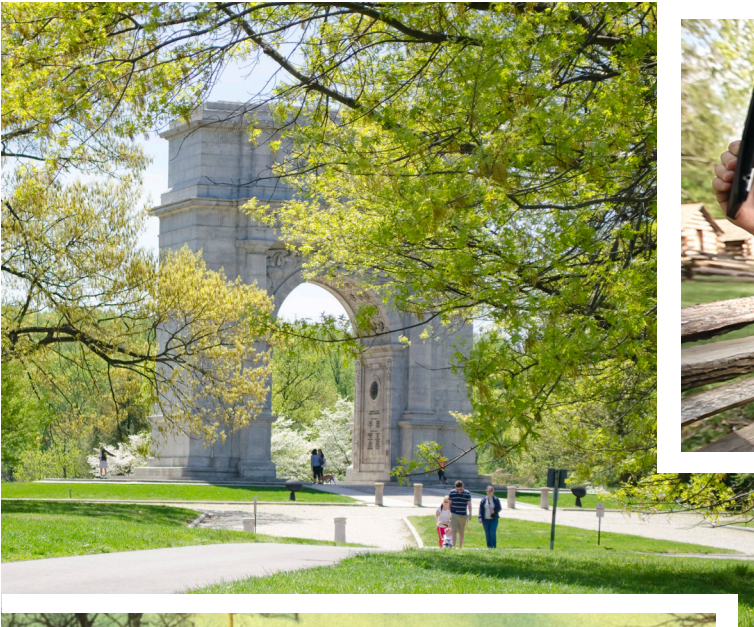


spring 2017 TOUR GUIDE



THE QUARTERLY GROUP TOUR
NEWSLETTER FROM THE
**VALLEY FORGE TOURISM &
CONVENTION BOARD**



A GRAND REVEAL

A Valley Forge Artifact comes to the Museum of the American Revolution

With ticket sales in full swing for Philadelphia's Museum of the American Revolution, the Valley Forge Tourism & Convention Board (VFTCB) has a message for eager history buffs: As you await the April 19 opening date, come to Montgomery County, 18 miles west of the museum, and experience the actual locations for yourself.

"We are home to Valley Forge National Historical Park and other sites significant to the story of our quest for liberty," says Mike Bowman, VFTCB President & CEO.

"The Museum of the American Revolution is stunning and has already established a good relationship with us. Its mission to engagingly and vibrantly encapsulate the war years of 1775-1783 align seamlessly with our organization and its promotion of historically significant locations throughout the county," he says. "Before and after the official ribbon cutting of the Museum of the American Revolution, fans should definitely plan a day or two here."

One of the most dramatic moments in a visit to the Museum of the American Revolution is the reveal of the actual field tent – called a marquee – used by General Washington. This canvas, one of several shelters for officers during the war, was displayed at Valley Forge for decades.

As groups consider a visit to the new Museum of the American Revolution, suggest a deeper dive into the story of our nation's liberty. Montgomery County, Pa., site of some of the iconic moments in our quest for independence, is only 18 miles from Philadelphia. No visit to the museum would be complete without a visit to the park.



WELCOME to the VFTCB's quarterly newsletter for group tour operators. We hope you not only enjoy this publication but also use it as a go-to resource when considering group-tour destinations that are enjoyable, engaging and memorable.



FEATURED ITINERARY

Two attractions – one in Montgomery County, Pa., and another nearby – have partnered to offer groups a value package. The American Treasure Tour, a hidden gem of eclectic Americana, located in Oaks, and Shady Maple Smorgasbord in East Earl, Pa., are offering an all-inclusive tour package that discounts both experiences.

“We’re excited about the opportunity this new venture brings to both attractions. It’s a great way to showcase two truly unique attractions to the group tour market,” says Virginia Frey, Director, American Treasure Tour.

Available Monday through Friday, the “All American Breakfast & Tour” starts with an all-you-can-eat gourmet breakfast at Shady Maple Smorgasbord starting at 9 a.m., followed by an 11:15 a.m. shuttle to the American Treasure Tour. Visitors then arrive at noon for a 90-minute guided tour of some of the most amazing memorabilia ever curated.

The \$24.99 package is available through advance reservation only for a minimum of 15 guests and must be scheduled through the American Treasure Tour by calling 866-970-8687.

