I was talking with a couple of women who are tried-and-true Newport News natives. Born and raised right here, I asked them what were some of the highlights they loved about our area and where they like to go on weekends or days off. They were both very quick to answer and both remarked how lucky we are to have so many attractions and fun things to do right here on the Peninsula.

**DAY ONE**

Morning:

Let’s visit *Jamestown Settlement*, a living-history museum with a re-creation of a circa 1610 fort and a Powhatan Indian village. The three ship replicas, *Susan Constant*, *Godspeed*, and *Discovery*, are also harbored here and everyone is welcome to board and explore. Inside the main building, a special exhibition, called *Tenacity: Women in Jamestown and Early Virginia*, allows you to explore the little-known, captivating personal stories of real women in Jamestown and the early Virginia colony and their tenacious spirit and impact on a fledgling society.

Lunch in the Jamestown Settlement Café.

Afternoon:

We’ll take the Colonial Parkway to Yorktown and the *American Revolution Museum*. Here we tell the story of our nation’s founding, from the twilight of the colonial period to the dawn of the Constitution and beyond. Indoor galleries feature period artifacts, immersive environments and interactive exhibits and films, including *The Siege of Yorktown*.

Outside, enter into a Continental Army encampment. Here you can learn about the daily life of a soldier and take in demonstrations on medical treatment, camp life, and cooking, and see firings of muskets and artillery. You can also see a Revolution-era farm, based on a real-life 18th century family. Imagine what it would be like to help with chores in the kitchen, in the tobacco barn, and with crops in the garden.

Running through March 22, 2020, a special exhibition of the *Forgotten Soldier* features personal stories of enslaved and free African Americans who fought on both sides of the American Revolution and their contributions in establishing this nation. Take in interactive exhibits and visually compelling art displays that encourage your group to shift their gaze to see events of American history in a new light.

Dinner:

Before heading to our hotel, we’ll stop for dinner and share some stories of things we’ve seen today.

**DAY TWO**

Morning:

Rise and shine with breakfast at our hotel and then begin our day at the *Virginia Living Museum*, experiencing native animal exhibits depicting...
Virginia’s natural heritage from the mountains to the sea. Meet finned, furry, and feathered friends in indoor and outdoor habitats. Hands-on exhibits, a touch tank with horseshoe crabs and sea stars await you! The red wolf, eagles, a moray eel and bobcat are only a few of the native animals you will experience. Re-live the age of the dinosaur in the outdoor Dinosaur Discovery Trail with 16-foot life-like dinosaurs and more.

We’ll have an early lunch at the Wild Side Café before moving to our next destination.

Afternoon:

We begin our afternoon at The Mariners’ Museum and Park, one of the largest maritime museums in the country. Your group will explore rare figureheads, handcrafted ship models, and other gems in more than 90,000 square feet of gallery space with a docent who will share nautical tales and interpret artifacts that celebrate the spirit of the ocean. Inside the museum is the USS Monitor Center, which tells the story of The Battle of the Ironclads, which took place just off the shores of Newport News and Hampton. This crucial naval battle was fought between the USS Monitor and the CSS Virginia (Merrimack), ships that changed our navy from wooden vessels to ironclad.

Dinner:

Tonight we’ll dine at one of the great restaurants we have in City Center. If the weather is nice, we can enjoy the outdoor seating at any one of our restaurants.

DAY THREE

Morning:

Today we travel just a short distance to Hampton (actually you won’t even know you’ve gone from one place to the other) and make our first stop at Fort Monroe and the Casemate Museum. The largest stone fort in the United States, it was designed to protect Hampton Roads (our rivers) from enemy attack. The fort remained in Union hands during the American Civil War and was an active U.S. Army post until 2011. The Casemate Museum is housed in casemates or “fortified chambers” within the fort’s walls. Exhibits chronicle over 400 years of social and military history at the site, including the “Contraband Decision” of 1861 and the cell where Jefferson Davis was imprisoned after the Civil War. Should you choose a guide, they will take you through the fort and highlight Robert E. Lee’s quarters, the home Abraham Lincoln stayed in while here, and much more.

Lunch at The Grey Goose in Hampton.

Afternoon:

Just a few steps from our lunch spot is the Hampton History Museum. Hampton is the oldest English-speaking city in the United States (our docent will explain) and from the first landing at Point Comfort to the ladies of Hidden Figures and NASA, there’s decades of information here. We will also get a better understanding of the Contraband Decision while touring the museum.

Next we have a treat! We get to take a spin on the Hampton Carousel. First installed in 1920, the completely restored carousel is housed in its own weather-protected pavilion on the city’s downtown waterfront. It is one of only 170 antique wooden merry-go-rounds still existing in the U.S.

Let’s head back to the hotel for a rest and then have dinner in Newport News.

DAY FOUR:

Unfortunately, all good things must come to an end and after you enjoy breakfast at the hotel, we must say good-bye…but the door is ALWAYS open and we look forward to your return!