

## **AAA/CAA Travel Counselors/Agents Invited to 5-Day, 4-Night Holiday Familiarization Tour, Nov. 28- Dec. 2, 2018**

*~ Tour includes Newport News, Hampton, Norfolk, and Portsmouth ~*

**Coastal Virginia, Aug. 17, 2018** – From the Virginia Peninsula to Southside Hampton Roads, staff members from the American Automobile Association (AAA) and the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA) are invited to experience an incredible assortment of drive- and walk-through holiday light shows, historic homes decorated for the season and live entertainment during the **14<sup>th</sup> Annual Hi-Lite Hampton Roads Holiday Familiarization Tour**.

This 5-day, 4-night tour is designed to familiarize AAA/CAA counselors and travel agents with not just the holiday events in the region, but also the attractions and wide variety of lodging, dining, and shopping options available in the Coastal Virginia cities of Newport News, Hampton, Norfolk, and Portsmouth.

The tour starts Nov. 28 with a visit to Downtown Norfolk's **Waterside District**, followed by a short passenger ferry ride to Portsmouth to revert back to your childhood days at the **Children's Museum of Virginia**. At nightfall, guests will visit the famed **Winter Wonderland** collection of animatronic figures among holiday-inspired scenes at the **Portsmouth Art & Cultural Center**.

After dinner at the **Renaissance Portsmouth Waterfront Hotel**, which includes a "Meet & Greet" presentation by the **Virginia Arts Festival**, guests will return to the **Quality Inn Lake Wright** for a good night's sleep. While on the motorcoach, don't forget to look out the window to see the skylines of Downtown Norfolk and Olde Towne Portsmouth illuminated for the holiday season!

The group will start Day 2 (Nov. 29) with breakfast at the host hotel, followed by a riding tour of **Naval Station Norfolk**, the world's largest naval base. Prior to lunch at a Norfolk hotel, guests will take a behind-the-scenes tour of the **Virginia Zoo**. After lunch, the itinerary includes tours of the **Half Moone Cruise & Celebration Center**, **Nauticus**, and the **Battleship Wisconsin**.

The afternoon will include a sweet treat featuring **Doumar's** famous original hand-rolled ice cream cone, first sold in 1904 at the St. Louis Exposition. The next stop will be Norfolk's expanded **Chrysler Museum of Art**. The group will get a chance to freshen up at their hotel prior to a special holiday dinner and will end the night with a stroll through **Norfolk Botanical's "Garden of Lights" Million Bulb Walk**.

Day 3 (Nov. 30) will take the group to Newport News to tour the **Virginia Living Museum**, where they can catch a holiday planetarium show or just connect to Virginia's natural heritage. After lunch, guests will experience the world-renowned **Mariners' Museum** and its adjoining **USS Monitor Center**, one of the largest and most comprehensive maritime history museums in the world.

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After checking in to the **Holiday Inn Newport News at City Center** for the next two nights, the motorcoach group will travel to Williamsburg to take a walking tour of the historic area of **Colonial Williamsburg**, followed by an evening at the **10<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Town: A Busch Gardens Celebration**.

Day 4 (Dec. 1), will start with breakfast at the **Hampton Inn & Suites in Newport News**, followed by a tour of the **Virginia Air & Space Center** and a spin on the **1920 Hampton Carousel**. After visiting historic **Fort Monroe** and the **Casemate Museum**, guests will be treated to the nation's oldest African-American museum and its holiday bazaar at **Hampton University Museum**. After lunch and a visit to the **Hampton History Museum**, the group will travel back to Newport News to tour the **Virginia War Museum**. After some downtime and a hosted dinner at **Burger Theory** inside the Holiday Inn Newport News, the evening will continue with **Hollydazzle** in City Center at Oyster Point.

After Hollydazzle, the group will venture into **Newport News Park** for a two-mile ride through **Celebration in Lights**, Virginia's first drive-through light show. In this 7,711-acre park, more than 200 displays, including 70 animated ones, are set up in themed areas, such as "*Forest Friends*" and "*Battle of the Ironclads*."

The final day of the FAM tour, a travel day, is Sunday, Dec. 2. After breakfast at the **Holiday Inn Express & Suites** in Newport News, participants will board the motorcoach for airport transfers or car retrieval and return to their AAA/CAA offices with knowledge of the many year-round attractions in Coastal Virginia so they, too, can **Hi-Lite Hampton Roads!**

The invitation is limited to AAA/CAA travel counselors who have not attended the Hi-Lite FAM in the last five years (i.e. travel counselors who took the FAM in 2013-2017 are not eligible to attend). Those who took the FAM prior to 2013 and are interested in attending again will be wait-listed until November 1, 2018, with acceptance subject to space availability.

Because space is limited, early registration is highly encouraged. A \$150 participation fee is required from those AAA/CAA staff members whose applications are accepted. A companion rate of \$100 is available for those who would like to bring one guest and share his/her room. For additional FAM information, contact Dana Howe with Visit Norfolk at 1-800-368-3097, Ext. 627, or via email at [dhowe@visitnorfolktoday.com](mailto:dhowe@visitnorfolktoday.com). For questions regarding registration or invoices, contact Lottie Onks with the Hampton CVB at [lonks@hamptoncvb.com](mailto:lonks@hamptoncvb.com) or 757-728-5332. Payment in full is due by Nov. 1, 2018.

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