



Echoes of Virginia: A Journey Through History, Art & Virginia's Small Towns

Day 1:

Guests will be welcomed into the warm, inviting ambiance of **Graze on Main**, where an elegantly prepared lunch showcases the region's flavors and hospitality. As the group savors their elevated Southern cuisine, they will enjoy a captivating **live interpretation of Edith Bolling Wilson**. Through graceful storytelling and period-inspired presence, the First Lady's voice comes to life, offering intimate glimpses into her legacy, her resilience, and her time in the White House. The result is a refined blend of culinary delight and living history—an experience that lingers long after the final bite.



Continuing to learn about this First Lady's fascinating life, the group will then visit the **Edith Bolling Wilson Birthplace Museum**. Housed in the very home Edith was born inside, the museum offers an engaging journey into the early life of Edith Bolling Wilson, one of the nation's most forward-thinking First Ladies. Nestled in the heart of Wytheville, this historical home invites guests to explore period rooms, personal artifacts, and stories that reveal her upbringing and lasting influence on American history. Learn the true story of Woodrow's courtship of Edith, and why some refer to her as the "First Female President".

Spending the rest of the afternoon exploring **Downtown Wytheville**, the group can unwind at their own pace while discovering the town's distinctive charm, and rich history. Stroll along tree-lined streets dotted with locally owned boutiques, galleries, and inviting cafés, or pause to admire colorful murals and historic architecture that tell the story of the community. Guests may choose to explore cultural gems like the **Thomas J. Boyd Museum** or simply relax on a shaded bench, soaking in the welcoming atmosphere. It's a perfect balance of leisure and discovery, allowing each visitor to create their own memorable experience.



After checking in at the hotel to rest and refresh, a group tour of the historic **Millwald Theatre** awaits! Get a behind-the-scenes glimpse into one of Wytheville's most treasured cultural landmarks, as guests are

guided through the beautifully restored space, where stories of performances past and present bring the theater's legacy to life. The experience culminates in an unforgettable catered dinner served directly on stage, allowing guests to dine beneath the glow of the stage lights—an elegant and immersive evening where history, artistry, and hospitality take center stage.

Overnight in Wytheville

Day 2:



Depart for Blacksburg

Guests will arrive in the heart of **Downtown Blacksburg**, where they can enjoy **lunch on their own** while exploring the district's vibrant mix of local restaurants, cafés, and specialty shops. From elevated Southern fare and cozy bakeries to college-town favorites, downtown offers a welcoming atmosphere with options for every palate and pace. Visitors may also enjoy browsing boutiques, public art, and the charming streetscape surrounding the historic downtown district.

Following lunch, the group will gather at the historic **Alexander Black House & Cultural Center** for a guided visit through one of Blacksburg's most treasured historic homes. Guests will learn about the region's early history, architecture, and community development through engaging exhibits and storytelling. The experience continues with the Blacksburg Museum & Cultural Foundation's "16 Squares" walking tour, offering a leisurely, guided exploration of downtown's rich history, notable landmarks, and fascinating local stories. Designed with accessibility and comfort in mind, the tour provides an enjoyable pace for active adults and multi-generational travelers alike.



After an afternoon of discovery, guests will travel to **The Inn at Virginia Tech** and Skelton Conference Center to check in, relax, and refresh before dinner. Nestled on the edge of the Virginia Tech campus, the elegant property combines Appalachian hospitality with modern comfort and scenic mountain views. Guests may choose to unwind in their rooms, explore the hotel grounds, or enjoy the welcoming atmosphere of the lobby and outdoor spaces.

The evening concludes with a memorable dinner at **The Loyal**, the Inn at Virginia Tech's newly renovated restaurant

and bar. Featuring a refined yet approachable menu inspired by regional flavors and seasonal ingredients, The Loyal offers a warm and sophisticated dining experience perfect for groups. Guests will enjoy exceptional hospitality while gathering together to reflect on the day's experiences in Blacksburg.



Day 3:

Guests will begin the morning in **Historic Downtown Christiansburg**, where small-town charm and local history come together along Main Street. Visitors may explore the fascinating exhibits at Montgomery Museum of Art & History, which showcases regional history, culture, and artifacts connected to Montgomery County and Southwest Virginia.

