

By Daniella Byck, Erin Gifford, Nevin Martell,
Rebecca Norris, and Madeline Weinfield

G R E A T
PLACES
to
STAY

From posh resorts to charming
small-town inns, here are
more than 30 of our favorite nearby
escapes for your next vacation

An infinity pool overlooks the
golf course at Keswick Hall,
a resort near Charlottesville.

WHAT makes somewhere a great place to stay?

That varies by traveler, of course. For some people, it's all about proximity to nature, whether lake or beach, mountain or forest, or even dark skies. Perhaps amenities matter most—standout dining, a robust set of activities, a lovely spa, or fun for dogs. Some may want a spot that appeals to kids and grownups alike. Others might prefer a quiet, adults-only refuge.

On the following pages are 34 terrific destinations, most within a four-hour drive of DC, that offer a variety of experiences. We've chosen some of our favorite resorts, hotels, inns, and glamping sites—and surveyed readers for their recommendations, too. Consider these can't-miss choices for the next time you want an easy and special getaway.

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF LOCATIONS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED



GREAT ACCESS TO NATURE

POSTCARD CABINS

Tucked in the woods at two locations near Shenandoah National Park, these tiny homes deliver the romance of camping without sacrificing comfort. Glamping cabins are set far enough apart to feel peaceful and private, and each modern structure comes with rustic amenities such as a fire pit and picnic table. But step inside and it's another story: a plush queen bed; a well-appointed kitchenette; a bathroom with a hot-water shower and flushing toilet; air conditioning; and a picture window framing the trees await. If the forest backdrop isn't enough of a hint, there's even a small box inviting you to lock your phone away for the duration of your stay.

**2010 MADISON RD., STANARDSVILLE, VA.
655 ALUM SPRINGS RD., BASYE, VA.**

— Drive time from DC: Two hours —

BEST WATERFRONT HOTEL

THE TIDES INN

Located on the end of a small peninsula off the Rappahannock River, the boutique hotel exudes chill Chesapeake vibes. There's a tidy marina dotted with boats—many guests arrive by water rather than by land—and a slender beach alongside a pool with shoreline views. Get out on the water by signing up for optional experiences, including an informative (and delicious) oyster-farm excursion, sailing cruise, lesson on catching and cooking crabs, or kayak outing. Finish the day at Salt & Meadow restaurant to savor Northern Neck-inspired cuisine such as crispy fried soft-shell crab on saffron-fennel purée and steamed local clams swimming in a garlicky white-wine sauce.

480 KING CARTER DR., IRVINGTON, VA.

— Drive time from DC: Two hours and 45 minutes —



GREAT FOR A WELLNESS RETREAT

THE BLACKBURN INN

Just outside downtown Staunton, this sprawling 80-acre property is a haven for health. The world-class spa offers a soothing array of treatments and therapies to help relax even the tensest type-A Washingtonian. A lengthy massage menu includes a version targeting stress, anxiety, and inflammation with CBD oil and an arnica massage to relieve muscle pain and migraines. By opening pores and flushing out toxins, Ayurvedic herbal steam therapy is helpful for deep detoxification. Stack multiple treatments in the white-brick spa, creating a sunrise-to-sunset relaxation regimen that'll have you reassessing whether you ever need to go home.

301 GREENVILLE AVE., STAUNTON, VA.

— Drive time from DC: Two and a half hours —

BEST VINEYARD ESCAPE

NICEWONDER FARM & VINEYARDS

Virginia wine country has many options for an overnight stay, though none quite like an immersive vineyard vacation at this Appalachian Mountain retreat. Thoughtfully appointed rooms offer charm and comfort, but for a truly one-of-a-kind stay, book one of the luxurious woodland yurts. Savor the terroir by visiting the 13-acre vineyard, where you can sample vintages in the modernist barn. Adventures continue on terra firma, with golf next door at the Virginian's 18-hole course or a guided fly-fishing expedition on a local river. Then unwind at the spa or in the infinity pool, taking in the verdant landscape.

22010 NICEWONDER DR., BRISTOL, VA.

— Drive time from DC: Five and a half hours —

GREAT FOR A FOODIE STAY

VISITATION HOTEL

The former monastery in downtown Frederick is now a boutique hotel boasting drive-worthy eats with *Top Chef* cred, thanks to Bryan and Michael Voltaggio. The brothers have returned to their hometown to showcase modernist Chesapeake-inspired fare at Wye Oak Tavern, which occupies the former chapel with soaring ceilings and shimmering stained glass windows. Look for playful dishes such as cold fried-chicken-liver pâté with a sourdough waffle and fried salted-cod "popsicles." After a night's rest in one of the sleek guest rooms, pop by Acorn Provisions for artfully poured lattes, cheffy sandos, and freshly baked pastries, including caramelized-apple Danishes and hefty chocolate-chip cookies.

