

Small Historic Towns across America

Brief History of Williamsburg, Virginia

Williamsburg, Virginia was founded in 1632 by English colonists for defensive reasons. When Jamestown, the capital of Virginia at this point, burned down during Bacon's Rebellion in 1676, the government was temporarily moved to Williamsburg while Jamestown was rebuilt. However, after staying there for some time, the members of the House of Burgesses realized that Williamsburg was both more comfortable and more defensible. When Jamestown was finished, they moved back. Then, just a few years later, in 1698, Jamestown was burned down again. When the government again moved back to Williamsburg, they decided to make it their capital, so, in 1799, Williamsburg became the capital of Virginia, and so it remained, until it was eventually moved to Richmond Virginia in 1780.

Location and Driving Directions from closest major US airport

The closest airport to Williamsburg is Newport News/Williamsburg International Airport, which is only 20 or so miles from Williamsburg. To get to Williamsburg from the airport, turn left onto Bland Blvd. Continue for 4 miles, then turn right onto Jefferson Avenue. After driving for about 8 miles, merge onto I-64 W. Take exit 242A to merge onto VA-199 W toward Williamsburg. Turn right onto S Henry St. Turn left onto Francis St. W. Then turn right at the end of the road, then you're there.

Who was President when Williamsburg was founded and what the political environment was at that time.

Williamsburg is such an old town that clearly there wasn't a president when it was founded, but Charles I of England was in power at that time. Because Williamsburg was founded at such an early time in our country's history, we hadn't developed our desire for independence yet. We were not unhappy with our situation regarding England yet.

Oldest businesses/largest businesses today.

The oldest business in Williamsburg is the College of William and Mary, founded in 1693. In fact, William and Mary is one of the three oldest colleges in America.

City Government

Williamsburg has a council-manager form of government. There are five members of the council, the Mayor, Vice Mayor, City Manager, City Attorney, and Clerk of Council. They meet in regular session on the second Thursday of every month. The meetings are open to the public and televised. Members serve four years. Elections are held in May every other year.



Historic attractions in the area. Festivals and Events

One of the most amazing attractions in Williamsburg is Colonial Williamsburg, which is a living history museum with many beautiful restored buildings, including the governor's palace. It portrays Williamsburg during the 1770's at the dawn of the revolutionary war. Colonial Williamsburg is part of the Historic Triangle which includes Jamestown and Yorktown. Jamestown is also an amazing place to visit. It is another living history museum, though this one is set in the early 1600s at Jamestown's prime. Jamestown is in two parts, the mainland and the island. In order to visit the island, you must take the ferry. It is the free part of Jamestown and is far less crowded. Yorktown of course is the site of the last battle of the Revolutionary War. Every site has been kept up to look as close to what it was during the time period shown.



Where can we stay if we visit Williamsburg?

There are always hotels to stay at, but I would recommend a bed and breakfast like A Williamsburg Sampler Bed and Breakfast or A Williamsburg White House. Both are gorgeous places to stay. The links are below.

<http://www.williamsburgsamplers.com/>

<http://www.awilliamsburgwhitehouse.com/>



Why would I want to visit this historic town?

There are many reasons to visit Williamsburg, it is jam-packed with history. There are amazing historic places that make you feel like you have gone back in time. There are beautiful places to stay. Williamsburg is close to Jamestown and Yorktown, both of which are significant to our nation's history. Williamsburg is a wonderful place to visit, once you have, you won't soon forget it.

Links you may wish to visit:

<http://www.williamsburgsamplers.com/>

www.visitwilliamsburg.com/

historicjamestowne.org

<http://www.awilliamsburgwhitehouse.com/>

www.colonialwilliamsburg.com/

www.nps.gov/york/

Williamsburg, Virginia,
US History I, Section 2 EEM