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America's Spark of Independence Still Shines in the Always Revolutionary Richmond Region

RICHMOND, Va. (January 29, 2026) — This year, travelers are invited to experience a destination where revolutionary ideas aren't just part of history—they're happening every day.

The Richmond Region in Virginia is central to America's story. Here, Patrick Henry's fiery "Give me liberty or give me death!" speech sparked the fight for independence and secured the region's place at the forefront of change. In 2026, that legacy takes center stage as the nation marks 250 years of independence, with a powerful lineup of exhibitions and events unfolding across the Richmond Region.

Richmond Region Tourism is highlighting this legacy through its *Always Revolutionary* campaign, which invites travelers to explore the people, places and ideas that have shaped and continue to define the region.

"There's never been a better time to visit the Richmond Region," said Katherine O'Donnell, President & CEO of Richmond Region Tourism. "In 2026, our localities are bringing history to life through stories that reflect the diverse people, cultures and communities who have shaped this region, while also showcasing the innovative *Always Revolutionary* spirit that continues to define us today."

A Milestone Year for History and Heritage

Visitors can take part in America's founding story at sites across the Richmond Region. They can stand where Patrick Henry delivered his legendary call for liberty at [Historic St. John's Church](#), explore Patrick Henry's only surviving home at [Scotchtown](#), and tour the [Virginia State Capitol](#), designed by Thomas Jefferson. At [The Valentine First Freedom Center](#), visitors can explore the lasting impact of the Statute for Religious Freedom, one of Virginia's most influential contributions to democratic ideals.

Between Richmond, which became Virginia's capital during the Revolutionary War, and Williamsburg, the colony's earlier capital, New Kent County adds some of the region's most significant connections to the Revolutionary story. Visitors can explore the grounds of [St. Peter's Parish Church](#), rumored to be the wedding site of George and Martha Washington, and stay overnight at the historic [New Kent Ordinary](#), one of America's oldest roadside taverns. Nearby, the [James Lafayette Monument](#) honors an enslaved man who became a key American spy during the Revolutionary War.

History continues in places shaped directly by the war itself, including [Colonial Heights](#), named for the colonial forces stationed along the Appomattox River during the fight for independence.

In Chesterfield County, [Henricus Historical Park](#) brings 1611 to life at the second successful English settlement in the New World, where early foundations of American society were formed along the James River.

The Richmond Region also illuminates the places and people often left out of traditional narratives. Opening April 19, the restored [Skipwith–Roper Cottage](#) in Richmond’s Jackson Ward will honor Abraham Peyton Skipwith, the first known Black homeowner in the neighborhood, circa 1793.

That broader approach to history also includes new efforts to examine the region’s role in slavery and its lasting impact. Opening April 9, the [Shockoe Institute’s](#) *Expanding Freedom* exhibit at Main Street Station will provide new context for understanding Richmond’s role in the domestic slave trade and its enduring legacy, expanding how the region’s history is examined and understood.

The [Always Revolutionary digital trail](#) guides visitors to key historic sites across the Richmond Region, highlighting the places where events unfolded and ideas took root during the fight for independence.

2026 Commemorations: Celebrating 250 Years of Independence

Throughout the year, visitors can experience landmark exhibitions and events tied to America’s 250th anniversary. [Richmond Salfest](#) (June 12–14) welcomes international tall ships to the James River for a free, festival-style weekend of performances and history.

At the [Virginia Museum of History & Culture](#), *Revolutionary Allies* (March 7–Nov. 1) and *We the People* (March 21–Sept. 7) explore the people and partnerships that shaped the nation. The museum will also host *IllumiNATION* (June 25–28), a large-scale outdoor sound and projection show illuminating America’s 250-year story across its block-long façade.

At the [Virginia Museum of Fine Arts](#), exhibitions and outreach programs in 2026 will examine the American Revolution and its ideals through art, including a gallery exhibition focused on George Washington and artistic interpretations of the Revolution, as well as a statewide mobile exhibition exploring themes of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness through works from the museum’s permanent collection.

