

**VIRGINIA  
IS FOR  
OUTDOOR  
LOVERS®**

**PARTNER TOOLKIT**

**#VAOUTDOORS**

**VIRGINIA.ORG/OUTDOORS**

VIRGINIA IS FOR LO♥ERS

## ♥ | VIRGINIA IS FOR OUTDOOR LOVERS

Virginia is for Lovers... of Life. The scenic beauty and wealth of outdoor travel products – from surfing to petting a wild pony on a mountain top – means visitors can truly create a historic life experience doing whatever they like to do outside.

So what does a historic life experience in the outdoors look like? It's an experience that moves our travelers to instinctively "want to go there and do that." Often, these experience blend other fun travel products with the outdoors. For example: a wine and kayak tour, a craft beer after a long hike, or a great meal after a fun bike ride with the family.

Here are a few visual examples:



## **MAKE SURE YOUR OUTDOOR BUSINESSES AND DESTINATIONS ARE LISTED AND UPDATED ON VIRGINIA.ORG**

Encourage local outfitters, retailers, lodging, parks, etc. to list themselves for FREE on Virginia.org so we can link to them in our content. Share info about your best trails for hiking and biking and tell us where to find your trailheads and water access points. Take time to include great imagery!

For more information on getting listed on Virginia.org go to <http://www.vatc.org/emarketing/getstarted/>.

Already have an account login and make updates or add new content at <http://admin.virginia.org>.

Contact: Robin Mamunes at [rmamunes@virginia.org](mailto:rmamunes@virginia.org)

## **SHARE THE LOVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

Share Virginia is for Lovers outdoor content on your pages

- Amplify your message by advertising your Facebook posts and targeting your primary markets.
- Tag @VisitVirginia when posting on Instagram or Twitter.
- Use hashtags #VAOutdoors & #LOVEVA
- Direct consumers to content on Virginia.org/Outdoors

## **ALIGN YOUR CONTENT STRATEGY WITH OURS**

Check out the upcoming Virginia is for Lovers content topics at <http://www.vatc.org/emarketing/contentmarketing/>.

In addition, consider submitting an outdoor getaway idea for possible inclusion on the Virginia.org website. Information and link to the online getaway submission form can be found at <http://www.vatc.org/emarketing/getaways/>.

Would you like to submit an idea for our travel blog or fun social media promotion?

Contact: Dave Neudeck at [dneudeck@virginia.org](mailto:dneudeck@virginia.org)

## **SHARE COMPELLING IMAGERY AND VIDEO WITH US**

Images and video drive social media engagement. It is vital for VTC to be equipped with the best resources available in order to drive maximum traffic and consumer engagement. Images and video should be inspiring and tell a visual story. They can be adrenaline pumping or dramatic sweeping landscapes; communicate a sense of oneness or togetherness in an outdoor experience; moments of beauty or excitement. Think about creating content that would make people think (and feel), "I want to go there and do that."

Contact: Sarah Hauser at [shauser@virginia.org](mailto:shauser@virginia.org)



♥ | COMPELLING IMAGERY





♥ | COMPELLING IMAGERY



## USING OUR LOGOS

Be part of the Virginia is for Outdoor Lovers campaign by using these logos on your website, social media platforms, and blogs. Share these resources with your local businesses.

If you would like to request the Virginia is for Outdoor Lovers logo suite and usage rights, please fill out the graphics request form available at <http://www.vatc.org/tourism/vifl-logo-request/>.

Contact: Ali Zaman at [azaman@virginia.org](mailto:azaman@virginia.org)



## PAID PARTNERSHIP RESOURCES

Go to [VATC.org/advertising](https://vatc.org/advertising) and check the co-op plan for Outdoor-specific opportunities.

Contact: Thad Smith at [tsmith@virginia.org](mailto:tsmith@virginia.org)



## MEDIA RESOURCES

Share Virginia is for Outdoor Lovers story ideas and sample itineraries with the VTC Communications team for pitching media visits. Take advantage of the following resources and distribute your own Virginia is for Outdoor Lovers news to local media.

