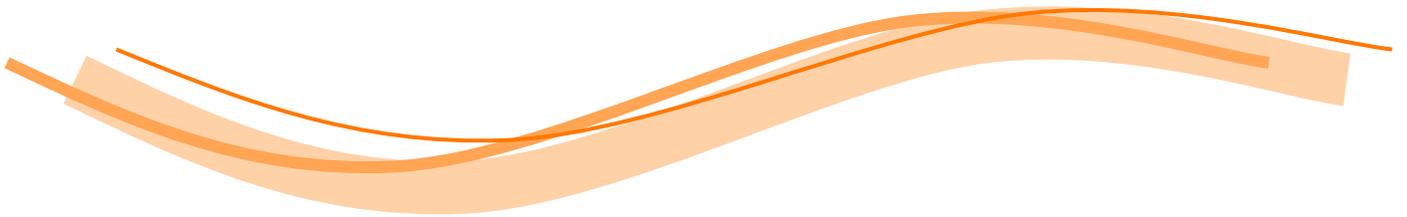




# NORTHERN VIRGINIA





## **NORTHERN VIRGINIA**

Virginia is for lovers – and you will fall in love with the fascinating American history, vibrant arts and culture and indulgent food and wine of Northern Virginia.

Northern Virginia has kept its own character reminiscent of colonial times with rambling plantations, equestrian farms and cobblestoned streets leading to quaint taverns, chic shops and historical gems.

As Virginia's Cultural Region it embodies an energetic mix of history, culture, dining and shopping. Think of it as the place where indulgence meets cultural and urban adventures, the “hip and cosmopolitan side of Virginia” and the affluent travelers’ cultural paradise!

Northern Virginia features picturesque vineyards and indulgent culinary experiences. Wine tastings and food festivals promise a deliciously satisfying visit to the region. The various wineries in Northern Virginia showcase an entire lifestyle full of gracious gardens, inns, shopping, history and the arts.

And you can fill your shopping bags with amazing finds from the region's unique shopping venues, from exclusive boutiques to outlet shopping – it's all here!

### **Alexandria**

Within sight of Washington DC, Old Town Alexandria is just minutes from DC - but feels a world away. It's a bustling district of chef-driven restaurants and cafes, independent boutiques and arts venues in beautifully preserved 18th century architecture. The Old Town hums with a cosmopolitan feel and walkable lifestyle loved by locals and the DC elite alike. And this historic town is just 10 minutes from Washington-Reagan National Airport.

Alexandria is a place to forget about counting calories and to indulge your taste buds with the many culinary experiences on offer. Alexandria native Meshelle Armstrong, her chef/husband Cathal Armstrong, and business partner Todd Thrasher, operate the highly acclaimed Eat Good Food Group and are credited with redefining Old Town Alexandria as a hip hangout and foodie destination. They operate four restaurants and a cocktail lounge in Old Town, and their Restaurant Eve has put Alexandria on the culinary map

Time for a little culture with a visit to the Torpedo Factory Art Center.

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The original factory building was constructed in 1918 for the manufacture of torpedoes. Now you can experience art in person and in progress! The Torpedo Factory features 82 working artists' studios, six galleries, the Art League School, Alexandria Archaeology Museum and gift shop – and, of course, a cafe.

And as night falls - Alexandria Colonial Tours offers you Alexandria's original ghost tour filled with ghost stories, legends and folklore. Led by colonial costumed guides with authentic 18th-century lanterns - The Ghost and Graveyard Tour is a 23-year Old Town tradition. You will hear about the city's history and about America's colonial culture.

### **Prince William County**

Located just 48 Kilometers from Washington, D.C. - Prince William & Manassas provides a peaceful escape. With countless historic sites, multiple choices in shopping and outdoor recreational activities - including national, state, and local parks - Prince William & Manassas provides a range of seasonal activities. More than just famous attractions such as the Manassas National Battlefield Park and the National Museum of the Marine Corps, Prince William & Manassas offers unique culinary options, performing arts venues and quaint historic towns.

