



Hampton Roads for the Holidays

Holiday cheer abounds in the Hampton Roads region for the holidays. Enjoy ice skating at the Virginia Air & Space Center; a nautical parade of lights on the Hampton River, or cheering on traditional street parades in Coliseum Central and downtown Hampton; there is an activity or event for every group between mid-November and December. This particular itinerary starts with the first Friday of December and includes Colonial Williamsburg's Grand Illumination – a tradition always held on the first Sunday of December.

First Friday in December

- Arrive in time for an early afternoon check in to your Hampton hotel and ready for evening festivities with a tour of the **Hampton History Museum** and the **First Light Celebration**. The event commemorates the first recorded English Christmas in America, which took place in Hampton (December 29, 1608). Experience Olde English caroling, children's activities, ginger cakes, wassail, corn cakes, and more. Attendees will also enjoy a reenactment of the story of Captain John Smith and the Kecoughtan natives. The festivities will conclude with the blue star lighting atop the museum.
- Enjoy dinner next door at the **Grey Goose Tea Room** before traveling to neighboring Newport News for **Holly Dazzle at City Center** – a spectacular holiday event combining fireworks and musical entertainment centered around an eight acre fountain plaza.

Saturday:

- Learn of man's quest for flight and space exploration at the **Virginia Air & Space Center**.
- Take a spin on the **1920 Hampton Carousel**, decorated for the holidays.
- Visit the oldest African-American museum in the US, **Hampton University Museum** and enjoy the **Holiday and Kwanzaa Marketplace** where you may purchase holiday and Kwanzaa gifts from the museum gift shop. The shop specializes in African, African-American, and other multicultural items.

- Stroll tree lined Queensway in downtown Hampton and lunch at a local restaurant.
- View native Virginia wildlife at the **Virginia Living Museum** and enjoy a holiday planetarium presentation. OR see the largest and most comprehensive maritime history museums in the world, **The Mariners' Museum** and the **USS *Monitor* Center**.
- Enjoy festive decorations, dinner and shopping at **Peninsula Town Center**. Choose from over 70 shops and eateries. Also visit St. Nick in Mary's Park.
- Ride through a two mile holiday display **Celebration in Lights** at Newport News Park.

Sunday:

- Depart for a fun-filled day of touring, starting with breakfast at the historic **Magnolia House Bed and Breakfast**.
- Tour historic **Fort Monroe** and the **Casemate Museum**. The museum chronicles the history of the largest stone fort built in America.
- Enjoy brunch at the Historic Chamberlin's Chesapeake Dining Room with views of the mighty harbor.
- Be part of festivities as you stroll the historic area and candlelit buildings of **Colonial Williamsburg**. View the **Grand Illumination** and fireworks display from three locations—the Governor's Palace, Powder Magazine, and Colonial Capitol.
- Festivities continue at **Christmas Town: A Busch Gardens Celebration**. Holiday traditions, dazzling shows and one-of-a-kind gift ideas will make everyone say, "Now this is Christmas." You are free to experience the park and have dinner on your own to maximize time among the holiday displays that includes Santa's workshop, a fifty-foot lighted/animated tree and more than two million Christmas lights throughout the park.

Monday:

- Enjoy breakfast and depart for home or extend your stay to include holiday displays at the **Norfolk Botanical Garden of Lights** or experience the spectacular showcase of thousands of glittering lights and animated figures known as **Winter Wonderland at Courthouse Galleries** in Portsmouth.

