

WASHINGTON, DC
MARYLAND
VIRGINIA
CAPITAL REGION USA

New Reasons to Visit the Capital Region in 2012

Bursting with fresh new attractions, events and exhibits see what the Capital Region has to offer in 2012. Following is a sampling of the new and notable in the Capital Region USA.

Virginia:

Attractions

[Fort Monroe National Monument](#) (Hampton) - The largest stone fort ever built in America became a part of the National Park System on November 1, 2011, after more than 150 years as an active army post. During the Civil War the fort became a place of refuge for escaping slaves and was known as “Freedom’s Fortress.” Confederate president Jefferson Davis was imprisoned in one of the casemates after his arrest on treason charges. Tree-lined avenues with brick officer’s residences reflect the elegance of military brass.

[Museum of the Confederacy](#) (Appomattox) - Tracing its roots to 1896, the Museum and White House of the Confederacy in Richmond today welcomes more than 70,000 visitors annually. The 150th Anniversary of the Civil War and Emancipation has brought a new opportunity for the museum to expand its presence and reach a greater audience when it opens the doors on a second facility in Appomattox in Spring 2012. The \$7.5 million museum, featuring 5,000 square feet of exhibit space, will focus on events surrounding the end of the Civil War, the surrender at Appomattox and the reunification of the country. Artifacts associated with those events will be moved to the Appomattox site including the uniform and sword Robert E. Lee wore when he surrendered his army to Ulysses S. Grant.



[Williamsburg Pottery](#) (Williamsburg) - Since 1938 the Williamsburg Pottery has been a shopping destination for those looking for a wide variety of items at bargain prices. On April 5, 2012, “the pottery” will be reborn with a half-mile of new buildings, more than 160,000 square feet of shopping space and a new cafe, restaurant and bakery. The new facility will emerge as a sophisticated yet casual experience that combines the charm and tradition of a European market with the conveniences and sensory experiences of 21st- century shopping.

[Kings Dominion](#) (Richmond) introduces two new attractions for 2012. Windseeker features a 301-foot-tall tower that will spin riders nearly 30 stories above ground. Dinosaurs Alive! will transport guests back in time to periods between 245 million and 65 million years ago. Thirty six life-sized dinosaurs are on display in a spectacular outdoor Jurassic forest setting.

[Virginia Sesquicentennial Winery Passport](#) (statewide) The Virginia Wine Board has unveiled a guide to 23 Virginia wineries with special labels commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War and the 42 battlefields located near them. Virginia is the fifth largest wine producing state in the United States, and one of the 10 best wine travel destinations for 2012 according to *Wine Enthusiast Magazine*.



Exhibits

[National Air & Space Museum: Space Shuttle Discovery](#) (Chantilly) - Virginia will welcome the legendary Space Shuttle Discovery, the longest-serving orbiter in the NASA space shuttle fleet in Spring 2012 at the National Air and Space Museum Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center. Discovery replaces the Space Shuttle Enterprise, which has been seen by nearly nine million visitors since the center opened in 2003 and will be moved to a new home. Among its 39 missions Discovery was flown by the first African- American commander and first female commander in NASA history and was also the shuttle on which Sen. John Glenn flew in 1998 at age 77.

[Jamestown Settlement: 17th Century Exhibition](#) (Williamsburg) - The 17th Century: Gateway to the Modern World special exhibition, developed by the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in cooperation with the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation, explores transition from the "old" world to a new globally connected world. November 16, 2011 August 15, 2012.

[Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art: Andy Warhol Portraits](#) (Virginia Beach) - Andy Warhol transcended art and became a phenomenon in the 1970s. The MOCA will host an exhibition of the reclusive artist's portraits May 24 August 19, 2012. Included will be studies in screen prints, drawings, paintings, Polaroid photography and vintage family photos.

Events

[Op Sail 2012](#) (Hampton Roads) - Beautiful masted ships return to Hampton Roads June 6 through 12, 2012. More than 20 ships from around the world join United States Navy ships and local vessels in a salute to the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812. Look for living history exhibits, dinner cruises and special programs. June 6-12, 2012. The Virginia Beach Patriotic Festival, featuring performances by the Blue Angels, kicks things off June 1-3.

Maryland:

Attractions

[New Restaurants by "Top Chef"](#) (Frederick and Chevy Chase) - Chef Bryan Voltaggio ("Top Chef") has two restaurants in the works, both slated to open in 2012. North Market Kitchen is slated for his hometown of Frederick, MD. The new 90-seat restaurant will be a modern take on the classic American diner, Voltaggio said, with an industrial, stainless steel look and food to match. Favorites including meatloaf and french fries will be brought up-to-date with new spices and combinations. The other restaurant, as yet unnamed, will be a bistro/steakhouse hybrid in the Chevy Chase Pavilion, a shopping mecca, also home to Embassy Suites. The proposed restaurant will have 220-seats and an open kitchen.



Photo by Graham Cullen

Former Nissan Dealership to house Voltaggio's latest restaurant in Frederick.

[Maryland Live! Casino](#) (Anne Arundel County) - The first phase of the largest gaming facility in Maryland is scheduled to open June 2012 and will feature 4,750 slot and electric table games, including black jack, roulette, craps and poker. The second phase of construction will include several upscale dining establishments and an intimate live music venue and is slated for completion by October 2012.

