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Top 10 Business Reasons to “Bring It to the Beach!”

(Virginia Beach, Va., 2009) – A meeting planner’s budget is important. Every dollar should be spent to maximize a business’ bottom line, and provide a memorable experience. In Virginia Beach, there are virtually hundreds of reasons that make the resort city a repeat meeting destination. Here are the Top 10:

1. A New \$202.5 million Convention Center

The \$202.5 million [Virginia Beach Convention Center](#) boasts more than half a million square feet of meeting space, including a 150,000 sq. ft. column-free exhibit hall, more than 28,900 sq. ft. of meeting rooms and a state-of-the-art 31,000 sq. ft. ballroom. Proudly certified by [Virginia Green](#) which promotes environmentally-friendly practices, the facility offers competitive rates, 2,230 free parking spaces and is just blocks from the Virginia Beach oceanfront.



2. Green Destination

The city was recently named a “Virginia Green Destination” in the Commonwealth, as a result of the Virginia Beach tourism and hospitality industry’s commitment to decrease its impact on the environment and provide environmentally-friendly alternatives for visitors. To date, more than 60 Virginia Beach hospitality businesses are certified by [Virginia Green](#), including restaurants, hotels, attractions and events. www.VirginiaBeachGreen.com.

3. Superior Customer Service

Meeting planners will enjoy the ease of event planning with specialized services and features such as customized site inspection tours of Virginia Beach, the Convention Center, hotels and attractions. The Virginia Beach CVB also provides professional advice and assistance in planning off-site events for convention and group gatherings; assistance in attendance-building materials, such as brochures, maps, and DVD/video; an Online Services Directory with helpful tools to ensure a successful event; as well as housing and event reservations assistance with Passkey, the industry leader for online group reservations management.

4. Accommodations

The resort city boasts 12,000 hotel rooms citywide and 3,500 committable rooms within a two-mile radius of the Convention Center. New properties include a Spring Hill Suites by Marriott at the Virginia Beach oceanfront and a Westin located at the Virginia Beach Town Center.

5. Air Service

Norfolk International Airport is located just 20 minutes from the Virginia Beach oceanfront, hosts most major airline carriers, and offers 200 flights daily.

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6. Weather

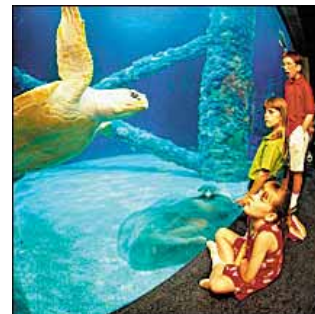
The seaside resort’s mild climate year-round adds to Virginia Beach’s appeal as the perfect meeting destination for every season. In the fall and spring shoulder season, Virginia Beach offers reduced hotel rates and unique activities such as whale watching, kayaking, fishing, and golf.

7. Transportation

Virginia Beach offers a myriad of options including Hampton Roads Transit, taxi, shuttles and the Virginia Beach Wave, a new state-of-the-art hybrid-electric bus system providing eco-friendly shuttle service at the Oceanfront.

8. Unique Meeting Venues

Virginia Beach boasts a variety of unique venues for a themed event or special dinner. The new [Sandler Center for the Performing Arts](#), located at Town Center, is a 1,300 seat performance venue hosting performing artists of regional and national acclaim. For a truly grand affair, meeting planners can host an evening reception in the Sandler’s grand lobby, with sweeping staircases and an exquisite chandelier providing an elegant backdrop. Or, stroll through the [Contemporary Art Center of Virginia](#), which can accommodate 350 guests, and enjoy exhibitions from international artists. Explore the ocean depths at the [Virginia Aquarium](#) during an evening reception for 2,000. The aquarium is home to 700,000 gallons of aquariums, 300 interactive exhibits and an IMAX theatre. In May 2009, the Virginia Aquarium will open *Restless Planet*, an exhibit featuring habitats and animals that chronicle Virginia’s ecological history.



9. Coastal Cuisine



Nearly 300 restaurants serve up succulent seafood dishes, from fresh Chesapeake Bay crab cakes and steamed shrimp to stuffed flounder and the local favorite, striped bass (also known as “rockfish”). The restaurants celebrate a diverse range of cultures, offering a myriad of choices from Italian, Japanese and BB-Q to Mexican and Indian. Agriculture is one of the top three industries in Virginia Beach, with miles of green space in the southern end of the city harvesting produce from fresh strawberries to yellow corn and squash. Therefore, the chefs are enticing visitors with the freshest seafood *and* the freshest produce.

10. Adventure Travel

When the meetings are over, Virginia Beach is the perfect getaway for adventure lovers. In 2009, *Men’s Fitness* ranked Virginia Beach the No. 10 fittest city in America, and there’s a reason why. Virginia Beach offers a variety of sports, fitness and outdoor activities for those who enjoy an active lifestyle. A number of outfitters teach surf lessons and surf camps geared for enthusiasts of all ages. For hikers and bikers, Virginia Beach boasts more than 18,600 acres of state parks and wildlife refuges perfect for hiking, biking, canoeing and kayaking. Over 121 navigable miles of waterways and 35 miles of ocean and bay beaches give visitors a variety of landscapes for exploring the great outdoors.

The Virginia Beach CVB invites meeting planners to “Bring it to the Beach!” Virginia Beach is four hours southeast of Washington, D.C. by car and within a day’s drive or less from two-thirds of the U.S. population. For the latest information and project updates on the new Virginia Beach Convention Center, visit www.vbmeetings.com. Media information and digital images are available at www.vbpressroom.com.