

Travel:

VIRGINIA'S HISTORIC TRIANGLE

WILLIAMSBURG, JAMESTOWN & YORKTOWN

by Don Woodland

Hay fields along the James River at Berkeley Plantation, in Charles City, Va.

Those who follow politics know that if there was ever a time in our history where we as Americans need to look back at our Colonial roots, this is the time. And what better way than to physically visit the place of our roots...the historic triangle in Virginia. Not only does Colonial Williamsburg offer the world's biggest living history museum, but it also provides the stunning irony that the place of our colonial beginnings...Jamestown, is only 23 miles away from the site that marked the end of our colonial attachment to Britain...Yorktown.

These three towns are linked by the Colonial Parkway, and it is a wonder in itself. You'll want to savor the minutes you spend on this American gem, as it is absolutely beautiful, completely free of any commercial development, and is made three-lanes-wide, where there's only two lanes of traffic. So folks can really enjoy the view...and you will. You'll also see the wonderful solution to linking these three towns without casting a visual blight on Colonial Williamsburg...the highway actually tunnels underneath the historic area, and was opened in 1949.

The easiest way to get to the historic triangle of Virginia from Cape Cod is to fly into Richmond and drive there. It's about



The Governor's Palace, Williamsburg

a 40 minute drive. Or you can also fly into Norfolk or Newport News-Williamsburg.

Williamsburg

Williamsburg was the capital of Virginia at a time when American freedom and independence was taking shape. Originally called the "Middle Plantation", from 1699 to 1780, Williamsburg was the political, cultural, and educational center of the American colonies. It was here that the foundations of our republic — responsible leadership, a sense of public service, self-government, and individual liberty — were nurtured under the leadership of the likes of: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, George Mason, and Peyton Randolph.

Near the end of the Revolutionary War and through the influence of Thomas Jefferson, the seat of government of Virginia was moved up the peninsula to the safer and more centrally located city of Rich-

mond. For nearly a century and a half afterward, Williamsburg was a simple, quiet college town, home of the College of William and Mary.

Today, this 18th-century community



A cannonball left by the British in the side of the Yorktown's Nelson House (see insert) catches the eye of two tourists--about three feet above their eye level.

is America's largest living history museum. From the clang of the blacksmith's anvil to the beat of the fifes and drums, it's not hard to become immersed in its 500 original and reconstructed public buildings, private homes, taverns, shops, 90 acres of gardens, and public greens. Through educational and entertaining programs, plays, presentations and vignettes, Colonial Williamsburg conveys a clear sense of citizenship and the democratic process. You can listen to patriots such as Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry.

And of course, you get a real glimpse of living during the 18th century--whether its smelling the roasting chicken, or watching chocolate simmer. Tradesmen like silversmiths, cabinet-makers, and gunsmiths make their wares in the various shops as well. And in the evenings, you can enjoy music, colonial dancing, dramas and plays at various locations throughout town.

There are some key buildings you'll want to visit in Colonial Williamsburg:

The Governor's Palace: When completed in 1722, the residence of Virginia's royal governor was considered one of the finest buildings in British North America. For many, the "Public Audiences With A Founding Father" are the highlight of their

visit to Colonial Williamsburg. These "audiences" are held in the garden behind the Governor's Palace. William Barker portrays Mr. Jefferson. Richard Schumann portrays Mr. Henry. Both are outstand-

ing in their characters. They immediately transport you back to America in the 18th century.

The Capitol: The H-shaped plan of the Capitol is an early example of an architectural design successfully devised for a specific purpose. It was here on May 15, 1776, when Virginia's legislators unanimously adopted a resolution declaring their independence from England, nearly two months before the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence in Philadelphia.

The Courthouse: This original 18th century building was the seat of local government and housed municipal and county courts until 1932.

The Magazine: This was built in 1714 to store arms. It played a dramatic role in an incident that propelled Virginia toward revolution. In the Gunpowder Incident of April 1775, British marines removed the town's powder under cover of darkness.