You are never far from arts and culture in Northern Virginia! Historic Occoquan, located on the river, was a natural site for water-borne commerce. By 1765, it flourished as an industrial settlement with grist mills and tobacco warehouses. Today, it serves as one of the top places to go in Virginia as a charming restored artist's community with shops, outdoor dining, ghost walks and more. Browse the quaint shops or perhaps take a guided kayak tour along the river.

Then perhaps it is time to swing a club at Potomac Shores Golf Club, which opened in Spring 2014. This Jack Nicklaus Signature golf course is the first in the DC Metro region and the first of Nicklaus' courses to be open to the general public. It features dramatic elevation changes, wide corridors and well-designed green complexes that maneuver through majestic hardwoods along the banks of the historic Potomac River.

Or maybe you will not be able to resist Potomac Mills - one of the hottest tourist destinations in Virginia. It is Washington, DC area's largest outlet mall, featuring more than 220 stores all under one roof! Potomac Mills is a wonderful destination for more high-end and less

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high-price! You will find savings of up to 70% every day at stores such as Bloomingdale's-The Outlet Store, Nordstrom Rack, Last Call by Neiman Marcus, Saks Fifth Avenue OFF 5TH, Coach Factory, J. Crew Factory, LOFT Outlet, Michael Kors Outlet, Pandora Outlet, Talbots Outlet, Tommy Bahama Outlet and True Religion Outlet.... Potomac Mills also boasts over 25 eateries and the AMC Potomac Mills 18 Theatres with IMAX.

Manassas National Battlefield Park is a 5000 acre park and the site of two important Civil War battles. This is where Stonewall Jackson earned his nickname, and Robert E Lee also led his troops into battle at this site. There is an artifact-filled visitors centre as well as a new theatre, featuring the film "Manassas: End of Innocence." This superb, 45-minute video, narrated by Academy Award winning actor Richard Dreyfuss, follows the stories of five individuals whose lives were forever touched by the battles, and serves as an excellent guide to exploring the battlefield and nearby historic sites. Visitors can enjoy equestrian, walking and driving tours, annual battle commemorative events - as well as living history demonstrations at various times throughout the summer.

And for more military history - The National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, Prince William County, is a state-of-the-art facility that honors, preserves and narrates America's story through the eyes of U.S. Marines. Its magnificent architectural design features a dramatic 210-foot tilted steel mast and glass atrium inspired by the flag raisings at Iwo Jima. Inside, a massive "Leatherneck Gallery" and surrounding era galleries take visitors through the history of the Marine Corps, divided into "theaters" or chapters depicting pivotal conflicts and battles.

### **Arlington**

Arlington boasts the neighborly, small-town community vibe with all of the amenities and conveniences of major urban centers. As the smallest geographic county in the US, Arlington packs a lot of excitement, charm accessibility and affordability into one small area. In addition to its many historical attractions, including the famous Arlington National Cemetery, the Marine Corps War Memorial and others, Arlington offers visitors first-class shopping, diverse dining and an eclectic local arts and entertainment scene. Plus, it's just minutes to the National Mall and other regional attractions. As well as Arlington National Cemetery there are two other memorials to American service and sacrifice in close proximity that you can also visit.

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	<p><b>Arlington National Cemetery</b></p> <p>Arlington National Cemetery performs 27 to 30 funeral services each day. As well as military graves, as with many cemeteries, you can search out the famous residents. Amongst many others you can find Presidents including William Taft and John F Kennedy. His brothers Robert and Ted are also in Arlington, as is Jaqueline Kennedy Onassis. Audie Murphy the film star and Glen Miller the big band leader are also laid to rest in Arlington.</p> <p>The grounds of Arlington National Cemetery honour those who have served the United States by providing a sense of beauty and peace for guests. The rolling green hills are dotted with trees that are hundreds of years in age and complement the gardens found throughout the 624 acres of the cemetery. This impressive landscape serves as a tribute to the service and sacrifice of every individual laid to rest within the hallowed grounds of Arlington National Cemetery. Commemorating its 150th anniversary this year, the Cemetery is hosting a variety of special tours and events that detail its 150 years as a national cemetery</p> <p><b>United States Air Force Memorial, Arlington, VA</b></p> <p>The United States Air Force Memorial honors the service and sacrifices of the men and women of the United States Air Force and its predecessor organizations, including the Aeronautical Division, U.S. Signal Corps; the Aviation Section, U.S. Signal Corps; the Division of Military Aeronautics, Secretary of War; the Army Air Service; the U.S. Army Air Corps; and the U.S. Army Air Forces. More than 54,000 Airmen have died in combat while serving in the Air Force and these historical service arms of the military.</p> <p><b>National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial Arlington, VA</b></p> <p>The Pentagon Memorial was created to remember and honor those family members and friends who lost their lives as a result of the events of September 11th, 2001 at the Pentagon. The memorial itself was dedicated on September 11, 2008, the first of the three national 9/11 memorials to be dedicated in to honour victims who were both inside the Pentagon and aboard Flight #77.</p> <p>While in Arlington you should not miss out on that wonderful Virginia cuisine because it is as prevalent here as elsewhere in the State.</p>
<p><b>Location</b></p>	<p>Located midway between New York and Florida, Virginia is the gateway to the South. It is also sometimes classified in the Mid-Atlantic region.</p>