For those who enjoy browsing and shopping, Downtown Christiansburg offers a delightful

selection of antique stores, specialty shops, and locally owned boutiques. Guests may spend time exploring Antiques on Main or visit The Chandlerie, a thoughtfully curated shop featuring hand-poured candles, gourmet foods, home décor, kitchenware, books, and unique gifts perfect for bringing home a piece of the region. The relaxed pace and walkable downtown make for an enjoyable and accessible morning experience for travelers of all ages.

Travel north through Virginia's scenic Shenandoah Valley en route to Harrisonburg, arriving in time for lunch and the continuation of their regional journey. Harrisonburg is Virginia's first **Culinary District** and offers a variety of both locally owned and nationally recognized restaurants. Many of the area's melting pot of restaurants also bring farm-to-table philosophy to life, creating gourmet dishes from locally sourced ingredients from vendors throughout the Shenandoah Valley.



Visit the **Hardesty Higgins House**. The Hardesty-Higgins House includes an official Virginia Visitor Center which is located within an 1840's house. Home to the town's first mayor, Isaac Hardesty, this house was used briefly as headquarters for Union Gen. Nathaniel Banks as he tried to corner Stonewall Jackson in 1862. Located within the Hardesty-Higgins House, visitors will find The Valley Turnpike Museum, the Harrisonburg Rockingham Civil War Orientation Center, Rocktown Gift Shoppe and the Heritage Bakery, owned by a mother and daughter duo, the daughter Isabelle is there most days.

The Valley Turnpike Museum is located inside the historic Hardesty-Higgins House (circa 1848). The museum is located on the historic road for which it was named, now known as U.S. Route 11.

The museum explores the history of the road, from its beginning as a buffalo path to Stonewall Jackson's famous Valley Campaign, to the toll road era and the development of the interstate highway system. *Free admission.*

The **Harrisonburg Rockingham Civil War Orientation Center** is the third in a series of centers located throughout the eight-county National Historic District in the legendary Shenandoah Valley. Located in the

historic Hardesty-Higgins House. From Stonewall Jackson's 1862 Valley Campaign to Union Gen. Philip Sheridan's final destruction of the Valley in 1864, the central Shenandoah Valley's compelling Civil War history is available to visitors at the Harrisonburg Rockingham Civil War Orientation Center. Harrisonburg is within the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District.



Visit OASIS Fine Art & Craft for an artist demonstration. For over 25 years, Oasis has offered a place for local artists to display and sell their work. Today OASIS is an artist's co-op selling work from 35 local artisans including stained glass, paintings, mixed media, photography, fabric art. Each month a First Friday show is held to feature the work of one artist for the month. The artist in residence may be seen working on their craft on the second floor.

Enjoy a stroll through Downtown Harrisonburg on a self-guided art tour. Harrisonburg is home to over two dozen public art sculptures and murals. Find beautiful art treasures through the

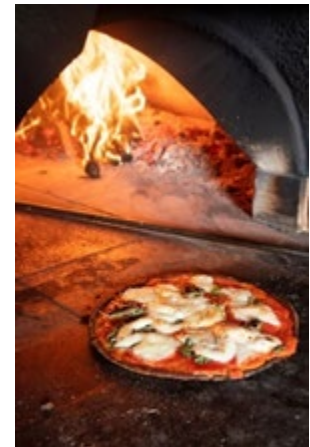
Self-Guided Art Tour. Art ranges from a Virginia is For Lovers LOVEWorks sign to bronze life-sized ducklings hidden throughout the downtown area.



Arrive and check in at the **Hotel Madison & Shenandoah Valley Conference Center**, a modern boutique hotel within walking distance of downtown Harrisonburg. With 230 guest rooms and 21,000 square feet of full-service meeting space. The hotel offers small town hospitality with urban amenities. On the main level enjoy a popular restaurant and coffee shop frequented by students from the adjacent James Madison University campus.

For dinner stop at Bella Luna Wood Fired Pizza. The centerpiece of the restaurant—a massive wood-fired oven—allows guests to

watch as their pizzas are created and baked in the 900-degree oven. In addition to the smoky, crispy Neopolitan-style pizzas, diners enjoy rustic and refined hand-made pastas, fresh seasonal salads and sandwiches, and delectable desserts. The bar boasts a wide selection of local microbrews and hard ciders on tap, hand-selected wines and fantastic cocktails.



After dinner head across the street after dinner for fresh gelato from Bella Gelato. The gelato is made with local milk from local Mount Crawford Creamery.

