



Virginia Beach:

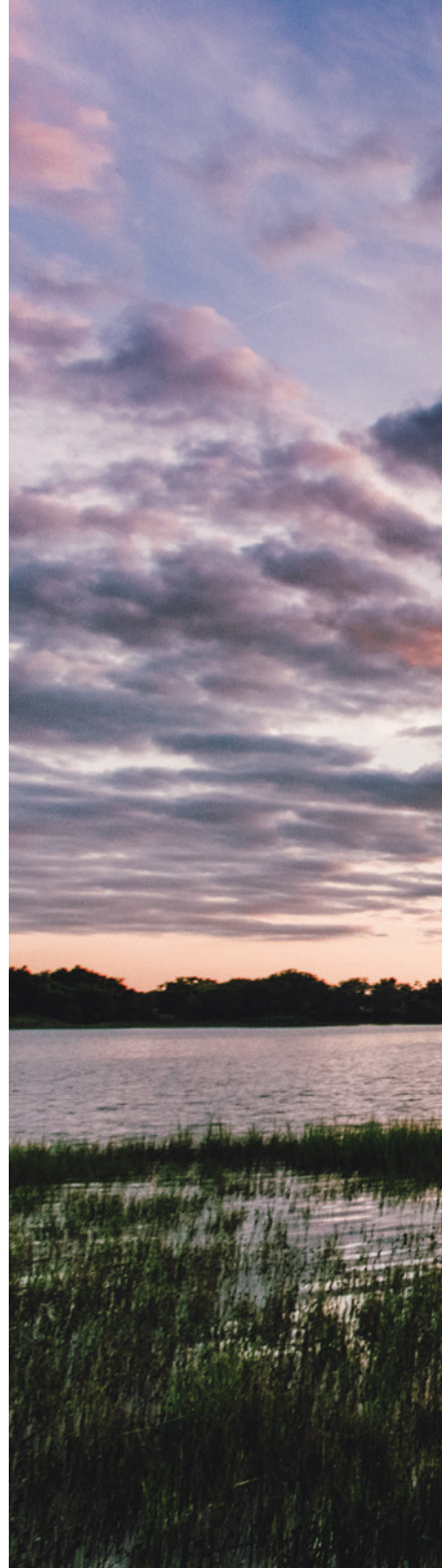
A COASTAL CITY

THIS IS THE LIFE.

Where you wake up early because you want to, just to be the first in line at the edge of the Earth, putting everything behind you. The roar of the surf echoes in applause, welcoming you as the sun kisses your forehead. You've arrived.

Where time seems to stop so you can finally catch up – not because you're moving too slow but because this moment is worth the wait. The world floats by with the clouds and the gulls on the ocean breeze. Freedom spirals and dances in the salty air, calling you to remember all the things that truly matter: the simple things, beautiful things and spontaneous things. Nothing to stop you from immersing yourself in every experience you set out to capture.

Here, the days pass like waves; no two are the same – but each one celebrated like the greatest that has ever lived. Tales of amazing adventures, of love lost and found, of victory and defeat. A collection of moments, like grains of sand stirring around your feet – an age-old magical kind of pixie dust. And, just like that – you are transformed. No longer an anonymous visitor. From now on, you live the life.





The Variety OF COASTAL EXPERIENCES

Shoreline may be the defining element of any beach destination, but it's our uniquely varied coastal culture that truly sets Virginia Beach apart. You're in for a multi-dimensional vacation experience here, with an abundance of things to do, places to explore and flavors to sample. Everything that gives locals such an intense love for the beach life is yours to experience - all you have to do is immerse yourself.

An excellent starting place: the vibrant **Resort Beach**. Famous for its iconic three-mile boardwalk, this is where you'll find restaurants, bustling nightlife, live entertainment, year-round events, shops and the throwback beach nostalgia for which we've long been known. Ride a surrey down the boardwalk to snap a selfie with King Neptune; take a surfing lesson or skim-board along the shore; build a sandcastle at Grommet Island; ride a beach cruiser to your ice cream shop of choice; or explore the art galleries and shops in the emerging **ViBe Creative District**.

To the south, not far from the Resort Beach, **Sandbridge Beach** exudes island-like charm, nestled between the Atlantic Ocean and **Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge**. The sand dunes house stunning beachfront rental homes, ideal for a large family vacation spent beach-combing, paddle boarding and feasting on freshly caught blue crabs. Kayak through the Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, take in a sunset at Little Island Park, or head down to neighboring **Pungo** to pick fresh produce at one of 16 You-Pick Farms.