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	The Commonwealth is bordered by Washington, D.C., the USA capital, and Maryland to the north; the Atlantic Ocean to the east; North Carolina and Tennessee to the south; and West Virginia and Kentucky to the west. Northern Virginia is just across the Potomac River from Washington.
<b>Geography</b>	Northern Virginia flattens out from the western mountains into a sandy coastal plain toward the Atlantic Ocean.
<b>Name</b>	Named after Elizabeth I, Queen of England 1558-1603
<b>Population</b>	6.9 million
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Currency</b>	US Dollar (the Canadian Dollar stands at 94 cents US as at July 5 <sup>th</sup> , 2014)
<b>Tipping</b>	Tipping is expected: 10% - 15% where appropriate
<b>Government</b>	Democracy
<b>Documentation</b>	Passports are required
<b>Time zone</b>	Eastern Standard Time
<b>Health</b>	Fine medical facilities - but take travel insurance as medical treatment in the US can be very expensive.
<b>Safety tips</b>	Normal caution whilst travelling

<b>CLIMATE</b>	
<b>General climate</b>	Mild with four distinct seasons
<b>Today's weather</b>	28 degrees Centigrade and sunny in Arlington, North Virginia as July 5 <sup>th</sup> , 2014.
<b>Best time to visit</b>	pring and fall are especially beautiful

<b>GETTING THERE</b>	
<b>Flying time</b>	Flying time: just 65 minutes from Toronto and 2 hours from Montreal Airports: Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport and Washington Dulles International Airport, both located in Virginia, are major gateways.
<b>Cities</b>	Northern Virginia has a population of 2,083,700
<b>Distances</b>	Northern Virginia is a 12 hours drive south of Montreal and Toronto
<b>Trains</b>	Virginia Railway Express <a href="http://www.vre.org">www.vre.org</a> Amtrak <a href="http://www.amtrak.com">www.amtrak.com</a>
<b>Car Rental</b>	Viaroute <a href="http://www.viaroute.com">www.viaroute.com</a>
<b>Buses</b>	Greyhound <a href="http://www.greyhound.com">www.greyhound.com</a>
<b>Boats</b>	Enjoy a 40-minute boat cruise by Potomac Riverboat Co. and see Old Town Alexandria's waterfront plus Founders Park, Old Town Yacht Basin, Admiral's Row, Jones Point Lighthouse and more.
<b>Passes</b>	Passes are available for many of the historical sites – see <a href="http://www.virginia.org">www.virginia.org</a> for details

