

THE SOUL OF COASTAL VIRGINIA

5 DAYS / 4 NIGHTS

Virginia Beach | Portsmouth | Norfolk | Jamestown | Hampton

Day 1 | Virginia Beach, VA

AM – After breakfast at **Mary's**, the locals' choice for over 40 years, visit the **Ferry Plantation House**. This 1830 brick home, once covered with oyster shell stucco, is a ten-room central passage plan Federal farmhouse built by slave labor. It faces the Western Branch of the Lynnhaven River as the last witness to the rich past of the site's recorded history.

Next, visit explore the **Union Kempsville High School Museum** to explore legacy of the first high school for African Americans in Princess Anne County, now known as Virginia Beach. The Princess Anne Training school opened in the 1930s and changed its name to Union Kempsville High School in 1962. Its last class graduated in 1969 with citywide integration of schools.

PM – Shop 400,000 square feet of department and specialty stores at **Landstown Commons Shopping Center** before lunch at **Smoked from Above**, where award-winning BBQ is smoked on site.

Head to the oceanfront for the afternoon. Formerly a U.S. Life-Saving Station built in 1903, The **Old Coast Guard Station** houses exhibits depicting the history of the life-saving service. Discover the life of Michael A. Healy, an African American who served as an Arctic Sea Captain and commanded The Bear from 1886-1894, saving Eskimos and fighting poachers.

Work up an appetite exploring the three-mile oceanfront Boardwalk on your own and indulge in the beach life with a fresh seafood dinner at **Catch 31**. Take a photo with **King Neptune**, the 24-ft bronze statue that stands at the gateway to 31st Street Park.

Day 2 | Portsmouth, VA

AM – Start with a unique perspective on U.S. History at the **Portsmouth Naval Shipyard** with ship models, uniforms and artifacts from Colonial to Civil War times and beyond. Stop for lunch at **Roger Brown's** for Southern hospitality.

PM – Visit the **Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church**, formerly the African Church. According to oral accounts, the church was used as a station house from which runaway slaves departed to points north. The attic was reportedly used as a lookout for the Underground Railroad. Visitors to the church can still see historic hiding places and access to the tunnel that has been bricked in since the 1860s.

Return to Virginia Beach and spend the evening shopping and dining at **Town Center**.

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Day 3 | Norfolk, VA

AM – Grab breakfast at **Pocahontas Pancake and Waffle Shop**, featured in the Food Network’s “best of” series in 2002, before heading to Norfolk.

Visit the **Black Soldiers Memorial at Elmwood Cemetery**. This Civil War monument to honor African American Union soldiers is a rare find. A column topped with a black Yankee soldier, sometimes called “Billy Yank.”

PM – Explore the naval, economic and nautical power of the sea at **Nauticus**, an interactive science and technology center. Tour the Battleship **USS Wisconsin**.

Return to Virginia Beach for the **Taste of the Market Live the Life Adventure**. Enjoy fresh-from-the-farm produce and locally made specialty foods. Spend some time shopping at **Lynnhaven Mall**, with over 180 stores, five anchors and the region’s only Dave & Buster’s. Have dinner at **Waterman’s**, a rustic Oceanfront beach cottage, and be sure to order a refreshing locals’ favorite libation, the Orange Crush.

Day 4 | Jamestown, Fort Monroe and Hampton, VA

AM – After breakfast at your hotel, head to **Jamestown Colony**, an important National Historic Landmark. A vessel carrying “20 and odd” Africans arrived at Old Point Comfort in August 1619 and is believed to have brought the first Africans to British North America as slaves.

Enjoy lunch at African American-owned **Cove Tavern** among stone fireplaces and wooden boats.

PM – Visit **Old Point Comfort at Fort Monroe**, a historic lighthouse surrounded by a stone fort where in August 1619 a ship arrived carrying free and enslaved Africans. During the Civil War, Union Major General Benjamin F. Butler first declared that runaway slaves were “contraband of war” and refused to return them to Confederate owners. Upon hearing the news, thousands of people escaping slavery sought refuge at Fort Monroe – many came to nickname it “Freedom’s Fortress.” Within the fort, the **Casemate Museum** tells the story of the fort’s role as a Union stronghold in a Confederate state, the “contrabands” and offers a black history film.

Next, head to the **Hampton University Museum**. Founded in 1868, the museum is one of the oldest African American museums in the U.S. and features over 9,000 objects including fine art, and the largest existing collection of work from artists John Biggers, Elizabeth Catlett, Jacob Lawrence, Richmond Barthe and Samella Lewis. The historic **Emancipation Oak Tree** stands near the entrance of Hampton University, the site of the first classroom for many freed men and women and the first Southern reading of President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation in 1863.

Enjoy dinner on your own at the Virginia Beach oceanfront.

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Day 4 | Virginia Beach, VA

AM – A true living history museum that rivals any other of its kind in the world, **The Military Aviation Museum** is home to meticulously restored WWI and WWII era military aircraft. Learn about the Tuskegee Airmen, the first black servicemen to serve as military aviators in the U.S. armed forces, flying with distinction during World War II. Though subject to racial discrimination both at home and abroad, the 996 pilots and more than 15,000 ground personnel who served with the all-black units would be credited with some 15,500 combat sorties and earn over 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses for their achievements. The highly publicized successes of the Tuskegee Airmen helped pave the way for the eventual integration of the U.S. armed forces under President Harry Truman in 1948.