[Historic St. John’s Church](#) continues its iconic “Liberty or Death” reenactments on summer Sundays, while Patrick Henry’s [Scotchtown](#) hosts the Governor Celebration on Sept. 19. At [The Valentine](#), *Dissent! Liberty & Loyalty in Early Richmond* (Feb. 26–Jan. 31, 2027) examines the tensions of a young nation. [The Branch Museum of Design](#) presents *Americana* (opening July 2), exploring the symbols and stories that have shaped American identity.

Together, these events are part of a broader slate of commemorations unfolding throughout 2026 as the Richmond Region marks America’s 250th anniversary.

Revolutionary Voices and Revolutionary Ideas

The Richmond Region's story is defined not only by pivotal moments, but by the people whose voices challenged convention and expanded opportunity. Visitors can explore the legacy of poet Edgar Allan Poe at the [Poe Museum](#), walk in the footsteps of Maggie Lena Walker at the [Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site](#), and learn about figures such as John Marshall, Henry "Box" Brown, and Virginia Randolph.

Revolutionary ideas took form here in ways that transformed daily life, from the world's first successful electric streetcar system, introduced in Richmond in 1888, to student-led civil rights protests that helped drive social change.

That tradition of innovation continues today. Introduced in 2025 at [Kings Dominion](#) amusement park, Rapterra, the world's tallest and longest launched wing coaster, illustrates how revolutionary ideas in engineering and design continue to emerge in the Richmond Region.

Reinvention is also visible at the neighborhood level. Once an industrial district, [Scott's Addition](#) has transformed into one of the region's most dynamic areas, known for its mix of breweries, restaurants, creative businesses and residential development.

Revolutionary Spirit, Modern Momentum

In 2026, the Richmond Region's revolutionary spirit extends well beyond its historic sites. [CarMax Park](#), the new home of the Richmond Flying Squirrels, opens April 7 and anchors a new era of baseball and entertainment in the Diamond District. A longtime tradition also reaches a milestone as [Richmond Raceway](#) celebrates its 80th anniversary, honoring decades of racing history at one of America's premier short tracks.

The region's momentum is driven by its people and neighborhoods. Richmond's legacy of Black business excellence, rooted in [Jackson Ward](#), remains a defining force. That creativity is especially visible in the region's ever-evolving food scene, including national recognition for chefs such as Leah Branch of The Roosevelt, a recent James Beard Award nominee.

Several beloved attractions will debut major enhancements in 2026. [Maymont](#) celebrates its 100th anniversary as a public park with the spring reopening of its mansion and expanded Virginia Wildlife Trail. [Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden](#) will unveil its reimagined Conservatory in spring 2026, doubling the iconic domed structure in size, adding four distinct climate zones, and introducing a permanent butterfly exhibit. Later in the year, [Brown's Island](#) will debut a revitalized riverfront.

Ready to Visit?

Whether drawn by the nation's founding story, inspired by voices of change, or energized by what's new, 2026 is the moment to experience the Richmond Region. Together, the Richmond Region's people and places add depth to Virginia's broader [VA250 commemoration](#). With history that still resonates and a future shaped by bold ideas, this is a place that's *Always Revolutionary*.

Start planning a trip at [VisitRichmondVA.com](#).

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About the Richmond Region

Seven destinations, each with their own personality and flavor, make up the eclectic Richmond Region. From urban bustle to small town charm, from river life to nightlife, a visit to RVA is as diverse as the people you'll meet along the way. The Town of Ashland, Chesterfield County, Colonial Heights, Hanover County, Henrico County, New Kent County and the City of Richmond warmly welcome you for an "Only in Richmond" experience. The Richmond Region celebrates diversity, equity, and inclusion through community-driven initiatives at the heart of everything we do.

About Richmond Region Tourism

Richmond Region Tourism, the official destination marketing and tourism organization for the Richmond Region, is a private, not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting the Region to meeting, convention and sports event planners, tour operators and leisure travelers. More than 7 million people visit the Richmond Region annually, contributing more than \$2 billion to the local economy. Tourism generates nearly 22,000 jobs in the Richmond Region.