While in Williamsburg, be sure to see the **DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Museum**, which has a wonderful collection of antiques and colonial furniture. Many find themselves studying old maps on display that point to changes in the shape of Vir-

ginia over its history. There's also silver, textiles, and ceramics on display.

Accommodations in Colonial Williamsburg include the following:

As John D. Rockefeller Jr. undertook the restoration of Virginia's colonial capital, planners soon realized that visitors would need a place to stay overnight. The solution was the **Williamsburg Inn**, opened in 1937, and regarded as one of the world's great hotels. A meticulous renovation of the 62-room inn in 2001 added significant enhancements to the historic hotel's interior, yet retained the exquisite quality that Rockefeller envisioned. Rooms now average 500 square foot in size. The Williamsburg Inn is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Providence Hall offers more privacy plus full facilities.

Colonial Houses are 18th century accommodations located right in historic Williamsburg. These are perfect for those who wish to fully immerse themselves in (Continued on next page)



A soldier at Yorktown Victory Center



The magnificent regal lobby of the Williamsburg Inn



Richard Schumann as Patrick Henry

VIRGINIA'S HISTORIC (Continued from previous page)

the historic period. Modern conveniences are available, but you can request TVs and radios be absent, if you want a more authentic experience. There are 74 guest accommodations in 25 guest houses—some as small as one room and others as large as 16 rooms. Each is furnished with authentic period reproductions and antiques.

Williamsburg Lodge is undergoing dramatic expansion and renovation. New guest houses are now open and more will

be opening by next season. Rooms are decorated in folkart décor. The Lodge is just steps away from Golden Horseshoe Golf Club (www.goldenhorseshoegolf.com) and the historic area.

Woodlands Hotel and Suites is Colonial Williamsburg's newest, more contemporary hotel consisting of 204 guest rooms and 96 suites. Rooms have refrigerators and microwaves and are quite spacious. Continental breakfast is provided daily in the lobby.

The seasonally operated **Governor's Inn** is located only three blocks from the historic area, has 200 rooms, and provides continental breakfast daily. Of the five Colonial Williamsburg accommodations, it is the most economical.

Staying at any of Colonial Williamsburg's five hotels include the opportunity to purchase admission tickets to the historic area for a reduced price. The "length of stay" pass provides admission during your entire stay, plus 50% off all evening programs. This pass is only \$29 per adult and can be upgraded to an annual pass for a small fee.

Golfers will want to consider the many golf packages available at Colonial Williamsburg accommodations. The packages include:

Unlimited daily play (per night of stay) on our two award-winning 18-hole golf courses (one reserved round per day on the Gold Course designed by Robert



The Capitol at Williamsburg

Trent Jones Sr. or the Green Course by Rees Jones, a second round may be booked at no additional charge after completion of the first round on the same day, based on availability), cart included Unlimited daily play on our Robert Trent Jones Sr. designed nine-hole Spotswood Course, walking only.

Unlimited use of practice facility and range balls. Two nights accommodations in a Colonial Williamsburg hotel.

You can choose from the following golf/accommodation packages:

Williamsburg Inn From \$289 per person, per night

Providence Hall From \$229 per person, per night

Colonial Houses - Historic Lodging From \$189 per person, per night



A common sight in Williamsburg

Williamsburg Lodge From \$185 per person, per night

Woodlands Hotel & Suites From \$159 per person, per night

Governor's Inn From \$139 per person, per night

Call 1-800-HISTORY to book your golf package.

There are also several regular vaca-
(Continued on next page)



A recreation of Jamestown settlement



Harpist Marian Harding entertains diners at the Williamsburg Inn

VIRGINIA'S HISTORIC

(Continued from previous page)
 tion packages available as well:

America's Historic Triangle – Provides length-of-stay admission for up to seven consecutive days to Colonial Williamsburg, Jamestown Settlement, Historic Jamestown, Yorktown Victory Center and Yorktown Battlefield.