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<b>ACCOMMODATION TYPES</b>	<p>There is every type of accommodation available in Northern Virginia from pretty B &amp; B's to motels to five star hotels. I can recommend the following from my recent trip to the region:</p> <p><b>Hotel Monaco Alexandria</b>          480 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314          Tel: 703-684-6508  <a href="http://www.monaco-alexandria.com">www.monaco-alexandria.com</a>          A lovely boutique-style hotel that even provided a pet goldfish for companionship!</p> <p><b>Hampton Inn Potomac Mills/Woodbridge</b>          1240 Annapolis Way, Woodbridge, VA 22191          Tel: 703-447-5770          A clean, simple hotel with a pool and very handy for the Potomac Mills shopping mall.</p> <p><b>Renaissance Arlington Capital View</b>          2800 South Potomac Ave, Arlington, VA          Tel: 703-413-1300  <a href="http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/waspy-renaissance-arlington-capital-view-hotel/">http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/waspy-renaissance-arlington-capital-view-hotel/</a>          A swanky, glittering modern hotel which lives up to its name-promise of sweeping views across the Potomac to Washington.</p>
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<b>TARGET GROUPS</b>	
<b>Kids</b>	All the attractions here have plenty of hands-on kid's activities to keep the little ones amused. The hotels too are very child friendly, many with pools and supervised child minding facilities.
<b>Teens</b>	Bring history to life for teens at Mount Vernon and don't forget to point out Washington's famous dentures on display at the museum – just the sort of thing teens love!
<b>Romance</b>	"Virginia is for lovers"! says it all...
<b>Honeymoons &amp; Weddings</b>	Wonderful resorts and settings for weddings and honeymoons abound in Virginia
<b>Zoomers</b>	The slower pace of life in the countryside and the fascinating historical sights make this a great state to visit for Zoomer travel.

<b>UNIQUES</b>	There are 300 Civil War sites in Virginia.
<b>Surprising</b>	Whilst the American Civil War waged all around Mount Vernon, the estate itself was declared neutral territory out of respect for George Washington from both sides.
<b>History</b>	<b>Colonial Era:</b> The Virginia Company sailed from England to try and establish the first permanent English colony in the New World. Their

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	<p>instructions were to settle Virginia, find gold and a water route to the Orient. The explorers landed on Jamestown Island on the banks of the James River on May 14, 1607.</p> <p>Virginia is the site of the first permanent English-speaking settlement in North America at Jamestown in 1607. Here, the English met the Powhatans, a chiefdom of Algonquian Indians who lived in central and eastern Virginia. The New World's first English women and Africans came to Jamestown in 1619, the year and place where the Western Hemisphere's first representative legislature met.</p> <p>Virginia was the largest, most populous and prosperous of the original 13 colonies.</p> <p>Virginia leaders including George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, George Mason and Patrick Henry, played a major role in the Revolutionary War-era events and in the writing of documents such as the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights.</p> <p>At <b>Yorktown</b> on Oct. 19, 1781, British forces under General Charles Cornwallis surrendered to the combined French and American forces serving under the command of General George Washington.</p> <p>Virginia is called the Mother of States &amp; Mother of Presidents: Eight states were formed in whole or in part from Virginia, including Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia, Kentucky and Pennsylvania. Virginia has produced more U.S. presidents than any other state: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, William Henry Harrison, John Tyler, Zachary Taylor and Woodrow Wilson.</p> <p>More major battles of the <b>American Civil War</b> were fought in Virginia from 1861 through 1865 than in any other state. Today, one-third of America's most important Civil War battlefields are in Virginia, and most are open to the public.</p>
<p><b>Books</b></p>	<p><b>George Washington</b> by Joseph Ellis. A very readable biography of the great man that exposes the real person behind America's iconic Founding father.</p> <p><b>Jamestown – The Buried Truth</b> by William M. Kelso, the lead archaeologist who unearthed the secrets of America's birthplace. Home to the band of adventurers who first set foot on the banks of the James River in 1607, James Fort was for decades thought to have been washed away by the nearby James River. That is until chief archaeologist William Kelso, led by a passionate unwillingness to believe that the fort and its contents were lost, garnered the support of the site's owners (the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities) and began to dig. What he unearthed at the site, and continues to uncover, is no less than amazing. In Jamestown, the</p>

