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New, Free Civil War Trails Map - Learn Undiscovered History -

Media Only

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RICHMOND, Va. – Virginia is unparalleled as a destination for Civil War history, drawing visitors from around the world to its battlefields and museums. Now visitors can experience more than 500 Civil War sites throughout Virginia and Maryland – many not previously marked or interpreted – with the help of a new map and guide from Civil War Trails, a 13-year-old organization that began with a single trail in Virginia and grew to a multi-state initiative.

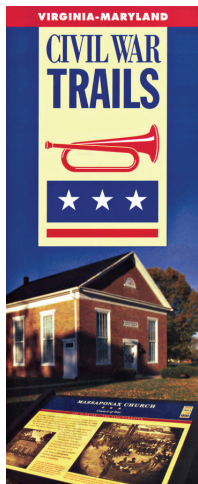
Alisa Bailey, president and CEO of the Virginia Tourism Corporation, said that Civil War history continues to be a big draw for visitors coming into the state. “Our research shows significant numbers of our guests visit a Civil War site during their trip to Virginia. The Civil War Trails program is one of the best ways to explore that history.”

The Virginia-Maryland Civil War Trails Map includes close-up maps of cities and regions in which multiple sites exist along with a text summary of the war in the Mid-Atlantic. Also included is contact information for the Civil War Trails organization and for state and regional tourism offices. Sites with important Civil War history are marked by interpretive waysides telling the stories of what happened and why, who was involved and why it was important. Maps are ably supplemented by roadside directional signage making it easy to create impromptu side-trips or plan one’s own driving itinerary.

The map is free and can be obtained by calling the Virginia Tourism Corporation at 1-888-CIVILWAR or by visiting www.Virginia.org/civilwar. More information is available on the Civil War Trails website www.civilwartrails.org including downloadable maps and audio files.

Mitch Bowman, Civil War Trails executive director, said the program’s strength is in the revealing of hidden history. “Visitors to these places discover stories that have been buried in the landscape for the last 150 years and learn compelling history that is told at the site for the first time.”

The maps help transport visitors to sites they may never have otherwise found or even known about, for many of the Civil War Trails locations are on back roads and on the side streets of historic towns and cities. Most are rich with fascinating stories: History records a battle in which cavalry led by Gen. George Armstrong Custer attacked an enemy force only for Custer and his troopers to soon find themselves surrounded and fighting for their lives.



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That battlefield is not in South Dakota but rather in rural Virginia at a place called Trevilian Station. Custer and his command fought their way out of this scrape, and today visitors can learn the story of “Custer’s First Last Stand” on the spot where it happened.

Likewise, for many decades, passing motorists never noticed a place in the wooded median of Highway 301 east of Fredericksburg. Through the Civil War Trails map, travelers now learn that this is the spot at which Abraham Lincoln’s assassin, John Wilkes Booth, was shot and killed by his pursuers.

The Civil War Trails program – recognized in 2001 by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as the single most successful and sustainable heritage tourism program in the nation – is totally self-guided and can be enjoyed in any increment of time. According to Bowman, “It is a road map for people to discover stories of triumph and tragedy at more than 500 sites whether they have two minutes, two hours, two days or two weeks.”

For high-resolution image, go to www.vatc.org/PRMediaKit/Assets/Images/CWmap2.jpg

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