3-for-1 Vacation – Three consecutive day's lodging and admission to Colonial Williamsburg, Busch Gardens Williamsburg and Water Country USA for three consecutive days.

Busch Gardens/Water Country USA "Bounce" Package -- Two or three nights' lodging with two or three days of unlimited admission to Busch Gardens Williamsburg and Water Country USA

Williamsburg Flex Vacation -- Choose two, three or four nights' lodging includ-

ing a flexible ticket valid your entire stay that includes unlimited admission to Busch Gardens Williamsburg, Colonial Williamsburg, Jamestown Settlement, Water Country USA and Yorktown Victory Center.

Adults 62 and older can receive a \$5 discount on general admission tickets.

Christmas in Williamsburg is a very special time. Williamsburg's outdoor Christmas decorations are known worldwide for their use of natural materials that would have been available during the 18th century. These typically include pine and boxwood wreaths decorated with fresh pineapples, apples, oranges, pomegranates, nuts, pinecones, holly and other materials. More than three miles of white pine roping are hung. There's 2,550 white pine and Fraser fir wreaths, 15 truckloads of pine, holly, boxwood, magnolia and berries, and 79 cases of fruit. Christmas decorations are up from Thanksgiving through January 1st. Christmas candles flicker in the windows of colonial homes. Carolers gather on the streets. With its white lights, natural greens and fruit decorations and feasts, Christmas at Colonial Williamsburg is fabulous. 75 exhibition buildings, trade shops, taverns and offices in the historic area are decorated. Colonial Williamsburg's holiday Grand Illumination starts December 4th. For the Grand Illumination, there will be outdoor entertainment, fifes and drums, balladeers and musicians and fireworks. For more information on the event that has been a Christmas tradition since 1935, call 1-800-HISTORY. (www.colonialwilliamsburg.org)

Shopping opportunities abound in the lovely **Merchants Square**, located three blocks from the historic area, and containing some 40 shops and restaurants. (www.merchantsquare.org)

Those who have never been to **Busch Gardens/Williamsburg** and who have
 (Continued on next page)



Bacon's Castle

VIRGINIA'S HISTORIC (Continued from previous page)

been to the Busch Gardens in Tampa, are in for a huge surprise. The Williamsburg facility isn't just beautiful. According to the Amusement Park Historical Association, it is *the most beautiful Theme Park in the WORLD!!!* It has received that citation for 15 consecutive years. Also "Amusement Today" bestows annual awards to the world's top amusement parks. This year the 100-acre 17th century-theme park received several awards: Best Landscaping -- 1st place, Most Beautiful Park -- 1st place, Best Shows -- 3rd place, Best Food -- 3rd place, and Cleanest Park -- 2nd place. The park is home to more than 50 rides and attractions, including some of the world's top-rated roller coasters, ten stage shows, unique culinary experiences and world-class shops. (www.buschgardens.com)

The park's resort is the **Kingsmill Resort & Spa**, Virginia's largest golf resort (2,900 acres), which boasts 63 holes of championship golf along the James River. There are also 15 tennis courts, six new Hydro Courts, and complete spa facilities. The AAA Four-Diamond property offers 425 guest rooms and suites, a full-service marina, and six restaurants. (www.kingsmill.com)

Williamsburg Winery is another place you won't want to visit. Virginia is America's most promising emerging wine region and Williamsburg Winery is Virginia's largest winery, with an annual production of some 60,000 cases. With approximately 100 wineries in Virginia, the Williamsburg Winery accounts for almost one-quarter of all wine production in Virginia. (www.williamsburgwinery.com)

Restaurants you won't want to miss in Williamsburg include: A. Carroll's Bistro (www.a-carrolls.com), A Chef's Kitchen (www.achefskitchen.biz), the Blue Talon Bistro (www.bluetalonbistro.com), The Regency Room at the Williamsburg Inn, Chowning's Tavern, Ford's Colony (www.fordscolony.com), The Trellis Restaurant (www.thetrellis.com), and the Whitehall Restaurant (www.thewhitehall.com)

Note: Those who have already been to Williamsburg will want to watch for the upcoming television mini-series "John Adams," based on David McCullough's biography, which is to be filmed at Colonial Williamsburg by Tom Hanks' production company -- Playtone Productions -- beginning this February.