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	<p>Buried Truth, Kelso reveals for the first time his up-to-date findings, offering a lively, fact-based account of the archaeological team's exciting journey through layers of history, illustrated with an array of color and black-and-white images.</p> <p>From his discovery of much of the fort's structure, including palisade walls, bulwarks, interior buildings, a well, a warehouse, and several pits, to the several hundred thousand objects, to the lost burial and skeletal remains of one of Jamestown's early leaders, Kelso's findings produce a picture of the settlement that is far more complex than previous accounts.</p>
<p><b>1000 Places to see before you die in Virginia</b></p>	<p>Shenandoah Valley – between the Allegheny Mountains and the Blue Ridge Mountains          Monticello – home of Thomas Jefferson          Colonial Williamsburg – open-air living history museum recreating 1750-1775 end of colonial era          The Inn at Little Washington          The Homestead hotel</p>
<p><b>Must Sees</b></p>	<p><b>Mount Vernon</b>          Virginia's mixture of charm and character is embodied by Mount Vernon Estate the beautiful home of George Washington. It is just 26 kilometers south of Washington DC...yet it exists in a different time and space. This is the most visited historic estate in America and a definite "must-see".</p> <p>George Washington was commander in chief of American forces in the Revolutionary War against the British and is revered as the first president of the United States. Washington and his wife Martha called the riverside estate of Mount Vernon their home for more than 40 years. Interestingly, around 60 years after Washington's death, fighting in the American Civil War raged across the nearby countryside – but the Mount Vernon estate served as neutral ground for both sides.</p> <p>Visitors to Mount Vernon have every opportunity to discover the real George Washington. The Ford Orientation Center and Donald W. Reynolds Museum and Education Center have 25 galleries and theaters, more than 700 artifacts, and interactive displays – including the great man's famous dentures, along with three life-size models of Washington created from forensic investigation.</p> <p>The historic areas you can visit include the restored Mansion, original outbuildings, the tomb where the Washingtons are buried and the beautiful gardens. The estate also includes a working blacksmith shop and the Pioneer Farm - a 4-acre demonstration farm near the river with heritage breed animals, a reconstructed slave cabin and a 16-sided treading barn.</p>

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<b>SPORTS ACTIVITIES</b>	Boating and sailing on ocean, bay and rivers; kite-boarding, hang gliding
<b>Golf</b>	<p><b>Potomac Shores Golf Club</b>            1750 Dunnington Place, Potomac Shores, VA            Phone: 571-383-3050  <a href="http://www.potomacshoresgolfclub.com">www.potomacshoresgolfclub.com</a></p> <p>The latest championship golf facility to open in the Mid-Atlantic region, Potomac Shores opened Spring 2014. This Jack Nicklaus Signature golf course is the first in the DC Metro region and the first of Nicklaus' courses to be open to the general public. It features dramatic elevation changes, wide corridors and well-designed green complexes that maneuver through majestic hardwoods along the banks of the historic Potomac River.</p>
<b>Fishing</b>	In mountain streams, reservoirs, Chesapeake Bay (sea trout, flounder) and the Atlantic Ocean (mahi-mahi, tuna, Marlin)
<b>Horse riding</b>	There is great trail riding in Virginia's many parks.
<b>Hiking</b>	Over 860 kms of the Appalachian Trail's 3,400 kms are in the state
<b>Cycling</b>	This is a cycle-friendly state. A beautiful cycle way runs along the Potomac River from Alexandria to Washington's estate at Mount Vernon.

<b>CULTURE</b>	
<b>Arts</b>	<p><b>Torpedo Factory Art Center</b>            Experience art in person and in progress! Constructed in 1918 for the manufacturing of torpedoes, the Torpedo Factory now features 82 working artists' studios, six galleries, the Art League School, Alexandria Archaeology Museum, a cafe and gift shop.            105 N. Union St, Alexandria, VA            Phone: 703-838-4565  <a href="http://www.torpedofactory.org">www.torpedofactory.org</a></p> <p><b>The Signature Theatre</b> in Arlington is a non-profit professional theatre company dedicated to producing contemporary musicals and plays, reinventing classic musicals for smaller stages, and developing entirely new works. Signature has presented 43 world premiere productions, and is renowned for combining Broadway-quality productions with intimate playing spaces. It's just one more reason why this area is called Virginia's Cultural Region.</p>
<b>Music</b>	<p><b>Red Crooked Sky Dance Troupe:</b> a collaborative mix of American Indians, including Cherokee, Sioux, Meherrin, Osage, Pamunkey, Seneca, and Monacan- each dedicated to educating and promoting positive cultural awareness through traditional and contemporary dance.            Check out <a href="http://www.virginia.org/music">www.virginia.org/music</a></p>

