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Media Contact:

Tamra Talmadge-Anderson
Public Relations Director

TEL (804) 545-5573
CEL (804) 201-7839
EML ttanderson@virginia.org

Virginia Tourism Corporation
901 East Byrd Street
Richmond, VA 23219-4048 USA

TEL (804) 545-5500
FAX (804) 545-5501
www.virginia.org (consumer)
www.vatc.org (industry)

State Tourism Office Talks Dollars and Sense for National Tourism Week (May 10-18)

*-State travel partners unify to celebrate Virginia's \$17.7 billion
tourism industry-*

(Richmond, Va.) - Virginia's state tourism office will join with travel partners across the state to highlight the power of tourism during National Tourism Week (May 10 -18). Tourism is one of Virginia's most powerful industries, generating \$17.7 billion in visitor spending, supporting 208,000 jobs and providing \$1.2 billion in state and local taxes to Virginia's communities.

"Now more than ever, support of the tourism industry is crucial," said Alisa Bailey, president and CEO of the Virginia Tourism Corporation. "Tourism has proven to be vital in supporting Virginia's economy, in good financial times and in bad. We invite Virginians to consider the many positive ways that tourism touches their lives - from providing jobs, generating taxes for their communities and preserving our history and culture."

The Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) is the state agency responsible for marketing Virginia as a travel destination to national and international visitors. VTC partners with Convention and Visitors Bureaus, destinations, museums, accommodations, nonprofits and businesses across the state to develop strategies and initiatives to keep Virginia's tourism industry strong in today's competitive market.

Recent VTC initiatives to keep Virginia "top of mind" for visitors include:

- VirginiaGreenTravel.org - a new Web site dedicated to Virginia's environmentally friendly and certified green travel destinations.
- *Live Passionately - Virginia is for Lovers* brand – integrated marketing campaign to extend the brand and showcase the world-famous "Virginia is for Lovers" slogan, celebrating 40 years in 2009.
- [Portraits of Passion](#) – video vignettes on Virginia.org of extraordinary Virginians whose passion for wine, food, music, history, adventure and life make a visit to Virginia an enriching experience.
- Wine Marketing – increasing awareness of Virginia as a food and wine destination by showcasing more than 130 wineries and recent rating as one of the top five up-and-coming wine regions in the world.
- Community Marketing Grants – a small but impactful grant program that provides matching grants of up to \$25,000 to help communities market their tourism assets.
- Entrepreneurship Support – in partnership with other state agencies, VTC is a key member of Entrepreneurship Express, a hands-on educational program that outlines the steps to start a business.



NEWS

VTC encourages Virginians to use National Tourism Week as motivation to plan a “Virginia Vacation” and explore the state. As gas prices continue to rise, in-state vacations are an ideal way to save gas money, experience Virginia’s history, heritage, dining and adventure and support the state’s economy.

To begin planning a Virginia Vacation and for information about the state’s travel destinations, visit www.Virginia.org or call 1-800-932-5827 to request a free, Live Passionately - Virginia is for Lovers Travel Guide.

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