Day 4:



Start your day on the **Harrisonburg Coffee Trail** where delicious treats meet aromatic brews. One popular option, Enjoy **breakfast at Broach Porch Cafe** (47 Court Sq. open 7 a.m. – 5 p.m.) This recently expanded coffee shop and restaurant has excellent views of Harrisonburg's iconic courthouse from their patio seating.

Take a Living History Tour of the **Brethren & Mennonite Heritage Center**. Experience a guided tour of the Center, (possibly interact with docents in period dress providing historical demonstrations). Learn about the early settlers to the Shenandoah Valley; particularly Brethren and Mennonite Culture and History. Tour carefully preserved buildings from the 1700s, 1800s and 1900s including a shoemaker shop, hand-hewn log house, schoolhouse and Civil War era farmhouse.



Shenandoah County - Dreamers Always Welcome.

Travel to Shenandoah County to enjoy lunch at **Southern Kitchen** in the **Historic Town of New Market** that is Known for their fried chicken, house-made meatloaf, green beans and collards, peanut soup, and homemade pies, some with a sky high meringue that is heavenly. Southern Kitchen serves up a little slice of Southern Hospitality in this nostalgic old diner setting.



Spend the afternoon visiting Virginia's most unique and beautiful underground wonder at **Shenandoah Caverns!** The only Virginia caverns with elevator service! Since 1922, Shenandoah Caverns has been a premier tourist destination in Virginia's beautiful Shenandoah Valley. Visitors from around the world marvel at our breathtaking natural wonders, incredible geology and extraordinary crystalline formations found 200 feet below ground level. See the famous "Breakfast Bacon" formations so unusual that they appeared in National Geographic magazine Be amazed at the size of our soaring Long View Hall Look for formations like Capitol Dome, Rainbow Lake and

Beyond the Veil View the extraordinary crystalline formations of Diamond Cascade Welcome a "cave kiss" that brings good luck.

After the Caverns, travel to a nearby attraction peaking interest in visitors of all ages, come join the celebration at **American Celebration on Parade!** See their unique collection of stunning parade floats, props, and stage settings from famous presidential inaugurals. Over 20 floats from the Rose and Thanksgiving Day Parade are on display.



Ready for a tasty afternoon pick me up? **Route 11 Potato Chips** is one of America's premiere specialty chip producers. Come and try the best chips on the planet!

Route 11 Potato Chips is open to the public Monday-Saturdays. There are no walk-through tours of the facility,

but there is an amazing fry-viewing experience. Route 11 Chips hates disappointing folks, so if you're coming specifically to fry-view, call 800-249-SPUD ahead and make sure they are in production. At Route 11, they consider themselves traditionalists when it comes to cooking potato chips. They cook in small batches with high quality ingredients to make an exceptional chip with a good crunch, nice golden color and plenty of curl bursting with flavor.

Journey to the **Historic Edinburg Mill!** Located in the historic Edinburg Mill, which was originally constructed in 1848. The building is famous for being one of the few mills in the Shenandoah Valley that was not burned by Sheridan during the Civil War. The three floor museum has a variety of exhibits featuring life throughout the Shenandoah Valley including exhibits on the Civil War, the nation's first Civilian Conservation Camp, Transportation, an extensive Red Cross exhibit and many other relics. Also on-site is a gift shop like no other and a State certified Visitor Center open 7 days a week. Stop at the ground floor for **Heritage Mill Wines 1848** that offering a large selection of National and International wines, Virginia wine, Craft beer, crackers, cheeses, hot sauce, nuts, and a variety of snacks.



Continuing a historic visit at the Edinburg Mill, enjoy dinner at the **Edinburg Mill Restaurant** set in the 1848 charm of its limestone walls and low beam ceilings. In a cozy and intimate atmosphere, you'll find a menu that takes simple offerings and elevates them to extraordinary heights. Some local favorites include their fried oysters, popular grilled steak dinners, the enormous chef salad, and their cozy southern-style side dishes.

Journey to the nearby Town of Woodstock to rest your head at the award winning **Holiday Inn Express** hotel in Woodstock, Virginia, offering some of the newest accommodations and one of the most convenient locations of any Shenandoah Valley hotel. This hotel is located just off I-81, providing business travelers with easy access to **Downtown Woodstock**. Leisure travelers staying in our Woodstock, VA, hotel will find all the majesty of the Shenandoah Valley at their fingertips.