Head north of the Resort Beach to find the laid-back **Chesapeake Bay Beach**, known as a waterman's paradise with the off-the-radar, dockside restaurants and bars locals prefer. Watch the sun set over the water while savoring fresh seafood, visit a local brewery, take in a sunrise or a sunset, embark on an oyster-farm boat tour on the Lynnhaven River, hike the winding trails of historic **First Landing State Park** or climb to the top of the **Cape Henry Lighthouse**.

West of the Resort Beach, **Town Center** rises as an inland cosmopolitan oasis. State-of-the-art venues and a central park host cultural events, while uptown shopping and dining options are scattered amid glittering high-rise architecture. The feeling is definitely uptown, but it's a comfortable, you're-still-on-vacation feeling that's a special treat for your sophisticated side.





DON'T MISS THESE Local Favorites

SUNNY LITTLE SECRETS

Out in the distance, where the glimmering water meets the restless sky, the day comes and goes like the undulating tide. To see the sun rise over the Atlantic Ocean and set over the Chesapeake Bay in the same day is an experience that is distinctly Virginia Beach, and we have some of the best hush-hush spots for catching them both. Watch through the dancing sea oats on the dunes of **Sandbridge**, as the winking sun glistens on the morning surf. If you're at the **Resort Beach**, beat the rush of the day's first beachgoers and take in the colors of the dawn behind **King Neptune** or on the **Virginia Beach Fishing Pier**. For a hidden-jewel-of-a-view impeded by nothing but the horizon, head to **Rudee Inlet**, drop a paddleboard or kayak into the water and experience the daybreak by floating right up to it.

As dusk approaches and the lazy sun slinks lower in the sky, pack appetizers with friends and make your way out to **Chesapeake Bay Beach** to relax as the last beams of sunlight disappear from view over the water. Whether you're just waking up or your night is about to begin, slow down and take it all in. You'll be glad you did.

BEACH TOWN WITH A DOWNTOWN

Living the life is more than just enjoying our beaches. It also means heading downtown to our thriving metropolitan district, located just a short drive from the Resort Beach. With 19 restaurants, six options for sweet treats and approximately 17 shops, the **Virginia Beach Town Center** is ideal for spending a leisurely afternoon away from the sand. Shop-hop through Anthropologie, Paper Source, lululemon and Free People, among many others.



After finding your summer dress, cosmetics or winter coat, it's time for a delicious pick-me-up from **The Royal Chocolate** and a gourmet coffee or cold-pressed juice from **The Daily Grind**. After an afternoon spent strolling, cap off the day with an alfresco experience, noshing on Southern comfort food at the newly opened **Tupelo Honey Café** or sipping on an evening glass of wine at **Sonoma Wine Bar and Bistro**, where you can choose from more than 400 bottles of wines. We recommend wrapping up the night with belly laughs from a comedy show at **The Funny Bone** or heading over to the **Sandler Center for the Performing Arts** for a night of live entertainment. How's *that* for the best of both worlds?



EAT LIKE A LOCAVORE

Virginia Beach is unique in that it is surrounded not only by the Atlantic Ocean and the Chesapeake Bay but also by more than 8,000 acres of farmland, providing access to the freshest catch and the freshest just-picked produce. Given our bounty of great food, we take our eating *seriously*.

We also grow oysters once desired by royals and invite visitors to explore the farms in which they're being harvested, right in the Lynnhaven River, and our blue crab season is one not to be missed. In addition to seafood (did we mention the ahi tuna is caught directly off shore?), our Pungo farming community has 16 You-Pick Farms located right off the coast. Going from the docks to the farms is not only feasible, it's our way of life, and it shows in the menus we serve up – and enjoy – year-round.

Being a VB locavore means decadent feasting, straight from the hands of the people who grow, catch and cultivate the best of what this coastal city has to offer. So, be sure to pack your appetite and chow down on local flavor!

View these illustrated maps online at thedailylifevb.visitvirginiabeach.com

Fres

OUTDOOR Adventures

For those who long to lace up their running shoes, paddle through the ocean's waves or sleep under the stars, nature's gifts await you here. Although our beaches have long beckoned sunbathers and sandcastle-builders, our coastal city is also a wonderland for sports enthusiasts and those desiring more physical adventures, too – something that has consistently made us one of America's fittest cities. From watersports and hiking to zip-lining and skydiving, Virginia Beach provides that heart-thumping rush sports enthusiasts crave.

For more about the active life in Virginia Beach, see Outdoor listings on page 54, or go to VisitVirginiaBeach.com.

WATERLUST

Bottlenose dolphins feast year-round in the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and, from May through October, you can get up close and personal with the playful marine mammals during guided kayaking excursions. Guides will lead you to where bay waters meet the Atlantic Ocean, dolphins' favorite spot for a frolic between feeding grounds, for an incredible photo opportunity and unforgettable – and physically exhilarating – experience.