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<b>Films</b>	“The New World” with Colin Farrel and Christopher Plummer
<b>Museums</b>	<p><b>National Museum of the Marine Corps</b>  This state-of-the-art facility honors, preserves and narrates America's story through the eyes of U.S. Marines. Its magnificent architectural design features a dramatic 210-foot tilted steel mast and glass atrium inspired by the flag raisings at Iwo Jima. Inside, a massive "Leatherneck Gallery" and surrounding era galleries take visitors through the history of the Marine Corps, divided into "theaters" or chapters depicting pivotal conflicts and battles and other vital contributions to the preservation of America's freedom.  18900 Jefferson Davis Highway, Triangle, VA  Toll Free: 1.877.635.1775  <a href="http://www.usmcmuseum.com">www.usmcmuseum.com</a></p>
<b>Festivals</b>	Every fall 15.8 million acres of trees just wait to show off their colours. All that foliage, combined with 4,000 kms of scenic byways and more than 100 festivals and events make fall a perfect time for a visit

<b>ATTRACTIONS</b>	<p><b>Arlington</b></p> <p><b>Arlington National Cemetery</b> is a beautiful and moving testament to American history. Graves date back to Civil War times and the estate owned by Confederate Leader Robert E Lee’s wife was commandeered to form the cemetery.  Arlington National Cemetery performs 27 to 30 funeral services each day. As well as military graves, you can search out the famous residents. Amongst many others you can find Presidents including William Taft and John F Kennedy. His brothers Robert and Ted are also in Arlington, as is Jaqueline Kennedy Onassis. Audie Murphy the film star and Glen Miller the big band leader are also laid to rest in Arlington. The rolling green hills are dotted with trees that are hundreds of years in age and complement the gardens found throughout its 624 acres. It’s an impressive landscape and offers impressive views across to Washington.</p> <p><b>The United States Air Force Memorial</b> honours the men and women of the United States Air Force and its predecessor organizations. More than 54,000 Airmen have died in combat while serving in the Air Force and the historical service arms of the military. Their memorial is a fitting one: three memorial spires range from 61 m to 82 m high. They soar in an array of stainless steel arcs against the blue sky of this scorching summer day, evoking the image of contrails of the Air Force Thunderbirds as they peel back in a precision 'bomb burst' manoeuvre. Only three of the four contrails are depicted, at 120 degrees from each other, as the absent fourth suggests the ‘missing man’ formation used</p>
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	<p>at Air Force funeral fly-overs.</p> <p><b>The National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial</b>, created to remember and honour the 184 lives lost when American Airline Flight 77 was crashed into The Pentagon at 9.37 a.m. on September 11th, 2001. It's a simple but effective place of remembrance besides the massive Pentagon building.</p>
<b>Beaches</b>	Virginia Beach is a very popular beach destination on the Eastern US coast.
<b>Wildlife</b>	With its many parks there is a surprising amount of wildlife and birding opportunities in Northern Virginia. I watched eagles soaring at the Potomac Shores Golf Club and white tailed deer abound in the woods.
<b>Parks</b>	Virginia State Parks have been voted "America's Best" by The Sports Foundation and the National Recreation and Park Association; Shenandoah National Park.
<b>Gardens</b>	Renowned for its exceptional scenery and educational programs, <b>Norfolk Botanical Garden</b> is considered a premier example of horticultural excellence. The Garden dates back to 1938 when the Works Progress Administration sponsored 200 African-American women to clear the dense, native vegetation and plant 4,000 Azaleas. Today, the Garden represents 155-acres of colourful landscapes, unusual flowers, mature forests and seasonal plantings and features one of the largest collections of azaleas, camellias, roses and rhododendrons on the East Coast. Open 365-days a year, the Garden is one of the only botanical gardens offering tours by foot, boat or tram.
<b>Historical Sites</b>	<p><b>Historic Occoquan</b>          Located on the river, Occoquan was a natural site for water-borne commerce. By 1765, it flourished as an industrial settlement with grist mills and tobacco warehouses. Today, it serves as one of the top places to go in Virginia as a charming restored artist's community with shops, outdoor dining, ghost walks and more. Enjoy a brief tour given by the town's Mayor. Then take time browsing the quaint shops on your own.</p> <p><b>Jamestown 1607:</b> Experience Jamestown online and learn the Stories of a Nation from the various perspectives of the English settlers, the Natives who had been living on the land for more than 10,000 years, the early Africans who were brought over on a Dutch trade ship, as well as the investors in the Virginia Company, who had expected gold returns and a northwest passage to the Orient. Enjoy the continuing episodes with sound effects, videos and games!</p> <p><b>Historic Jamestowne:</b> The mission of Historic Jamestowne is to preserve, protect and promote the original site of the first permanent English settlement in North America and to tell the story of the role of</p>