Contact: Danielle Emerson at [demerson@virginia.org](mailto:demerson@virginia.org)



## VIRGINIA'S OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY

According to the Outdoor Industry Association, at least 46% of Virginia residents participate in outdoor recreation each year. In Virginia, outdoor recreation generates:

- \$13.6 billion in consumer spending
- 138K direct Virginia jobs
- \$3.9 billion in wages and salaries
- \$923 million in state and local tax revenue

Nationally, outdoor recreation generates:

- \$646 billion in consumer spending
- 6.1 million direct American jobs
- \$39.9 billion in federal tax revenue
- \$39.7 billion in state and local tax revenue



## OUTDOOR RECREATION IS AN ECONOMIC ENGINE FOR VIRGINIA COMMUNITIES

- **VTC's Drive Tourism Program** – VTC held workshops over the last two years in communities across the Commonwealth to help them visualize two- and five-year tourism development plans. Virginia's state tourism development plan, which was developed with stakeholder input and key research such as consumer data and trends, validated outdoor recreation development as a primary strategy for the Commonwealth. Some of the projects that workshop participants want to develop include: bike lanes; building a lodge off the Virginia Creeper Trail; constructing a bike trail from the Blue Ridge Parkway to Floyd; boat tours; and establishing an adventure tourism program.
- **VTC's Marketing Leverage Program** awarded \$911,320 for 53 grants to tourism entities in Virginia during the last two years with the purpose of promoting outdoor recreation. The grants were used to promote a cycling event, a marathon, birding festival, fishing, and national parks, to name just a few of the programs.



## THE VIRGINIA OUTDOOR TRAVELER

- The outdoors are Virginia's second biggest asset after history, in terms of attractions available to visitors. Virginia's outdoors attract millennials, who spend more money and stay longer during outdoor recreation pursuits.
- VTC research shows that 17% of Virginia's visitors come for outdoor recreation, which ranks second after visiting friends and family (34%). This is tied with entertainment and sightseeing (17%).
- Top activities enjoyed by tourists who participate in outdoor recreation in Virginia: visiting state/national parks; beaches and nature travel/ecotourism.
- The Blue Ridge Parkway, Appalachian Trail, Skyline Drive and Shenandoah National Park are among the top 25 Virginia attractions visited most frequently by travelers.



## PROMOTE OUTDOOR RECREATION IN VIRGINIA WELCOME CENTERS

Advertise your outdoor events 24/7 with the highly visible and affordable Virginia Welcome Center outside banner program. See all advertising opportunities at Virginia Welcome Centers and Safety Rest Areas at [www.himediallc.com](http://www.himediallc.com).

Contact: Gary Jeffrey at [gjeffrey@virginia.org](mailto:gjeffrey@virginia.org)



## MERCHANDISE OPPORTUNITIES

Enhance your participation in the Virginia is for Lovers Outdoor campaign by offering official Virginia is for Outdoor Lovers merchandise. Whether you want to create an additional revenue resource or use as promotional items for your outdoor events, branded merchandise is a great awareness builder.

- Partner with VTC and our authorized, licensed provider to sell Virginia is for Outdoor Lovers merchandise. From hats to t-shirts, and other outdoor lovers' favorite gadgets, VTC can provide a variety of items to fit any marketing budget.
- Sponsoring a keystone event? Custom, co-branded merchandising opportunities are also available.

Contact: Val Guffy at [vguffy@virginia.org](mailto:vguffy@virginia.org)



## BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH VTC

Outdoor content continually drives some of the highest web traffic to Virginia.org and generates some of the highest engagement with our social following. As of March 3, 2016, our social media platforms reach millions of people each year.

- Millions of travelers visit Virginia.org annually looking at outdoor related content.
- The Virginia.org website the Virginia Travel blog had more than 13 Million visits in 2015.
- On social media, the Virginia is for Lovers brand boasts a following of more than 750,000 people including 650k on Facebook.



## GROWING OUTDOOR RECREATION INDUSTRY

Tourism is one of Virginia's fastest growing industries and outdoor recreation is a key driver of that growth. See ways VTC is assisting with tourism outdoor recreation development in the state at <http://www.vatc.org/PAM/resources/>.

Contact: Randall Rose at [rose@virginia.org](mailto:rose@virginia.org)

