy, casual atmosphere designed to show off mother nature's beauty. Once you try the food, you'll discover that kayaking there is only half the amazing experience!



Having seen firsthand where all the great food is sourced, it's time to relax and let the fabulous chefs do the work. Dine at the AAA Four-Diamond **Terrapin**, credited for launching the farm-to-table movement in Virginia Beach, or **Blue Seafood & Spirits**, lauded by visitors on Yelp and TripAdvisor. The chef-owned and operated Blue serves the freshest, local seafood available - and their chocolate bread pudding finishes off the meal perfectly.

DAY 3

After breakfast at **Bay Local Eatery** - where the soft-shell-crab-topped "Bloody Blue Mary" is a must-try - it's time for a day trip to the Greater Williamsburg region. First stop - Virginia's original capital city, **Historic Jamestowne** - the birthplace of America and the first permanent English settlement in the New World. Archaeologists have uncovered the ruins of the first brewery there and, at the same time, some 400-year-old yeast. Historians and beer lovers alike are looking forward to the new beer Richmond's **Hardywood Park Craft Brewery** intends to make with the yeast. For now, you can tour the townsite to explore the ruins and learn more about the first settlers.

Virginia's second capital, **Williamsburg**, has also been an influential city in American history, not just for culture and politics, but for food as well. Explore the historic town, from rolling vineyards to brick lined streets, via **Williamsburg's Tasting Trail**. From award-winning wine and micro-brewed beer to ancient mead and distilled spirits, you'll discover some of the best handcrafted alcoholic beverages in the region. The first settlers believed that alcohol served many great purposes, from healing the body to giving energy to the weak and elderly. Today, you'll find it served up alongside some of the finest culinary offerings in America.

Back in Virginia Beach, before saying goodbye, it's a must to sit down for steamed blue crabs at a locals' favorite like **Margie and Ray's Restaurant**. First established in 1964 as a small country store and tackle shop, Margie and Ray's serves some of the best seafood you'll find anywhere in the U.S. - no doubt one of the reasons it's so popular with local farmers!



DAY 4

Time to set out for **Alexandria**, just across the Potomac River from our nation's capital. Old Town Alexandria is a nationally recognized historic district known for its rich history, beautifully preserved 18th- and 19th-century architecture and vibrant waterfront. It's also the place George Washington called home. Colorful rowhomes and century-old buildings with storied pasts serve as an extraordinary backdrop and home to acclaimed, chef-driven restaurants. Think southern-inspired comfort food with a focus on local and regional

products. There's a reason Alexandria has been featured in The New York Times and Food & Wine!



Begin your taste of the town with some authentic American comfort cuisine featuring creative culinary twists. **Myron Mixon's Pitmaster Barbecue** serves up signature dishes such as barbecued deviled eggs and baby back mac and cheese. Nearby, **Hen Quarter** puts a fun twist on chicken and waffles by adding compressed watermelon, honey pearl butter and Tennessee bourbon maple syrup. Try **Whiskey & Oyster** - new to the Carlyle district, the restaurant features a 20-foot oyster bar and outdoor dining with fire pits. Or check out **Magnolia's on King** for a little southern-inspired hospitality.



Now you're fueled up and ready to explore **King Street**, a walkable mile recognized as one of the "Great Streets" of America. Charming one-of-a-kind boutiques feature everything from flatware to footwear. A stop in at the **Torpedo Factory Arts Center** on the waterfront end of King will introduce you to local artists and their wares featured in more than 80 studios and galleries in this former World War II torpedo plant.

By now you've probably discovered firsthand the value of an overview. For dinner, take your taste buds on an **Old Town Food Tour** by DC Metro Food Tours - an ideal way to discover Old Town Alexandria's heritage, culture and vibrant food scene. Sample celebrated dishes and locally crafted beer at



chef-driven restaurants and artisan-owned specialty shops such as **Columbia Firehouse**, former home of the 1871 Columbian Steam Engine Fire Company, or **Virtue Feed & Grain**, an 1800's feed house, while your guide provides a taste of America's rich history and points out historic hotspots.



Don't forget the final course! Alexandria has long been known as a dessert destination, and now you can easily combine your love of sweets with a nightcap. Try **Triple Craft's** adult milkshakes like Chocolate Kahlua or Vanilla Bourbon. Or **Casa Rosada Artisan Gelato** for a Malbec wine-flavored treat. **Sugar Shack Donuts** represents the ultimate blending of sweets and spirits with their own speakeasy, **Captain Gregory's**, hidden inside the donut shop. Afterwards, catch live music at any of the many venues located along King Street or a well-known artist at **The Birchmere**, America's Legendary Music Hall.

