



Group Tours

Just minutes from Williamsburg & Virginia Beach, Hampton offers a "Sea to the Stars" experience for every age group!

At first glance it might seem that the English explorer John Smith, Blackbeard the Pirate, President Abraham Lincoln, educator Booker T. Washington, John Glenn, Alan Shepard and America's first astronauts—the Mercury Seven—have little in common. But ever since the first boatload of English tourists set foot on American soil in 1607, pausing at Strawberry Banks for some fresh fruit and dry land before sailing up river to found Jamestown, people in search of relaxation, water sports, and educational fun have visited Hampton. That connection, from exploring the New World to exploring space, gave birth to Hampton's motto, "First from the sea, First to the stars."



Hampton is centrally located between Williamsburg and Virginia Beach. Both cities are within a half-hour drive. Accessed by Interstate 64 from I-95 or I-85, Hampton makes a perfect spot for a "hub and spoke" tour of Coastal Virginia!



FORT MONROE VISITOR & EDUCATION CENTER EXPANDED EXPERIENCE AT THE CASEMATE MUSEUM

The NEW Visitor Center provides visitors with a point of arrival and orientation to the significant historical and recreational amenities of Fort Monroe. Through the adaptive reuse of an original Beaux Arts Style building, which was first built as a Library in 1909 by the Coast Artillery Schools, the Visitor Center complements the existing Casemate Museum.

The center features exhibits that tell the profound stories of Captain John Smith, the arrival of the first enslaved Africans and the culmination of 242 years of slavery as the first contrabands came to Fort Monroe to receive their emancipation. After visiting the center, you can exit to the Postern Gate walkway, crossing over the moat into the walls of the historic fort and continue your visit to the Casemate Museum.



The Casemate Museum and the Fort Monroe Visitor & Education Center is currently closed and will reopen in 2021. Expanded group programming and tours are planned for 2021 as well.

Famous Attractions, Breathtaking Views and Professional Narrators



Groups enjoy the informative and entertaining three-hour harbor cruise of the world's largest natural harbor. Knowledgeable tour guides bring to life the legends, lore and history of the Chesapeake Bay. Cruise past the mighty warships at the Norfolk Naval Base with an in-depth narrative of each and every ship. See massive aircraft carriers, nuclear-powered submarines and support craft. Sail alongside merchant ships from all over the world and hear of the Battle of the Ironclads. **New this year!** *Fort Wool is now a migratory bird sanctuary. Learn how this historic island fortification is being used as a home to more than 20,000 waterbirds displaced by the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel expansion. We will sail as close to the fort as we can to not disturb the new habitat.*

Groups up to 117 capacity. Group Adult rate of \$28.60 with tax.

Student cruise as low as \$17.05 Tour Operators discounted rates offered.

Meal options available or enjoy the full service snack bar on board.

757-722-9102 or visit www.MissHamptonCruises.com



MISS HAMPTON II
HARBOR CRUISES



The Hampton Jazz Festival, held over a 3-day period, has brought the best of jazz, pop, blues, soul, and R&B for 51 years. This annual gathering has become more of a reunion – a celebration of friends, family, culture, music, and life. Group rates are \$76 per night when buying over 45 combined tickets (based on 2020 pricing, subject to change.)

The Hampton Jazz Festival dates are the last full weekend in June and will resume in 2022.
June 24, 25 & 26, 2022 • June 23, 24 & 25, 2023 • June 28, 29 & 30, 2024



Receptive Services:



Locally owned, operated and located in Coastal Virginia, we have been assisting adult and student groups visiting here since 1990. Whether your group needs transportation, accommodations, meals, admissions or guided tours, one call to us connects you to everything our region has to offer. We are dedicated to providing memorable experiences with customized itineraries and convenient per-person pricing to meet your groups' needs, interests and budgets.

Visit www.colonialconnections.com or contact Terri Gilley at 800-378-1571 / terri@colonialconnections.com



MARS is the leading tour operator in the Mid Atlantic Region featuring immersive tour experiences for groups of all sizes and ages. We custom create each tour to the needs and desires specific to that group's budget, interests, and focus. Hampton's attractions can be included in many regional tours of Coastal Virginia, including our MARS Exclusive Virginia International Tattoo program with live vintage aircraft show and a pre-show luncheon with Tattoo performers. Serving groups since 1997, we are experts in African American Heritage Tours, STEAM educational travel, performance tours, and other niche markets. Take A Fun Trip and leave the research, work, and organization to us!

Visit www.takeafuntrip.com or contact Kate Scopetti at 800-769-5912 / kate@takeafundtrip.com



Take a road trip to Hampton, Virginia and experience historic museums, fort, and sites that illustrate the perseverance of the human spirit. In 2019, Hampton, Virginia commemorated the 400th anniversary of the first African landing in English North America. Now, you can experience Hampton's rich African American heritage sites on the 400 Years Forward tour.