Shady Maple Smorgasbord offers the largest selection of popular Pennsylvania Dutch cooking, as well as a vast amount of other

delicious cuisines. The buffet is the largest on the East Coast serving nearly 1.5 million people every year.

The American Treasure Tour offers a guided tram tour that takes visitors through 100,000 square-feet of Americana. Quirky items include a castle made entirely of 396,000 Popsicle sticks, 70 antique vehicles, a giant 15-foot women’s high-heeled shoe, a super-sized Homer Simpson, an entire miniature circus and a Denney-Kitfox airplane.

The tour is also home to one of the largest displays of mechanical music (nickelodeons, band organs and music boxes) in the country.

The VFTCB’s group tourism staff can help create a full, multiday group getaway surrounding this offer, with additional information on discovering our history, hotels, shopping, dining, arts/culture scene and outdoor adventures.

NEW FOR Spring



TRAIL OF THE JAGUAR

The up-close-and-personal factor at Elmwood Park Zoo takes a major leap forward with the opening of Trail of the Jaguar.

Designed by the team that created Disney's Animal Kingdom, the 5,000 square-foot exhibit transports guests deep into jungles, forests and arroyos to encounter animals in their natural habitats. The space will eventually house jaguars, jaguarundis (a South American cousin to the cougar), ocelots (also known as the dwarf leopard) and small animals like lizards, snakes and small wood rats.

"We are moving along very well with construction," says Shaun Rogers, Marketing Director.

Exterior details include rock walls that look as if they had come from the desert regions of the American southwest. The building itself looks as if it were made of adobe, an illusion furthered by the use of themed accents, doorjambes and even sconces.

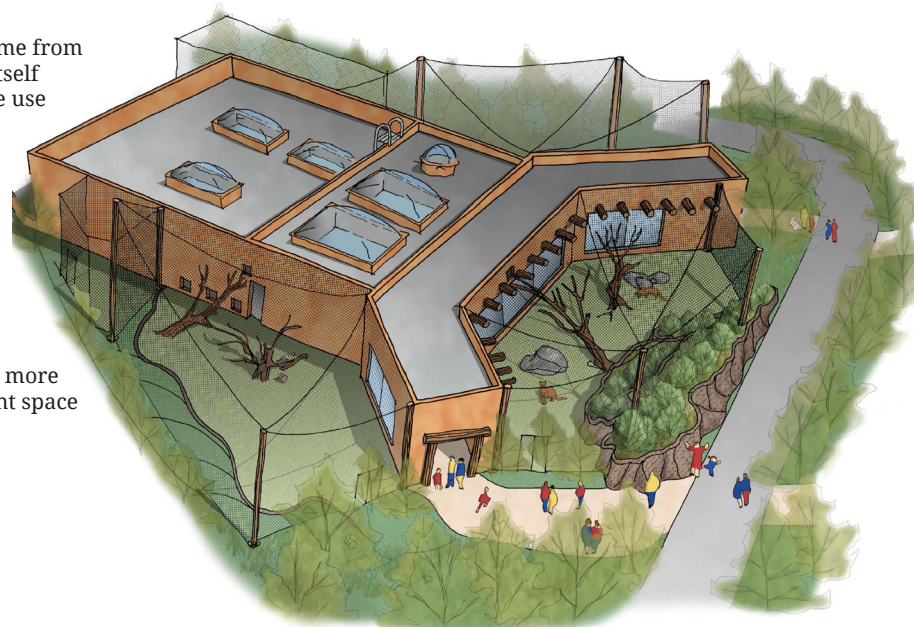
An interior hallway is lined with glass panels. In a few short weeks, kids of all ages will be pressing up against these windows to view Inka and Zean ("ZEE-an"), the zoo's majestic jaguars. And although their adorable offspring won't be in residence for a while, the new space can accommodate the cubs when they're ready.

The Trail of the Jaguar experience also provides the zoo with more indoor space. One of the goals is to offer the building for event space and student-friendly group outings like sleepovers.

Elmwood Park Zoo expects this kind of adventure to be very popular.

After all... Who could resist a catnap with a giant cat?

Elmwood Park Zoo
1661 Harding Blvd
Norristown, PA 19401
elmwoodparkzoo.org
800.652.4143



LEGOLAND DISCOVERY CENTER

Finding a student-friendly group outing in Plymouth Meeting will be a snap with the opening of LEGOLAND Discovery Center.