(For more information about visiting Williamsburg, go to www.visitwilliamsburg.com. For reservations at any Colonial Williamsburg hotel, call 800-447-8679.)

Jamestown

More than a decade before the Pilgrims landed in Plymouth, Capt. John Smith and his men from the Virginia Company established their settlement in Jamestown. This was the first permanent English settlement in the New World, the birthplace of Virginia, and our nation. Life wasn't easy for these men. By 1619, disease and malnutrition had taken all but 1,000 of those who had come to Virginia. In recent years, it has been discovered that these brave soles had landed in the New World during the worst

drought in 800 years. There was conflict with the local Powhatan tribes. And their "business venture" mission from the Virginia Company, distracted them from setting up a colony whose vision was long-term survival. These are the thoughts that one must contemplate in order to understand the Jamestown story. It's truly fascinating, however grim.

Today at historic Jamestown, you can watch glassblowers at work, stand in the church that witnessed the birth of America's system of representative government,



Duke of Gloucester Street, in Colonial Williamsburg

and watch Jamestown Rediscovery archaeologists uncover new information about the original settlers, including the long-hidden James Fort. According to Beverly Straube, curator of the archaeological artifacts, the Jamestown archeological site is "the richest site I've ever worked. Over a million artifacts have been recovered." These artifacts will be available for public viewing in 2006.

At Jamestown Settlement, you can board replicas of the ships *Godspeed*, *Discovery*, and *Susan Constant*, and tour gallery exhibits tracing the first century of the Virginia colony, explore a representation of the colonists' fort, and discover the world of Pocahontas in a recreated Powhatan Indian village.

In 2006 and 2007, America will commemorate the **400th Anniversary** of the settling of Jamestown. Historically, Jamestown anniversaries have been spectacular. So it won't surprise anyone that the 18-month series of national and international events being planned to commemorate the Jamestown story promise to be extraordinary. For details, go to www.americas400thanniversary.com.

Also, watch for the upcoming movie "The New World", (www.thenew-world-movie.com), which was filmed mostly in Virginia, and is to be released in January, 2006. It will star Colin Farrell as John Smith, and Christopher Plummer as Capt. Christopher Newport, and promises to create renewed awareness of the Jamestown story. (www.historicjamestowne.org)

Smithfield

Across the James River from Jamestown is the architectural gem known as the town of Smithfield, which was first colonized in 1634. Here there are 60 buildings of the Colonial, Federal and Victorian periods. The town was named one of "The Best 50 Small Southern Towns" in the book by the same name by Gerald W. Sweitzer and Kathy M. Fields. The island can be reached by heading southwest of Williamsburg and picking up the free Jamestown-Scotland car ferry across the James River. It's a 15-minute ride. (800-823-3779)

In addition, Smithfield is a culinary delight...the "ham capital of the world,"

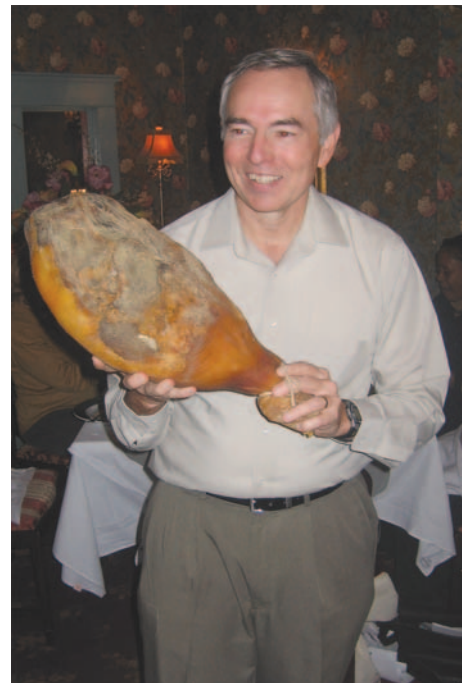
and home of Smithfield Foods, Inc. There are lovely inns and restaurants including our favorite: the **Smithfield Inn**, on Main Street, which offers fine dining in a beautifully restored colonial inn. They serve lunch and dinner. (www.smithfieldinn.com)

The surrounding Isle of Wight County is famous for peanut farming, although it is being eclipsed by increasing cotton production.