Alexandria has a variety of accommodations to fit every budget, from boutique hotels like **The Autograph Collection Morrison House** and **Hotel Indigo** to well-known standards such as the **Hilton Alexandria Old Town** and **Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria**.



DAY 5

Start your day with breakfast in Alexandria's **Del Ray** district - "where Main Street still exists" - with avenues made-for-strolling, dotted with independent shops and a thriving restaurant scene. Try the **Del Ray Café** for its casual French cuisine or the fresh-baked goodness of **Junction Bakery**.

Take the morning to walk in George Washington's footsteps. Pause in **Gadsby's Tavern Museum**, the president's drinking spot of choice; **Christ Church**, where Washington worshiped; and the **Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum**, one of the oldest pharmacies in America.



Indulge your thirst with one of the founding father's favorite beverages. **Port City Brewing Company** gets its name from Alexandria's rich and colorful origins as a thriving colonial seaport. Take a "Grain to Glass" brewery tour and learn the art of craft-beer making. Or visit the pre-Prohibition inspired **Portner Brewhouse**, where Catherine and Margaret Portner are honoring their great-great grandfather's legacy 100 years later by brewing up historic family recipes from Alexandria's Robert Portner Brewing Co., the largest pre-Prohibition brewery in the South. Dine on some of the Brewhouse's contemporary German-American cuisine for another example of Alexandria's culinary diversity.

Now that you have the lay of the land, head to Alexandria's historic waterfront. Set sail on a sightseeing cruise to take in stunning views of D.C.'s famous monuments from the water side, without all the crowds. Or hop on a **Bike and Boat Tour to George Washington's Mount Vernon** with the **Potomac Riverboat Company**. You'll bike your way south along the scenic **George Washington Memorial Parkway**, tour the historic estate and grounds, then catch the boat cruise back north on the Potomac for riverfront views. While visiting the world-

famous estate, stop at the famous **Mount Vernon Inn** to taste Colonial-inspired dishes, including their renowned Peanut Soup. And don't miss a tour of **George Washington's Gristmill and Distillery**, once the largest distillery in America. You'll want to grab a sample of the whiskey they're making today the same way George did all those years ago.



Wind down your day at an Alexandria waterfront restaurant over a plate of local seafood. Try **Hummingbird** at the Hotel Indigo, celebrity chef Cathal Armstrong's energetic bar and kitchen inspired by the American spirit of cherished traditions - think clambakes, crab balls, fish fries and oyster roasts! **Vola's Dockside Grill & Hi-Tide Lounge** offers a fabulous view of the marina, while **Fish Market Restaurant** on King Street serves up their Chesapeake-style seafood with a little history in a renovated warehouse more than 200 years old.

DAY 6

Delight in breakfast at **BRABO Tasting Room**, the celebrated gourmet restaurant created by nationally-renowned chef Robert Wiedmaier,

before heading west on a day trip to **Loudoun County**, known as D.C.'s Wine Country.

Just 25 miles from Alexandria, Loudoun County's winding roads weave through rolling green hills dotted with horses. Here you'll find more than 40 award-winning wineries & wine tasting rooms, along with breweries, distilleries and restaurants so distinct they are worth the drive alone.

Visit **Breaux Vineyards**, one of Virginia's largest wineries with glorious vineyard and mountain views available from the tasting room and landscaped terraces. Then head on to **Bluemont Vineyards** sitting high on an eastern slope of the Blue Ridge Mountains. It's said that on a clear day, you can even see the Washington Monument from the tasting room.

Grab lunch at the **Wine Kitchen** in Leesburg - a wine bar with a rotating menu that features the freshest ingredients from the region. Afterwards, make a stop at the **Leesburg Corner Premium Outlets** for a few shopping finds.

Back in Alexandria, celebrate your final night in Virginia by dining where past U.S. presidents have dined. Try for yourself the classic American dishes of **Vermilion**, or **The Majestic** which is housed in an historic and iconic Old Town storefront, before ending your night in a presidential atmosphere with craft cocktails at **PX**, a speakeasy lounge dedicated to the rebirth of the golden age.

WASHINGTON, DC TO VIRGINIA

City	Miles	Km
Fredericksburg	52	84
Lynchburg	154	247
Norfolk	147	237
Richmond	96	154
Roanoke	194	312
Virginia Beach	153	245
Williamsburg	114	183
Winchester	64	103

WASHINGTON, DC
MARYLAND
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