Day 5:

A unique and lovely destination for gardening enthusiasts- discover what is in bloom at the **Woodstock Gardens** garden center and enjoy breakfast at the **Woodstock Garden Cafe** that offers fresh, locally sourced food with a "go green" philosophy.

Indulge in a little shopping therapy in Downtown Strasburg. If you're shopping for that perfect vintage treasure, wander into the

impressively large Strasburg Emporium or the quaint Clementine Vintage. For a tasty treat, pop into Sammy Lou's Bake Shop for the most indulgent cookies and cheesecake or Cakes By Ashton for elevated 100% nut free/vegan bakery items. Make sure to take in Strasburg's beautiful murals while you shop.

Arrive to Loudoun County and enjoy **lunch on own** in **historic Middleburg**, capital of horse and hunt country. Suggestions include King Street Oyster Bar on Washington Street (try the crab cakes) and Thaverse around the corner, which is famous for its lime and chili salmon. Fortify yourself with a post-lunch espresso at the aptly named Cuppa Giddy Up back on Washington Street. (90 minutes)





Take a docent-led tour at the **National Sporting Library and Museum**. Established in 1954, this venerable museum and library on the eastern edge of town is the nation's leading resource on equestrian and outdoor pursuits – angling, shooting, foxhunting, flat racing and polo. It has a world-class research library, an equine-themed fine art gallery and a magnificent seven-foot bronze sculpture of Virginia-bred 1993 Kentucky Derby winner Sea Hero in the courtyard. (90 minutes)

After, make your way to **Zephaniah Farm Vineyard**- a family-owned winery on a historic 1819 farm off Route 15 where the owners grow 14 different grape varietals. Taste some of the award-winning vintages in the timber barn tasting room. The 2020 Friendship Red Blend and the 2020 Adeline are particular stand outs winning medals at the VA Governor's Cup in 2024. (2 hours)



Enjoy dinner at **Clyde's Willow Creek Farm**. Relax at this popular farm-to-table restaurant in eastern Loudoun. Featuring an impressive array of American folk art, Audubon prints and antique carriages and sleighs, Clyde's Willow Creek Farm is not only a restaurant, but an attraction. The historic building houses seven dining rooms and four bars plus a gorgeous outdoor dining area. It is also the sister restaurant to the famous Old Ebbitt Grill in Washington, DC. (90 minutes)

Check-in to local Loudoun County hotel for the evening

Day 6:



Tour **Dodona Manor**, the historic home turned museum of statesman General George C. Marshall, author of the Marshall Plan that rescued Europe after World War II. Walk the rooms of the 19th Century Greek Revival mansion where he and his wife worked, dined and entertained visiting dignitaries. (2 hours)

Enjoy **lunch on your own** in historic downtown Leesburg, where a variety of dining options await. For small plates, consider **The Wine Kitchen** on King Street or **Tuscarora Mill** and **Fire Works Wood Fired Pizza** in the Market Station precinct on Harrison Street. If you're in the mood for lighter fare, **Puccio's**, a beloved local deli, serves classic Italian sandwiches and signature salads. For cultural immersion, try **La Taqueria**, **Thai Pan** or **Señor Ramón's**. Other standouts include the cozy **Rebellion Whiskey Bar**, the charming **SideBar** and **Buford's Biscuits** for a Southern twist. (90 minutes)

Join a **walking tour of public art** in Leesburg. From sculptures, murals and statues the tour includes not only the stories behind the art but some history of the town. (60 minutes)

Savor the views and tastes at **Walsh Family Wine**. Dashing couple Nate and Sarah Walsh lease prime vineyards from farms throughout Loudoun, blend their classy vintages at this elegant tasting room in Hillsboro and pay tribute to the source farm on the labels of the bottles. What to try? The velvet smooth 2017 Russ Mountain Merlot and the crisp and bright 2019 Bethany Ridge Sauvignon Blanc, named for nearby ranges. (90min.-2hours)



Contact for more information:

Samantha Livesay

Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Montgomery County Regional Tourism
Samantha@gotomonva.com

Jennifer Bell

Harrisonburg Tourism
Jennifer.bell@harrisonburgva.gov

Brittany Clem-Hott

Shenandoah County Tourism -
bclem-hott@shenandoahcountyva.us

Hannah Oliver

Visit Loudoun
Oliver@visitloudoun.org

Tina Lonardo-Henley

Visit Wytheville
tina.henley@wytheville.org