



Tour Ideas & Itineraries

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!



The year 2026 marks the 250th Anniversary of the nation's founding in 1776 — the United States of America's Semiquincentennial. For this milestone occasion, a fleet of the world's most magnificent international tall ships, historic character vessels, and modern military ships will again sail into the harbors of Virginia as part of the national Sail250® tour.

More than 60 ships from 20 countries are expected to fill the Hampton Roads harbors from June 12 – June 23, 2026. The International Fleet will arrive on Thursday, June 18, 2026 off the Virginia Beach shore in time for the traditional **Parade of Sail on Friday, June 19, 2026.**

View the Parade of Sail at Fort Monroe National Monument. Hampton will offer outstanding ship-watching opportunities from 9:00am to noon as tall ships, many in full sail, make their way to the harbors of Norfolk for Sail250® Virginia. Tour the Casemate Museum, the Fort Monroe Visitor & Education Center and experience the Juneteenth commemoration on this special day. Sail250® Virginia is one of five official US ports selected to host the 2026 Sail250® America tour, including New Orleans, Baltimore, New York, and Boston. Additional details on page three.



Make Hampton a part of your Tattoo Tour

The Virginia International Tattoo is one of the largest motorcoach events on the East Coast and the American Bus Association named it the #1 event in the United States in 2016! Groups return year after year to witness this patriotic performance, but maybe it is time to refresh the itinerary

with a stop in Hampton. Give us a half-day and we'll give your group a unique experience. A must see is **Fort Monroe**, the largest stone fort surrounded by a moat, built in America and the **Casemate Museum**. Seniors love to take a spin on our **1920 Hampton Carousel**, one of a few of its era still in operation. **The Grey Goose Restaurant** is the perfect meal stop before heading through the tunnel to Norfolk. Better yet, make Hampton your home base for a regional multi-night tour as there is much more to see and experience.



April 24-27, 2025 • April 16-19, 2026 • April 23-25, 2027 vafest.org/tattoo



The Hampton Jazz & Music Festival, held over a 3-day period, has brought the best of jazz, pop, blues, soul, and R&B for 54 years. This annual gathering has become more of a reunion – a celebration of friends, family, culture, music, and life. Group rates range from \$106 to \$128 per ticket, per night when buying over 45 combined tickets for the three days. Higher priced tickets are seated closer to the stage. Festival dates are always the last full weekend in June.



June 27, 28 & 29, 2025 • June 26, 27 & 28, 2026 • June 25, 26 & 27, 2027

New World Discoveries in Hampton

When they arrived in 1607, Captain John Smith and crew discovered a point of land, later to become Hampton, that brought them "good comfort." Here they were made welcome by the Kecoughtan Indians and feasted on berries, wild game and bread made of maize. Four hundred years later, you'll still find the inhabitants hospitable and eager to share our captivating history.

Day One—Begin your visit at the **Hampton History Museum** and learn about the arrival of the Virginia Company and its encounter with the Kecoughtan Indians in the New World. Visit **St. John's Church**, the oldest continuous, English-speaking parish in the United States. Be "captivated" by costumed Pirates during a walking tour and learn of Hampton's role in the shipment of goods between England and the New World. Check into your Hampton hotel and enjoy dinner in one of Hampton's chef owned restaurants or a catered dinner cruise on the **Hampton Queen**.



Day Two—Tour **Jamestown Settlement**. Explore the world of 1607, when 104 men set anchor in Virginia and began to build America's first English permanent colony. Learn of the cultural encounters and events that planted seeds of a new nation in gallery exhibits and speak with costumed interpreters as they describe and demonstrate daily life in early 17th century Jamestown. Travel the Colonial Parkway to the **American Revolution Museum at Yorktown** where the story of our nation's founding is told. Visit a re-created Continental Army encampment to learn about the life of a soldier and hear about camp life, medical treatment, cooking and see the firings of a flintlock musket. Return to Hampton for a old fashion fish fry at **Graham & Rollins Seafood** or get in some shopping therapy and grab dinner at **Peninsula Town Center**.

Day Three - Discover **Fort Monroe National Monument** and the **Casemate Museum**. Your experience begins at the **Fort Monroe Visitor & Education Center**. 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 walk-way, crossing over the moat into the walls of the historic fort and continue your visit to the Casemate Museum, located in the walls of the largest stone fort in the United States. Visit the **Chapel of the Centurion** and see Louis Comfort Tiffany stained glass windows. Next stop is the **Hampton University Museum**, founded in 1868. It is one of our nation's most outstanding multicultural museums. See the **Emancipation Oak** and other campus landmarks. Enjoy dinner and entertainment at **The Grey Goose Restaurant**.



Day Four— Have a "New World" experience by discovering the history and future of space exploration at the **Virginia Air & Space Science Center**, featuring interactive aviation exhibits spanning 100 years of flight, more than 30 historic aircraft, a new Space Explorer Gallery and more! Only in Hampton will you see all four space modules in one collection: the NASA Gemini Test Capsule, Mercury 14 Spacecraft, the Apollo 12 capsule that took man to the moon and the Orion capsule that represents NASA's next space expedition to Mars! Enjoy a 3-D IMAX® film and then walk next door to the 1920 Hampton Carousel for a spin. For lunch, discover historic **Phoebus** and the quaint streets filled with charming architecture, retail and culinary offerings and antiques. Groups can eat on their own or pre-arrange a group "pop up" catered meal at **Charlotte's Cafeteria**. End the day by taking a spin on the **1920 Hampton Carousel**.