The 33,000 square feet of square-bricked fun will be packed with possibilities:

- Miniland, displaying all-brick versions of Philadelphia-area icons. This interactive landscape, made from 1.5 million LEGO bricks, includes Philadelphia's City Hall, Boathouse Row and even the famous Rocky steps at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.
- A 4D Cinema featuring wind, water and fog effects that burst off the screen. Set in the mythical land of Chima, the rollicking story is about feuding clans who are desperate to get their (circular) hands on a magical power source.
- Pirate Adventure Island, an entire ship of soft-play for young children. There is rigging to climb, air cannons to shoot and an escape slide that leads to the safety of an island castle.
- LEGO Racers Build and Test, where little designers can put together their own cars, get tips on how to make them go even faster and then compete on the test track. Results are timed down to the hundredth of a second, so the competition among friends is sure to be close.
- NINJAGO Training Camp, which blends brick-building skills with flexibility and agility training to prep students for the challenge of a laser maze. They'll need a lot of ducking, dodging and quick thinking to make it through.
- DUPLO Park, a big spot for little imaginations. This play area is specially designed for the youngest LEGO fans, meaning it bursts creativity. Of course, there are blocks to build with, but there are also oversized blocks to play on.

With the knowledge that an adventure like LEGOLAND is more fun with friends or classmates, LEGOLAND welcomes groups in a big way. Groups of ten or more receive special pricing, and with every five students, a chaperone is free. The discovery center also offers convenient meal options from its onsite café.



For students – and teachers – LEGOLAND can provide resources to turn a visit into a learning experience, without compromising the fun. A series of free LEGO Education Workshops uses colorful bricks and plenty of encouragement to teach about math, science, education and even language arts.

LEGO Education Workshops scheduled to begin in Plymouth Meeting, Pa., in Fall 2017.

LEGOLAND Discovery Center
Plymouth Meeting Mall, Unit #1055
500 West Germantown Pike
Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462
philadelphia.legolanddiscoverycenter.com

2017 PHILADELPHIA FLOWER SHOW

The Valley Forge Tourism & Convention Board (VFTCB) wowed visitors at the 2017 Philadelphia Flower Show, a significant draw of tourists (especially groups) to the area.

Flower Show fans were informed that Montgomery County has much to offer group-tour visitors, all just a short drive from Philadelphia. From the nationally recognized outdoor sculpture garden at Abington Art Center to the Barnes Arboretum in Merion (on the grounds of the original Barnes Foundation), Montgomery County is home to some of the finest private gardens in the country.

The theme for the 2018 Philadelphia Flower Show has already been announced: Wonders of Water. Montgomery County's vast waterways – and its numerous ways to experience them (boating, fishing, etc.) – will enable us to make quite a splash.

It's not too early to plan your overnight group tour for the 2018 show. Reach out to the VFTCB today to help plan your tour!



UPCOMING TRADESHOWS



The VFTCB Tourism Sales team is always on the move (here we are in Cleveland, for example, at ABA). Our schedule of upcoming events follows; if any of these are also on your agenda, be sure to find us for a heartfelt hello and handshake.

2017

**MARCH
29**

**Pennsylvania
Bus Association**
Lancaster, PA

**MARCH
30**

**Maryland
Motorcoach Association**
Gettysburg, PA

**APRIL
23-25**

**Active America
China Summit**
Portland, OR



The VFTCB Tourism Sales team with Roger Dow (CEO of the US Travel Association)



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spring 2017 TOUR GUIDE

The hotel front desk might be able to provide those forgotten toothbrushes, but what if you want something more memorable from the destination you just visited?

The VFTCB provides complimentary welcome gifts to all groups overnighing in a member hotel. We are consistently rotating and trying new gift ideas, eager to provide something useful or even just whimsical.

If you have any suggestions for an appropriate giveaway, let us know. Drop an email to:

Colleen Selner, Tourism Sales Coordinator
selner@valleyforge.org.



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King of Prussia, Pa., 19406
valleyforge.org | 610.834.1550



WIN A NIGHT OUT!

Let Us Know What You Think

We are very much interested in your response to this publication. Take our quick survey at valleyforge.org/survey. You'll not only help guide future issues, you'll also have a shot at a **\$50 gift card** to a fabulous restaurant near you. Three respondents will walk away with a great meal, so let us know your opinion and get ready to chow down on us.

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