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## Between Mother Nature, a World-Class Aquarium and Historical Sites, Virginia Beach Offers a Variety of Unique Meeting Venues

(Virginia Beach, Va. 2009) – Discover Virginia Beach’s numerous unique cost-efficient venues when hosting an event, themed meeting, special dinner or group retreat. Virginia Beach is a large metropolitan area nestled in a rich coastal environment, offering meeting planners the best of both worlds when creating a unique event for the group. For more information or images, visit [www.vbmeetings.com](http://www.vbmeetings.com) or [www.vbpressroom.com](http://www.vbpressroom.com).

### Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center

At the Virginia Aquarium, discover a distinctive venue for parties, special events, business functions and more. From an intimate, sit-down dinner for 20 of your closest friends to a cocktail reception for 2,000 of your best customers, the Virginia Aquarium can accommodate any event. And with nearly 700,000 gallons of aquariums and live animal habitats, more than 300 hands-on exhibits and a 3D IMAX Theater, your event is guaranteed to make a splash. In May 2009, experience the Aquarium’s new interactive exhibit, *Restless Planet*, featuring habitats and animals that chronicle Virginia’s ecological history. Habitats include a Malaysian peat swamp, a Red Sea, a coastal desert and an erupting volcano along with the animals that adapted to those environments. For additional information, visit [www.virginiaaquarium.com](http://www.virginiaaquarium.com).

### Set Sail on *Virginia's Jewel*

Climb aboard *Virginia's Jewel*, a luxury charter, for a sea-faring adventure. These inland trips run from 31<sup>st</sup> Street to the Chesapeake Bay, offering the serenity of Virginia Beach’s natural areas, while observing the city’s historical landmarks. With two enclosed climate-controlled decks, adequate open-air areas on each deck, plated and buffet meals, and modifications for visitors with mobility impairments, meeting attendees will fall in love with *Virginia's Jewel*. For additional information, visit [www.virginiasjewel.com](http://www.virginiasjewel.com).

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### **Schedule a Meeting with Mother Nature**

Get back to nature in Virginia Beach's state parks and wildlife refuges. Back Bay Wildlife Refuge (7,732 acres) is home to an assortment of wildlife, including threatened and endangered species such as loggerhead sea turtles, peregrine falcons, and bald eagles. A tranquil retreat, Back Bay features scenic trails and group educational opportunities. A small auditorium is available for pre-scheduled groups. To enjoy some down time, meeting participants can tour the park on a tram that runs during the summer months, and at select times during the winter months. For more information on Back Bay Wildlife Refuge, please visit [www.vbfun.com](http://www.vbfun.com).

First Landing State Park is Virginia's most popular state park, and boasts beautiful beaches, campgrounds and nature trails. The park is situated along the Chesapeake Bay and offers a variety of meeting facilities for any group. The Trail Center has a meeting room for up to 45 people and features exhibits on the natural and cultural history of the park. Private groups can hold their meetings in the outdoor amphitheatre which can accommodate up to 185 people. For more information on First Landing State Park, please visit [www.vbfun.com](http://www.vbfun.com)

### **Relax, Rejuvenate and Refine**

For an experience in holistic health, take a look at the Association for Research and Enlightenment (A.R.E.) Health and Rejuvenation Center. The A.R.E. is a not-for-profit organization, founded in 1931 by Edgar Cayce (1877-1945), who is considered the father of holistic health. Unique for meeting planners is the "Spa on the Spot" service, which includes custom-designed spa packages for groups. The 2-3 hour spa service packages include refreshing chair massage, foot reflexology, facials, hypnotherapy and yoga. What's more, A.R.E will bring the spa to you. The hotel ballroom or meeting room can be turned into a healthful, relaxation spa. For more information, please visit [www.edgarcayce.org/spa](http://www.edgarcayce.org/spa).



The Founders Inn and Spa, a charming, Colonial-style inn offering 240 luxurious guest rooms and suites, boasts the Flowering Almond Spa – a 10,000 square-foot facility featuring six treatment rooms, a private conservatory for relaxation and meditation, a fitness center and a heated indoor pool. Massage therapies include aromatherapy massage, deep tissue massage, sacred stone massage and reflexology. European facials, antioxidant vitamin C facials and caviar facials are also offered. Each spa service can be customized to accommodate groups of any size. The outdoor pool and seating area creates the perfect spot for a luncheon. For more information, please visit [www.floweringalmondspa.com](http://www.floweringalmondspa.com).

### **An Event of Grand Proportions**

New to Virginia Beach, the Sandler Center for the Performing Arts is a cultural centerpiece of the city. A performing arts venue with theatre-style seating for 1,300, the Sandler Center proudly boasts a Grand Lobby, perfect for catered events. Flanked by grand staircases and illuminated by an exquisite chandelier, the three-story lobby is an ideal place for a banquet or reception. During your event, step outside of the Sandler Center and enjoy a performance in the facility's outdoor performance plaza, capable of accommodating up to 400 guests.

**Historic Homes of Virginia**

Take a step back in time and explore the historic Francis Land House or Adam Thoroughgood House. The Ferry Plantation House also offers a unique glimpse into the area's history. Near this site was the famous trial of Virginia's only convicted witch, Grace Sherwood. Experience a piece of American history and see how colonial Virginians lived. Houses are available for special events and receptions. Visit [www.vbfun.com](http://www.vbfun.com) under "History and Museums" for additional information.



**Southern Elegance Meets Casual Charm**

Situated along the Chesapeake Bay and the Lynnhaven River, Lesner Inn is a sophisticated catering club offering breathtaking waterside views. The inn's meeting and banquet rooms are perfect for smaller, intimate gatherings or larger, festive affairs. A full range of menu options including cocktails are available. For more information, visit [www.lesnerinn.com](http://www.lesnerinn.com).

**Culinary Team Building**

The Founders Inn and Spa is a premier meeting and conference center perfect for business retreats. When seeking to create an atmosphere of teamwork, the Founders Inn offers groups culinary team-building activities. The executive chef assigns each team a meal component to prepare, and they celebrate their success by enjoying their delicious concoction after the meal is completed. It's a unique setting for colleagues to work together to accomplish objectives. Culinary team building is offered Monday through Thursday and can accommodate nine to 45 participants. For more information, please visit [wwwFOUNDERSINN.COM](http://wwwFOUNDERSINN.COM).



**Contemporary Art Center of Virginia**

Strolling through the Contemporary Art Center of Virginia, visitors enjoy paintings, sculptures, photography, glass, video and other visual media from internationally-acclaimed artists, as well as artists of national and regional renown. Located just six blocks from the oceanfront, the center hosts a variety of events, including corporate seminars, board meetings, fund-raisers, lectures, receptions and art auctions. Many organizations use the center's Price Auditorium to stage a variety of events, including dance, drama, poetry and music. For more information, visit [www.cacv.org](http://www.cacv.org).

*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](http://www.vbmeetings.com). Media information and digital images are available at [www.vbpressroom.com](http://www.vbpressroom.com).*