[Six Flags America](#) (Baltimore) - A new coaster, Apocalypse – The Last Stand, will descend upon the Maryland theme park on Friday, May 25, 2012. Riders will stand-up four-wide as they ascend an apex of 100-feet before hurtling through hairpin turns and incredible inversions at 55 miles per hour around the 2,900 feet of steel track.

[Washington County Museum of Fine Arts](#) (Hagerstown) - In conjunction with the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War and Emancipation commemoration, an extensive exhibit featuring artifacts and works of art of various media, examining themes of combat, military life, medicine, related history of African Americans, women and children, music and literature will open June 2012.

[Monocacy National Battlefield Visitor Center](#) (Frederick) - A special exhibit of the original “Lost Orders” #191, on loan from the Library of Congress, will be on display from August through October 2012. *Robert E. Lee issued Special Order 191. A copy of the order having been lost was recovered by Union soldiers on Monocacy’s Best Farm. The order provided the Union Army with valuable information concerning the Army of Northern Virginia’s movements and campaign plans.*

Events

[Star-Spangled Sailabration](#) (Baltimore) - *Star-Spangled 200* is a three-year state-wide commemoration that will kick off with an international maritime festival in June 2012. Dozens of Navy ships and tall ships from the U.S. and international navies are expected to line Baltimore’s harbor during the week, bringing thousands of sailors to the region. Additional activities will include free on-board public tours of ships, official visits by international dignitaries and Navy leadership, fireworks, crew sporting competitions, community service projects, living history displays, educational activities, a new symphonic work, a public art project, and much more.

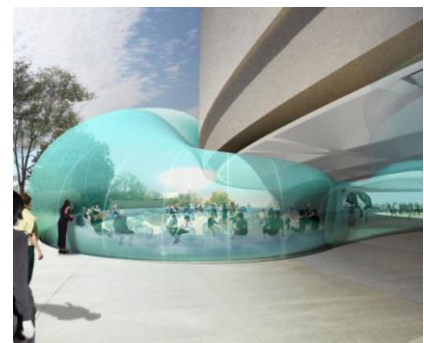
Washington, DC:

Attractions

[Ford’s Theatre Center for Education and Leadership](#) - A multimillion-dollar expansion will open February 2012. Visitors will have the opportunity to learn more about Abraham Lincoln’s life, his presidency, and its lasting effect on the US. A state-of-the-art Center for Education and Leadership will be across the street from the Theater and six buildings will be linked to create a modern museum.

[The Capella Georgetown](#) - Capella Hotels and Resorts, an ultra-upscale hotel development company founded by a former Ritz-Carlton executive, opens a property in Georgetown in 2012. The Capella Georgetown will include 48 rooms and suites, a premium restaurant and lounge, as well as a rooftop pool, bar and spa. Occupying a prime location in Washington, D.C.’s exclusive Georgetown district, the hotel will offer views of the Watergate, Kennedy Center and Potomac River. The hotel will be housed in an existing five-story, free-standing commercial building on 31st Street bordering the historic C&O Canal, one block from the upscale shops and restaurants of Wisconsin Avenue and M Streets.

[Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden Inflatable Addition](#) - An eye-catching project aimed to affirm its commitment to enhancing public engagement with contemporary art, is being planned with the New York-based architecture firm Diller Scofidio + Renfro (known for Manhattan’s “High Line”). A 145-ft tall structure that will be inflated within in the Hirshhorn’s courtyard and balloon through the top of the building will be visible from all sides of the museum and transform its public space into a seasonal auditorium, café and meeting place filled with activity. The first installation of the seasonal pavilion is slated to open autumn of 2012.



[The Newseum](#) - The HP New Media Gallery will explore cutting-edge advancements in the media landscape and the evolving role of new technologies in journalism. Included in the gallery will be touch-screen walls that allow visitors to see the news in real time and interact with newsfeeds. The gallery is expected to open in early 2012.

Events

[Cherry Blossom Festival](#) - 2012 marks the 100th anniversary of the gift of 3,000 cherry blossom trees from Tokyo, Japan. The centennial anniversary of these beautiful trees will be celebrated with 5-weeks of spectacular events Spring, 2012.

[Smithsonian American Art Museum: *The Art of the Video Game*](#), March 16 – September 30, 2012 - One of the first exhibits to examine the 40-year old evolution of video games as an artistic medium with an emphasis on striking visual effects and creative use of new technologies. The exhibition will feature some of the most influential artists and designers of games like Pac-Man and Myst.

[National Gallery of Art: *Joan Miró: The Ladder of Escape*](#), May 6– August 12, 2012 - Joan Miró's (1893–1983) affection for his native Catalonia, Spain and his passionate response to the Spanish Civil War will be examined in the first exhibition of the artist's work at the National Gallery of Art. The show will bring together some 80 paintings, works on paper, and sculptures drawn from his entire career. The National Gallery is its only North American venue. (Free) Additionally: The James Beard Award-winning Spanish-born chef José Andrés will create a unique menu and buffet inspired by Catalonia for the duration of the exhibit at the Gallery's Garden Café.

[The Textile Museum: *Woven Treasures of Japan's Tawaraya Workshop*](#), March 23- August 12, 2012 - Scheduled to coincide with the 2012 National Cherry Blossom Festival (March 20-April 27), this exhibition illuminates the skill and graphical genius of matchless kimonos, screens and opulent silks created by the Tawaraya workshop in Kyoto, a family business that has been producing materials for the royal court for 500 years.

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