Day One:

1:00pm — Arrive at the **Fort Monroe National Monument**. It was on this site in 1619 at Old Point Comfort that “twenty and odd” Africans first arrived on Virginia soil. More than two centuries later in May 1861, Major General Benjamin Butler accepted three runaway slaves under the declaration that they were “contraband of war” and would therefore not be returned to their owners. As news of this extraordinary development spread, Fort Monroe quickly earned the nickname “Freedom’s Fortress.”

Start your tour of historic Fort Monroe at the **Fort Monroe Visitor and Education Center**. The Center is designed to welcome and orient visitors and provide interpretive exhibits, research, and archival resources. The Center tells the stories of the arrival of the first enslaved Africans to English North America in 1619 and the culmination of 242 years of slavery as the first contrabands came to Fort Monroe to receive their emancipation.

2:00pm — Walk across the moat into the walls of the largest stone fort ever built in the United States dating back to 1834. Within the walls of the fort is the Casemate Museum, which chronicles the military history of Fort Monroe. The museum features the room where Jefferson Davis was held briefly as a prisoner following the American Civil War, and highlights the 1861 “Contraband of War” decision that granted three enslaved men, and thousands who followed, sanctuary at Fort Monroe, earning it the nickname “Freedom’s Fortress.”

3:00pm — Take a riding tour of Fort Monroe with a stop at the First Africans in Virginia Marker, the site in 1619, where the first ship carrying “20 and odd” enslaved Africans arrived at Point Comfort, in Virginia where Fort Monroe is today. The Africans brought with them their languages, cultures, and traditions that along with their presence would forever change the course of the United States.

3:30pm — Continue your tour with a visit to the **Emancipation Oak** on Hampton University’s waterfront campus. A living symbol of freedom for African Americans and a National Historic Landmark, the expansive Emancipation Oak is located at the entrance to Hampton University. The Emancipation Oak is said to be the site of the first Southern reading of President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation. At 98 feet in diameter and designated as one of the “Ten Great Trees of the World” by the National Geographic Society, it continues to be an inspiration.

4:00pm — Depart for hotel accommodations and then an early dinner at the **Paradise Ocean Club** overlooking the Chesapeake Bay at Fort Monroe. Stop for a cold brew at **Oozlefinch Craft Brewery** or the **Vanguard Brewpub & Distillery** before returning to your hotel.

Day Two:

9:00am — Visit the **Hampton History Museum**. Even as the history of Hampton is aligned with major events in American history, so too is the city’s history intertwined with the story of African Americans in this country. From the Seventeenth Century Gallery with its commentary on the coming of the first Africans to Virginia in 1619 through the descriptions of black sailors on merchant ships and the bravery of the slave Cesar Tarrant in Virginia’s Revolutionary War Navy, each gallery addresses the contributions of African Americans to Hampton history. The story of “Hidden Figures” is revealed in the exhibit “When The Computer Wore a Skirt: NASA’s Human Computers.”

10:00am — Next we tour the **Hampton University Museum** one of the most outstanding multicultural museums in the U.S. Founded in 1868, the same year as the university, it is among the oldest museums in Virginia. The collection of more than 9,000 objects and works of art is representative of cultures and nations from around the world and is the largest of its kind in southeastern United States.

11:00am — Enjoy the history of Little England Chapel. Built in 1879, the chapel is both a State and National Historic Landmark. It is the only known African missionary chapel in the state.

11:30am — Time for an early lunch at the **Grey Goose Restaurant** or at one of the many eateries at **Peninsula Town Center**.

1:00pm — Stop and reflect at the **Tucker Family Cemetery**. The graveyard is one of the oldest black cemeteries in Hampton and the family has traced their bloodline back to the first recorded African birth in English North America. A recent survey using ground-penetrating radar revealed the existence of more than 100 previously unknown graves which may include William Tucker’s remains.

2:00pm — Discover **Aberdeen Gardens**, a historic neighborhood built for and by African Americans in 1935 as part of F.D.R.’s New Deal Settlement. The Aberdeen Gardens Historic Museum preserves the neighborhood’s rich heritage and honors the original residents. Out of the 55 New Deal communities proposed and constructed at the time, Aberdeen Gardens was the only Resettlement Administration community for Blacks in Virginia. The iconic neighborhood is listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places.

3:15pm — Take flight at the **Virginia Air & Space Science Center**. The center’s programs highlight the contributions of African Americans in the fields of aeronautics and aviation. The center features state-of-the-art space and aircraft exhibits and a 3-D IMAX® Theater. A permanent exhibit chronicles the Tuskegee Airmen, the first black aviators to fly for the U.S. in wartime combat.