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	<p>the three cultures, European, North American and African, that came together to lay the foundation for a uniquely American form of democratic government, language, free enterprise and society.</p> <p><b>Jamestown Settlement:</b> The story of the people who founded Jamestown and of the Virginia Indians they encountered is told through film, gallery exhibits and living history. Outdoors, visitors can board replicas of the three ships that sailed from England to Virginia in 1607, explore life-size re-creations of the colonists' fort and a Powhatan village, and tour a riverfront discovery area to learn about European, Powhatan and African economic activities associated with water.</p>
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<p><b>OTHER ACTIVITIES</b></p>	<p>Inject a little excitement into your vacation with the help of Virginia outfitters who package everything from caving, boating, offshore and freshwater fishing, beachfront sports, llama trekking, inn-to-inn hiking, cycling and camping adventures, white-water rafting and sea kayaking. Golf and ski resorts abound here. Each year, in fact, Virginia golf resorts are ranked among the top in the country in a host of national magazines. More than one-fourth of the Appalachian Trail runs through the mountains of Virginia and you will find more caverns here than in nearly any other East Coast state.</p>
<p><b>Shopping</b></p>	<p><b>Potomac Mills</b> is one of the hottest tourist destinations in Virginia. It is Washington, DC area's largest outlet mall, featuring more than 220 stores all under one roof! Potomac Mills is a wonderful destination for more high-end and less high-price! You will find savings of up to 70% every day at stores such as Bloomingdale's-The Outlet Store, Nordstrom Rack, Last Call by Neiman Marcus, Saks Fifth Avenue OFF 5TH, Coach Factory, J. Crew Factory, LOFT Outlet, Michael Kors Outlet, Pandora Outlet, Talbots Outlet, Tommy Bahama Outlet and True Religion Outlet... Potomac Mills also boasts over 25 eateries and the AMC Potomac Mills 18 Theatres with IMAX.</p>
<p><b>Markets</b></p>	<p>Virginia is host to many wonderful curiosity and collectible shops, from thrift stores, antique shops and auctions where you can talk to appraisers, vendors and fellow collectors</p>
<p><b>Nightlife</b></p>	<p>Nightlife in Virginia includes ballroom dancing, theatre, concerts as well as line dancing, neighborhood pubs and karaoke. Since country music found its origins here, visitors can hear old timey mountain tunes every weekend.</p>

<p><b>CUISINE</b></p>	
<p><b>Food</b></p>	<p>Dining in Virginia is a real treat for travellers. Regional dishes like country ham and grits can be found on the same city block as ethnic dishes from the Old Country. Choose a chrome/neon diner and a malt, a family-style buffet of soul food or a country kitchen with crisp cotton</p>

