

Colonial Williamsburg

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
P.O. Box 1776
Williamsburg, Va. 23187-1776
www.colonialwilliamsburg.com

Grand Illumination 2018: An Evening of Greatest Mirth & Jollity

The beloved Williamsburg tradition of free holiday entertainment returns Sunday, Dec. 2 at 4 p.m. and culminates in exhilarating fireworks displays at 7 p.m. This year's event is generously supported in part by Mars Wrigley Confectionery and AMERICAN HERITAGE® Chocolate



WILLIAMSBURG, Va. (Nov. 26, 2018) – Colonial Williamsburg invites guests and the community to ring in the holiday season at Grand Illumination Sunday, Dec. 2 with an evening of warmth and merriment culminating in free fireworks demonstrations over three iconic Historic Area sites: the Governor’s Palace, Magazine and Capitol.

“Grand Illumination brings together different layers of Williamsburg’s unique history, wrapped up in a fun-filled package of holiday festivity,” said Bill Schermerhorn, Colonial Williamsburg creative director of signature events. “It’s a seasonal celebration created in the 1930s during 18th-century Williamsburg’s restoration, drawing on that period’s tradition of celebratory illuminations. It is an experience unique in the world, where the Historic Area’s darkened streets and sidewalks are filled with joyful song and dotted with the warming orange light of burning cressets, illuminating the ornate handmade fresh wreaths and garlands hung on homes, shops and taverns along Duke of Gloucester Street.”

Historic Area sites are open to ticketed guests from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Dec. 2, and the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg from 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Liberty Ice Pavilion is open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Duke of Gloucester Street in Colonial Williamsburg’s Merchants Square.

Daytime programs include a Christmas Decorations Walking Tour at 9:15 a.m., 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., which requires a special ticket. The Spirit of the Season at the Raleigh Tavern is open to

guests with Colonial Williamsburg admission at 1, 1:30, 2, 2:30, 3 and 3:30 p.m. and requires a free reservation ticket. A Christmas Remembered is open to guests with Colonial Williamsburg admission at 3 p.m. at the Charlton Stage. At the Art Museums, A Chisman Creek Christmas is held in the Hennage Auditorium at 12:30, 2:30 and 4:30 p.m. and requires a special ticket.

New this year, Mars Wrigley Confectionery will be offering free tastings of its gourmet *AMERICAN HERITAGE*® Chocolate hot cocoa beginning at 11 a.m. at select Colonial Williamsburg retail stores: Tarpley's, the Market House, the Craft House in Merchants Square and Revolutions in the Colonial Williamsburg Regional Visitor Center.

For holiday gift-givers and souvenir-seekers, a public auction of rare and one-of-a-kind period-inspired items will be held at noon between the Roscow Cole House and the colonial Courthouse. Select retail stores, including Tarpley's and the William Pitt Store will remain open late. The Market House closes around 3 p.m.

Dining highlights include the Williamsburg Inn Grand Illumination Brunch Buffet in the Regency Dining Room from noon-2:30 p.m., Chowning's Grand Illumination Garden Grill, open noon-8 p.m., and Grand Illumination Dinner at Chowning's, Christiana Campbell's, King's Arms and Shields taverns from 4:15-10 p.m. Food trucks are scheduled to operate in the Historic Area on Nicholson Street along Market Square and be open for business at 2 p.m.

A town crier officially opens the holiday season from the steps of the colonial Courthouse at 4 p.m. Themed musical performances and festivities are held throughout the Historic Area until the fireworks demonstrations at 7 p.m.:

- On the Palace Green, enjoy the vintage swing holiday sounds of the Truetime Honeys and 504 Supreme to salute the Colonial Williamsburg restoration era of the 1930s at 4 and 5:30 p.m. New this year, guests are invited to gather on the Palace Green to hear a reading of a Williamsburg Christmas tale "Goodwin and the Ghost" at 5 p.m. followed by an illumination ceremony at the George Wythe House at 5:20 p.m.
- In Market Square, the Westminster Ringers offer enchanting handbell selections at 4:15 and 5:15 p.m. At 6 p.m., the William & Mary Botetourt Chamber Singers perform classic songs of the holiday season.
- Outside the Ludwell-Paradise house on Duke of Gloucester Street between N. Queen and Colonial streets, listen to the Jubilee Performers capture the spirit of traditional African-American song at 4 and 5:15 p.m.
- Outside the James Anderson House on Duke of Gloucester Street between Colonial and Botetourt streets, hear performances of popular 18th-century music at 4:15, 5:30 and 6:15 p.m.
- Outside the Raleigh Tavern, hear cherished holiday songs performed a cappella by the College of William & Mary's Gentlemen of the College at 4, 5:30 and 6:15 p.m. The Raleigh Tavern is illuminated at 5 p.m. in a ceremony featuring the Colonial Williamsburg Fifes and Drums.
- On the Capitol's north lawn along Nicholson Street, the William & Mary Appalachian Music Ensemble performs heritage Southern Appalachian music at 4, 5 and 6 p.m.

In addition to scheduled musical performances, the Colonial Williamsburg Fifes and Drums will perform simultaneous concerts of seasonal regimental music of the 18th century in the Capitol circle, on the Palace Green and outside the colonial Courthouse at 6:40 p.m. in anticipation of the three fireworks displays that follow.

Simultaneous free fireworks demonstrations above the Governor’s Palace, Magazine and Capitol begin promptly at 7 p.m. and are followed by a torch-lit procession of the Fifes and Drums down Duke of Gloucester Street. Tickets for premium guaranteed seating on Palace Green are available at www.colonialwilliamsburg.com and are \$25 per guest. Premium seating opens at 3 p.m. and is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Event-related street closures are anticipated and guests and members of the community are encouraged to plan accordingly. Guest parking is available at the Colonial Williamsburg Regional Visitor Center.

Tickets and program information are available by visiting colonialwilliamsburg.com/grandillumination. Dining information and reservations are available via colonialwilliamsburghotels.com/events. Tickets, reservations and information are available by calling 855-296-6627, toll-free. Information, dining reservations and same-day program tickets are available via the free Colonial Williamsburg Explorer app, which can be downloaded from the Apple App Store and Google Play. Information is also available by following Colonial Williamsburg on [Facebook](#) and [@colonialwmsburg](#) on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

Media contacts: Joseph Straw
 757-220-7287
 jstraw@cwf.org

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 nearly 600 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.