When in Smithfield, you might enjoy taking the historic district self-guided walking tour, which leaves from the Visitor Center on Main St. (800-365-9339). (www.smithfield-virginia.com)

Surry

Chippokes Plantation State Park houses one of the oldest continuously farmed plantations in the country. There's also the Jones-Stewart antebellum mansion, built in 1854, which contains an extensive collection of antiques. The plantation was donated to the Commonwealth in 1967 and made open to the public. The park also has extensive camping and cabin facilities, and is a favorite choice for those visiting the area on a budget. The park offers biking, swimming, hiking, picnicking and horse-



Larry Santure of Smithfield Company explains how their hams are made.

Victory Center (www.historyisfun.org), a museum that looks at how the events of the American Revolution affected everyday people. You can see how soldiers lived during the war and see life on a 1780's farm.

back riding. Deer hunting at Chippokes every November is very popular. (<http://tinyurl.com/c4ekn>)

Those interested in the agricultural history of the area will want to stop at the **Chippokes Farm & Forestry Museum**,

And a walk through the downtown is very pleasant. Though smaller today than during colonial times, Yorktown continues to function as an active community. Several houses and other structures are still standing and give the town much character. **The**



The Manor House at Berkeley Plantation

on Rt. 634. (757-294-3439)

Bacon's Castle, built in 1665, is shaped like a Greek Cross and is a rare surviving example of Jacobean architecture in America. It is the oldest datable brick house still standing in North America. The house was occupied during the period of Bacon's Rebellion against the rule of Royal Governor Berkeley, hence the name Bacon's Castle. Bacon's Castle is located on Route 617 in Surry County, just north of the intersection of Route 617 and Route 10. (<http://tinyurl.com/aqke3>)

Yorktown

On October 19, 1781, America's fight for independence concluded at Yorktown. Visitors today can walk the **Yorktown Battlefield** and take guided tours. In the museum you can see the actual tent that George Washington used. And don't miss a visit to the **Moore House**—possibly the most glossed over venue in American history. It was there that the terms of surrender (capitulation) at Yorktown were negotiated. It was there that the American Revolution was sealed. Also visit the **Yorktown**

Nelson House, for example, is considered to be one of the finest examples of early Georgian architecture in Virginia.

Shopping is available in Yorktown at the new **Riverwalk Landing**, right on the York River. There's also the lovely new **Riverwalk Restaurant**, which offers dining indoors or outdoors, overlooking the York River.

When leaving to the airport in Richmond, be sure to plan to spend a couple of hours at the 1,000-acre **Berkeley Plantation** in Charles City--located between Williamsburg and Richmond, on the James River, and situated on two miles of riverfront. This was one of the first great estates in the New World, and was home to the Harrison's, a family that gave us two Presidents, two Governors and a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Berkeley was the site of the first Thanksgiving prayer, on December 4, 1619, and the first place where "Taps" was performed. It was also the first place where Bourbon whiskey was distilled in America. (www.berkeley-plantation.com)

(Continued on next page)

VIRGINIA'S HISTORIC

(Continued from previous page)

plantation.com)

The upcoming commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the Jamestown settlement and the 225th anniversary of the Battle of Yorktown in 2006 is an unparalleled occasion for Americans to get in touch with their past and celebrate the great moments of their history. For more information about tourism in Virginia, you can go to the Virginia Tourism Corporation at www.vatc.org or www.virginia.org.

And thanks for traveling.