Swimming, surfing, windsurfing, paddle-boarding, jet-skiing, parasailing, kayaking, sailing and boating are all available in the Atlantic Ocean and the Chesapeake Bay, just to name a few ways in which the water might as well be our fitness field. Recreational equipment can be rented from companies near the beaches, while several outfitters also offer surfing camps for those

wanting to learn to “hang 10” in a safe environment. For a different view of the water, try your skills at stand-up paddle-boarding or SUP Barre, and be sure to keep an eye out for special dog-friendly lessons on the water for your fit furry friends, too.

PARK IT RIGHT HERE

Whether you're into invigorating hikes, adventurous trails or breathtakingly scenic routes, our state parks, wildlife refuges and miles of beaches are sure to have you craving the great outdoors.

At **First Landing State Park**, you can hike through seven distinct ecosystems like a seasoned explorer! In fact, this registered Natural Landmark was the site of the settlers' first landing in 1607 and has since become Virginia's most visited state park. Walk along 1.25 miles of beach-front and stop to take in the beauty of dunes, tidal marsh and the maritime forest, or follow 19 miles of interpretive hiking, running and biking trails through protected habitats, including one of the most endangered habitat types in the world, the maritime forest community. Along each trail within the 2,888-acre park, you'll encounter a different scene, from freshwater ponds and Spanish moss to stunning views of the Chesapeake Bay.

Farther south in Sandbridge Beach, the **Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge** provides incredible scenic hikes along several trails through dunes, woodland, marshes and ocean beaches. Given its remote location, the park has become a haven for loggerhead sea turtles, peregrine falcons and bald eagles, all of which you'll have the opportunity to encounter as you explore the 9,108-acre refuge – a local favorite! Feeling extra adventurous? Hike through the refuge to reach **False Cape State Park**, accessible only by foot or by boat. Featuring six miles of pristine beaches, False Cape is a wildlife watcher's delight and a destination for more than 300 species of birds, including a snow geese population of 10,000.

hAir





TREETOP FUN

Thrill-seekers can take their adventuring high up to the trees at the **Adventure Park** at Virginia Aquarium. The largest of its kind in Virginia, the park features multiple zip lines and aerial ropes challenge courses of varying levels of difficulty. Zip through the air, up to 150 ft., and climb from bridge to bridge for a different view on outdoor fun and self-discovery.

TAKE THE REINS FOR A MAGICAL RIDE

During the fall and winter months, equine enthusiasts can take to the sand and ride down the scenic shorelines through the Resort Beach and beyond during a **Virginia Beach Horseback** excursion. Beyond the beach, experienced equestrians and first-time riders can explore nature throughout the city during guided trail rides all year long!

ALWAYS A NICE CATCH

With the food-rich Chesapeake Bay adjoining the Atlantic Ocean, fish here are abundant year-round. Tow your boat and choose from several different ramp locations; opt for a full or half-day private charter; or cast a line from one of the four fishing piers. In December, Virginia Beach holds the annual **Waterman's Mid-Atlantic Rockfish Shoot-out**, the largest rockfish tournament in the country. That's not surprising, given that 70 to 90 percent of the world's rockfish come from the Chesapeake Bay! With so many ways to get a bite, fishing in our waterways offers a year-round challenge for anglers of all skill levels. Just bait your hook and pick your platform.

BEACH PLAY WITHOUT BARRIERS

In Virginia Beach, we believe outdoor adventures are for every *body*. Designed specifically for children and adults of all physical abilities, **JT's Grommet Island Beach Park & Playground** offers soft play sculptures, accessible play equipment and cushioned play surfaces on the sand to ensure everyone can enjoy our beach-centric lifestyle. Beach wheelchairs and scooters are also available for those needing some assistance getting down to the shore.

THIS WAVE IS YOUR WAVE

Surf vibes really are for everyone in Virginia Beach. From the abundance of local surf shops and board shapers to the annual **East Coast Surfing Championships** at the Resort Beach, the surfing culture is deeply engrained into the fabric of how we live the life year-round. In fact, we were the birthplace of East Coast surfing! As many of our resident wave-riders will tell you, riding the perfect wave here comes at the cost of patience, tenacity and a little bit of luck – and that's just how we like it. For those hopping on a board for the first time, Virginia Beach often offers the right conditions to safely ease into the action. If you are serious about honing your craft, many lessons and camps are offered at the Resort Beach and Sandbridge Beach, with seasoned pros helping you ride your first East Coast wave. Local surf shops like **Pungo Board House, Surf & Adventure Co., Wave Riding Vehicles** and **VB Surf Sessions** offer everything you need, from equipment rentals to surfing lessons and camps. When the surf's up, so are the good times – you can even soar *above* the water with personalized lessons at **Xtreme U Flyboarding**.