HAMPTON VIRGINIA²⁵⁰ AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Friday, July 4, 2025— Fort Monroe is the designated site of the Virginia National July 4th Celebration. Presented in partnership by VA250, Fort Monroe Authority, National Park Service and the City of Hampton, the evening will feature performing artists, a brilliant drone show and dazzling fireworks!



Saturday & Sunday, October 25-26, 2025 – 250th Anniversary of the Battle of Hampton, a Land and Sea Reenactment: The First Battle of the Revolutionary War outside New England. Fought October 26-27, 1775, the Battle of Hampton was the beginning of the Revolutionary War in Virginia. It was a turning point in Virginia’s transition from resistance to rebellion, and at its heart was a struggle for the meaning and experience of liberty. The Revolutionary War is a key part of Hampton’s “Arc of Freedom.”

Friday, June 12 – Sunday, June 14, 2026. The Blackbeard Pirate Festival in Downtown Hampton will be an affiliate harbor for Sail250[®] Virginia. Hampton’s waterfront comes alive with dozens of pirate re-enactors, costumed in historically accurate garb, who transform today’s Hampton into the busy seaport of yesterday. Led by Blackbeard the Pirate himself, re-enactors help visitors step back in time and re-live the history and legends of 1718 Hampton. The Festival offers a variety of children’s activities, live musical entertainment, fireworks, period vendors, arts and crafts, and much more!



Friday, June 19, 2026 - View the Parade of Sail at Fort Monroe National Monument.

Hampton will offer outstanding ship-watching opportunities from 9:00am to noon as tall ships, many in full sail, make their way to the harbors of Norfolk for Sail250 Virginia!

8:00am—Arrive at Fort Monroe for assigned seating in stadium style bleachers. We anticipate the ships will come into view around 9:00am and last until noon.

Groups may tour the **Fort Monroe Visitor & Education Center** and **The Casemate Museum** at leisure or with an organized structured tour during the day.

12-4:00pm — **“Freedom through the Waterways” a Juneteenth Observance** will include Historical Exhibits, Cultural Performances and Educational Workshops along with African drumming, dance, gospel choirs and reenactments of historical events. Food trucks and vendors will be onsite for lunch or we can prearrange lunch off site.

Extend your Juneteenth experience by visiting the **Hampton University Museum and Campus** including **Legacy Park** and the **Emancipation Oak**. Visit the **Tucker Cemetery**, one of the oldest black cemeteries in Hampton and the resting place for generations of the William Tucker Family. William Tucker was the first baby of African descent to be baptized in English North America.

Or set sail on the **Hampton Queen** for an afternoon harbor tour, visit the **Virginia Air & Space Science Center** and take a spin on the **1920 Hampton Carousel**.



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

The Visitor Center provides visitors with a point of arrival and orientation to the significant historical and recreational amenities of Fort Monroe. 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.





A visit to the Virginia Air & Space Science Center is an awe-inspiring celebration of aviation milestones, space exploration, and technological advances. From historic aircraft suspended from the center's 94-foot ceiling to the unforgettable space capsule display in the main gallery, visitors come face-to-face with amazing artifacts & hands-on, minds-on exhibits that will make imaginations soar!

Located in Hampton, 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.

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



Hampton Queen Naval Base Cruises

Hampton Roads Harbor Tours, departing from the Downtown Hampton Waterfront



Join us aboard the Hampton Queen for an enjoyable, 2-hour sight-seeing cruise. Take in the picturesque beauty of Hampton Roads Harbor and learn about one of the busiest ports on the East Coast from the 1607 founding of Jamestown to the destroyers, submarines, and air craft carriers berthed at Naval Station Norfolk. The tour will include Hampton maritime and seafood history, the significance of the Virginia Air & Space Science Center and NASA Langley in Hampton, Hampton University's legacy, the VA Medical Center,

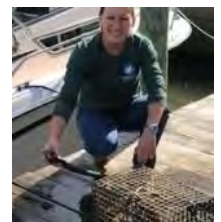
Fort Monroe & Fort Wool's history, Battle of the Ironclads, and much more.

Adult & Student group rates with discounted rates for tour operators. Private charters available for all types of groups and events including the Teen Party Cruise for student groups. Enjoy beautiful views on the Sunset Harbor Tour.

Contact: Drew Yochum, sales@hamptonharbortours.com or call 757-996-5449



"Walk, Talk and Taste" as you connect to Hampton's waterways and learn of the unique elements that make up the culture, heritage and economy and Virginia life. Walk among spectacular trees, experience a dockside oyster garden and enjoy a local brew and culinary sampling from one of Hampton's unique eateries. A certified Virginia Green eco-tour company is owned by certified Ecotour guides and received the **2022 & 2023 Virginia Green Travel Leader Award**



Tour Assistance with one email or 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 friendly meal options while en route.

BRUCE L. NEWTON, CTP
LEISURE SALES, VISITOR SERVICES MANAGER

Hampton Convention & Visitor Bureau
757-728-5319 | bnewton@hamptonevb.com
1919 Commerce Dr, Suite 290, Hampton, VA 23666
VisitHampton.com | [@VisitHamptonVA](https://www.instagram.com/VisitHamptonVA)
757.722.1222 | 800.487.8778