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	<p>curtains and fried chicken; all offer comfort food that mum used to make. Virginia also presents quality five-star restaurants famous for their unique menus, fabulous service and elegant settings.</p>
<p><b>Wine</b></p>	<p>Loudon is the heart of Virginia's wine producing region with many wineries and breweries scattered across the gorgeous countryside. See their website for all the details at: <a href="http://www.VisitLoudoun.org">www.VisitLoudoun.org</a></p>
<p><b>Restaurants</b></p>	<p>Here are my personal recommendations in Northern Virginia...</p> <p><b>Jaleo Spanish Tapas and Bar, Arlington</b>  Under the direction of famed chef José Andrés, Jaleo offers an impressive assortment of tapas, the traditional small dishes of Spain, as well as savory paellas, superb sangrias and a fine selection of Spanish wines and Sherries in a festive, casual atmosphere.</p> <p><b>Liberty Tavern, Wilson Boulevard, Arlington</b>  The Liberty Tavern is a popular and award-winning neighborhood restaurant and bar located in Arlington's exciting Clarendon community. The first floor of the restored historic property houses an inviting bar and lounge that remains vibrant all hours of the day. The upstairs dining room offers a warm ambiance, where guests can be equally comfortable enjoying a sophisticated multi-course dinner or a casual weekday meal. Liberty's cuisine features the best of fresh, in-season ingredients.</p> <p><b>The Demo Kitchen at Society Fair, Alexandria</b>  Society Fair has been named a 'Best New Bar' by Food &amp; Wine magazine. There is a bakery, butchery, market, wine bar, and demo kitchen - all under one enchanted roof. For dinner - feast your eyes on the demo kitchen at an engaging dinner/cooking class seating 10 guests. Soiree with the chef and sommelier as they prepare your dinner via a deluxe cooking demonstration, and then dine on a three-course meal focusing on locally sourced ingredients.</p> <p><b>The Waterfront Market, Alexandria</b>  Enjoy picturesque views of the Potomac River at the Alexandria marina as you sip a glass of Virginia wine or sup Alexandria's locally brewed craft beer, Port City - available on tap right on the dock! The Waterfront Market is the newest addition to the Alexandria waterfront, serving sandwiches and sushi plus fresh-baked pastries and sweet treats from recipes lovingly developed over 30 years at the Market's sister location, Bittersweet on King Street.</p> <p><b>BRABO Tasting Room, Alexandria</b>  Seasonal Virginia-grown ingredients and simple, satisfying dishes make</p>

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BRABO Tasting Room a neighborhood favorite. Situated in a 150-year-old historic building adjacent to the boutique Lorien Hotel & Spa - the Tasting Room is joined in a flavorful King Street trio by BRABO restaurant and a gourmet market, The Butcher's Block by RW. BRABO restaurant by acclaimed chef Robert Wiedmaier strikes the perfect balance between rustic and refined, timeless and contemporary with its interior designed by famed New York designer Vicente Wolf.

**Historic King Street Food Tour by DC Metro Food Tours, Alexandria**

A chance to take a journey through one of the largest historic districts in the US that was once home to both George Washington and Robert E. Lee – without getting hungry. The tour allows you to sample a variety of delicious specially made dishes from local restaurants, learn about the colorful past of this unique area, and take in some of the best preserved historic architecture in America.

**Dixie Bones Barbeque, Woodbridge**

In 1995, Dixie Bones opened in Woodbridge where it maintains a reputation as the region’s best BBQ house. It has been mentioned in numerous restaurant publications and named one of the top 100 restaurants in the DC metropolitan area by Washingtonian Magazine.

**Montclair’s Family Restaurant, Dumfries**

A family owned diner, it’s conveniently located right off I-95 making for the perfect stop on a road trip. This Greek-style mixed with American classic has been serving locals their favorite meals such as the Greek omelet and the gyro platter. Experience an informal meal that is like going home to enjoy family-cooking.

**Tidewater Grill at Potomac Shores Golf Club**

Nestled just off the Potomac River, on Powell's Creek, Tidewater Grill looks over the 18th hole of the Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Course offers stunning views of the golf course and Northern Virginia's wildlife. Executive Chef Matt Blazey's regionally inspired menu features meats and produce from local farms. Highlights from the menu include the signature crab roll, smoked sausage, and the "juicy Lucy" of the day.

<b>MORE INFO</b>	
<b>Brochures</b>	Call 1-800-671-4195 for a range of brochures
<b>Website</b>	State-wide website: <a href="http://www.virginia.org">www.virginia.org</a> Northern Virginia: Virginia's Cultural Region: <a href="http://www.virginia.org/Virginiasculturalregion">http://www.virginia.org/Virginiasculturalregion</a> Connect with Virginia on Facebook:

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<b>PERSONAL EXPERIENCES</b>	<p>I toured through Northern Virginia in June 2014 and you can read my Travel Blog of my journey here: <a href="http://www.chrisrobinsontravelshow.ca/Blog.aspx">http://www.chrisrobinsontravelshow.ca/Blog.aspx</a> I have also created a Pinterest board of images from my trip : <a href="http://www.pinterest.com/TravelShow/virginia/">http://www.pinterest.com/TravelShow/virginia/</a></p>
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