

Colonial Williamsburg

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
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Colonial Williamsburg Fourth of July Programs Celebrate “Light and Liberty” in the spirit of Independence Day



WILLIAMSBURG, Va. (June 12, 2018) – Colonial Williamsburg celebrates the anniversary of America’s independence with a full day of patriotic programs and activities culminating in a grand fireworks display of “Light and Liberty” on the Palace Green.

“At Colonial Williamsburg, America’s birthday reminds us of our calling to share our Nation’s enduring story,” said Mitchell B. Reiss, president and CEO of Colonial Williamsburg.

“Independence Day is a special opportunity to feed the human spirit through celebration and reflection upon America’s ongoing pursuit of a more perfect union. We look forward to hosting guests from around the globe for exciting programs and a remarkable fireworks display.”

“Lights of Freedom: A Fourth of July Procession and Fireworks” kicks off at 9 p.m. and is inspired by the words of Thomas Jefferson, who wrote in 1795 that “light and liberty go together.” The program features Colonial Williamsburg’s young Thomas Jefferson, Kurt Smith, and a torch lit patriotic procession by the Fifes and Drums. Guests are invited to sing along to classic American songs such as “The Star Spangled Banner” and “America the Beautiful.”

The fireworks display is accompanied musically by “The Lights of Freedom,” a soundtrack of 18th-century and popular Americana songs with the title selection co-written by Colonial Williamsburg Creative Director for Signature Events Bill Schermerhorn and Grammy award-winning composer Doug Katsaros. The 19-minute score will also include “Yankee Doodle,” “God Bless America,” new arrangements of “Columbia, Gem of the Ocean” and a “My Country, Tis of Thee”/“This Land is Your Land” medley recorded by The Gentlemen of the College of William & Mary and “Shine,” a new song performed by Colonial Williamsburg tavern troupe The Watermans.

“Last year’s premiere of ‘Lights of Freedom’ began a new musical tradition for Colonial Williamsburg’s Independence Day festivities,” Schermerhorn said. “We look forward to marking this year’s grand American holiday with an equally moving fireworks display that celebrates every American.”

This year premiere fireworks seating on the Governor’s Palace Green is available to the public. Tickets are \$25 per chair and are available at all Colonial Williamsburg ticketing locations and online. For those who will not be onsite for the fireworks, this year’s fireworks music will be streamed live on WMBG radio 97.7 FM.

Independence Day festivities begin at 8 a.m. with the Shields Tavern Breakfast Celebration with Thomas Jefferson in the Pavilion area. A special ticket is required; \$39.95 per adult, \$24.95 per child.

Historic Area sites are open to ticketed guests beginning at 9 a.m. A reading of the Declaration of Independence by young Thomas Jefferson from the Capitol west balcony begins at 9:30 a.m. Next for the public at 10 a.m. is Salute to the States, a special military muster on Market Square celebrating the original 13 states.

New this year, a group reading of the Declaration of Independence takes place at noon on the Courthouse steps by a cast of diverse Colonial Williamsburg Nation Builders including Aggy of Turkey Island, George Washington, Martha Custis Washington, the Marquis de Lafayette, James Armistead Lafayette and Rev. Gowan Pamphlet. The Fifes and Drums will also perform.

The Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg are open 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. to guests with Art Museums or Colonial Williamsburg admission. A special Fourth of July program included with Art Museums admission “Create! For Independence Day” where guests will create a patriotic work of art to take home is held at 10:15 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. In the afternoon, “Bristol Virginia and the Big Bang of Country Music” celebrates the 90th anniversary of Bristol Sessions, known as the “Big Bang” of country music, at 12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. in the Hennage Auditorium. A separate \$5 ticket in addition to Art Museums admission is required. Also in the afternoon at 1:30 p.m., guests can make their own patriotic pinwheel at Bassett Hall; A \$5 ticket in addition to museums admission is required.

Part of the Summer Breeze Concert Series, The U.S. Air Force Heritage of America Band performs on the lawn of the Art Museums from 4-6 p.m., followed by a performance by Brasswind from 7-9 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

From 4-6 p.m., guests can dine at an All-American Buffet at the Williamsburg Lodge, featuring music, a cash bar, games and crafts and special guest Liberty, Colonial Williamsburg’s mascot. A special ticket is required; \$49.95 per adult and \$19.95 per youth aged 3-10. Another dining option for dinner, the Chowning’s Tavern Independence Day Celebration takes place from 6-9 p.m. and offers a VIP dinner before the fireworks with fun games, live music and entertainment for the whole family. A special ticket is required; \$76 per adult, \$38 per child. Also starting at 6 p.m. is the lavish four-course Thomas Jefferson Wine Dinner at King’s Arms Tavern with the author of the Declaration of Independence. A special ticket is required; \$150. Seating is open and guests must be 21 or older to attend. The Thomas Jefferson Wine Dinner includes special reserved fireworks seating on the Palace Green.

Tickets and additional information are available at Colonial Williamsburg ticketing locations, online at www.colonialwilliamsburg.com/july4 by calling 855-296-6627 and by following Colonial Williamsburg on [Facebook](#) and @colonialwmsburg on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation preserves, restores and operates Virginia's 18th-century capital of Williamsburg. Innovative and interactive experiences highlight the relevance of the American Revolution to contemporary life and the importance of an informed, active citizenry. The Colonial Williamsburg experience includes more than 400 restored or reconstructed original buildings, renowned museums of decorative arts and folk art, extensive educational outreach programs for students and teachers, lodging, culinary options from historic taverns to casual or elegant dining, the Golden Horseshoe Golf Club featuring 45 holes designed by Robert Trent Jones and his son Rees Jones, a full-service spa and fitness center, pools, retail stores and gardens. Philanthropic support and revenue from admissions, products and hospitality operations sustain Colonial Williamsburg's educational programs and preservation initiatives.

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