4:30pm — Take a spin on the **1920 Hampton Carousel** along the Hampton Waterfront before returning to your hotel for downtime.

6:00pm — Enjoy a **Crabtown Cruise “Steamer Pot Dinner”** on the two hour cruise onboard the Miss Hampton II Harbor Cruise. Or have dinner in the historic village of **Phoebus**, the gateway to Fort Monroe with a number of eclectic eateries to choose.

Day Three:

Visit Neighboring Heritage Sites while you are visiting Hampton:

- In **Newport News**, tour **The Newsome House Museum**, which commemorates J. Thomas Newsome, one of the first African-American lawyers to argue before the Virginia Supreme Court. Learn about the heroics of African-American soldiers at the **Virginia War Museum**, and talk with a bucket maker about life as a freed Black in colonial times at **The Mariners’ Museum**.
- During the 18th century, half of Williamsburg’s population was Black. Learn about the daily life and culture of African Virginians at **Colonial Williamsburg**. Examine slavery’s evolution, and the reliance upon it by patriots like Peyton Randolph, to build a city, a colony and eventually a nation.
- **Jamestown Settlement’s** permanent exhibition galleries feature one of the most varied collections of objects relating to the nation’s beginnings in 17th-century Virginia, including objects representative of African cultures. A dramatic multimedia presentation, “From Africa to Virginia,” chronicles African encounters with Europeans, the impact on African culture, and the development of the transatlantic slave trade. The story of Angelo, the first African woman mentioned by name in historical record in the 1625 “Muster of Inhabitants of Virginia” is told in newly refreshed permanent galleries.
- Visit the **American Revolution Museum at Yorktown**. In the museum theater, “Liberty Fever” features the stories of people who lived during the American Revolution, including Billy Flora, an African-American hero of the Battle of Great Bridge in 1775. On the re-created Revolution-era farm, visitors can glimpse of the lives and roles of enslaved people on a small farm and African influence on American foodways.

NEW in 2021

**TAPESTRY
COLLECTION
BY HILTON™**

The Landing at Hampton Marina, Tapestry Collection by Hilton



Hampton's waterfront hotel will become a Hilton Tapestry in January 2021. 172 guest rooms offer the perfect environment to relax, dine riverside and host memorable events. Call 757-727-9700 for group reservations. Other Hampton Hilton properties include: Embassy Suites Hampton Convention Center, Hilton Garden Inn Hampton Coliseum Central, Hampton Inn Hampton-Newport News. Marriott offers the Courtyard Hampton Coliseum Central, Element Hampton Peninsula Town Center, SpringHill Suites Hampton. Other group friendly hotels include: Holiday Inn Express, Hyatt Place Hampton Convention Center, Best Western Hampton Coliseum Inn and Country Inn & Suites.



VIRGINIA AIR & SPACE SCIENCE CENTER

NASA LANGLEY VISITOR CENTER 

**Re-opens in 2021
with a new name and new
Space Explorer Gallery**

Located in Hampton, Virginia, the birthplace of America's space program, the **Virginia Air & Space Science Center** features interactive aviation exhibits spanning 100 years of flight, more than 30 historic aircraft, a hands-on space exploration gallery, unique space flight artifacts, and more! The Center is home to the Apollo 12 Command Module and the Orion PA-1 Test Vehicle.

The nearly \$1.5M in updates to the Center will bring dozens of new interactive displays, showcase artifacts in innovative and exciting ways, and bring cutting edge exhibits to Coastal Virginia. Exciting new content for the Space Explorer Gallery will engage a wider, multigenerational audience. Updates to the IMAX Theater include new seating, projection, screen, flooring, and lighting. These updates will provide visitors with an improved immersive IMAX experience than before.

Educational programming for grades pre-K through 12 teach the basic principles of science, aviation and space technology and stimulates interests in STEM careers. Our informal science education approach promotes "learning through doing" which allows students to explore the basics of scientific principles in a fun and engaging environment. www.vasc.org



Miss Hampton II Harbor Cruises offers daily narrated cruises of the Hampton Roads harbor and Chesapeake Bay and sails past the world's largest naval installation, Norfolk Naval Base. **Special rates are offered for student groups** and the driver and teacher are complimentary. **Teen Party Cruises** are popular for night time activities offering breathtaking views while dancing under the stars. Two or Three hour tours are offered with DJ, Pizza or Sub buffet and soda bar. Call 888-757-BOAT or www.misshamptoncruises.com

Tour Assistance with one phone call!

Hampton Convention & Visitor Bureau will be glad to point you in the right direction in developing an exciting itinerary for our city and Coastal Virginia. We have the latest information on events and can assist you with accommodations in Hampton. Our office also can assist you with performance venues for band and chorus groups or suggest group meal options while en route.

Contact Bruce Newton, CTP, Group Sales Manager



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