211 E. CHURCH ST., FREDERICK

— Drive time from DC: One hour —

BEST LUXURY STAY

KESWICK HALL

READERS' PICK

Built in 1912 as a residence, the posh resort outside Charlottesville underwent a massive upgrade five years ago. The Edenic setting is best appreciated with a glass of wine on the terrace, watching the sun dip over the infinity pool and 18-hole Pete Dye-designed golf course. You could spend an entire weekend at the resort, with its spa, European red-clay tennis courts, polished rooms, and candlelit Marigold by Jean-Georges restaurant. But for those who do want to stray from the 600-acre estate, a fleet of BMWs await for chauffeured jaunts to the surrounding wineries.

701 CLUB DR., KESWICK, VA.

— Drive time from DC: Two hours and 15 minutes —



BEST SMALL-TOWN INN

RED FOX INN

Take a page out of the Kennedys' travel itinerary: This historic gem, beloved by JFK and Jackie, features Colonial Revival architecture, traditional decor, and a vainscoted tavern with an extensive wine list. (Special attention is paid to the state's abundant vineyards.) Despite being part of one of the oldest continually operating inns in the country, the 22 guest rooms have modern comforts such as Egyptian-cotton linens, Apple TVs, and breakfast delivered daily. But perhaps the best amenity is the location, with direct access to Washington Street, the main drag where independent eateries and boutiques line the brick sidewalks.

2 E. WASHINGTON ST., MIDDLEBURG
— Drive time from DC: One hour —

BEST DESTINATION SPA

THE LODGE AT WOODLOCH

Considered one of the top spas in the country, this adults-only, all-inclusive sanctuary in the Pocono Mountains is worth the trip (and splurge). The remote spa goes beyond the typical offerings, with a flurry-packed Snow Room—the only one in the US—a spacious Himalayan-salt sauna, and a coed soaking area with massaging waterfalls. The extensive treatment menu features options for couples and moms-to-be. Round out your relaxing retreat with night yoga under the stars and wildflower walks, or simply enjoy the tranquil setting in an Adirondack chair overlooking the private lake. Rooms offer views of the garden or water.

109 RIVER BIRCH LN., HAWLEY, PA.
— Drive time from DC: Five hours —

PHOTOGRAPH BY LAURA GORDON

TRAVEL TREND

WOO-WOO WELLNESS

Hotel spas are offering more than facials and hot-stone massages, giving guests access to unconventional wellness treatments that incorporate sound and energy healing. Here's where to find these relaxing experiences.



Four Seasons Hotel Baltimore

Tuning forks are placed on different acupuncture points during group sound-healing sessions that are free for guests. One-on-one reiki and chakra balancing are additional options for energy-focused spa treatments.

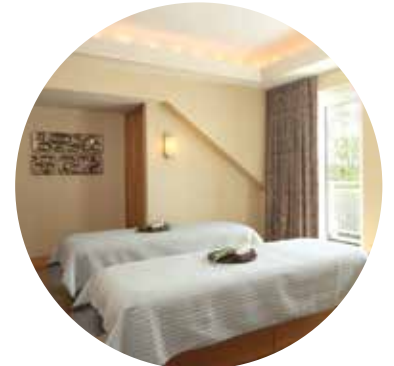
200 INTERNATIONAL DR., BALTIMORE
— Drive time from DC: One hour —



Lansdowne Resort

Don an eye mask to lounge on a raft in the indoor pool during sound-bath sessions. Dulcet tones from crystal singing bowls and other instruments echo off the water for meditative acoustics. There are also private sound sessions with the same chimes and gongs.

44050 WOODRIDGE PKWY., LEESBURG
— Drive time from DC: 45 minutes —



Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay

For anyone who's ever wanted to try reiki, an energy-healing practice that uses light touch, this Eastern Shore hotel has options for both humans and pets. The spa is also home to the Somadome, a UFO-like pod equipped with special vibrational and light frequencies.

100 HERON BLVD. AT ROUTE 50, CAMBRIDGE
— Drive time from DC: An hour and 45 minutes —

FAVORITE DOG-FRIENDLY HOTEL

WYLDER HOTEL TILGHMAN ISLAND

Even pups need a vacation during the dog days of summer. While many destinations allow them, this bayfront hotel on the tip of Talbot County welcomes them with free treats. Human guests will appreciate rooms with private porches and waterfront views, while dogs can enjoy access to pretty much the entire property, minus the indoor restaurant and pool. They can indulge in summer fare such as hot dogs and burgers from the pet-friendly menu at Tickler's Crab Shack, roll around in the sand at the private beach, and climb onto paddleboards and kayaks for a maritime adventure.

21551 CHESAPEAKE HOUSE DR., TILGHMAN, MD.
— Drive time from DC: An hour and 45 minutes —

GREAT FOR AQUATIC FUN
THE OMNI HOMESTEAD RESORT

The historic property finished a major refresh three years ago, zhuzhing up all 483 guest rooms and the Warm Spring Pools, perhaps the resort’s most famous feature. Austere bathhouses with open skylights hold the pools, where spring water flows at a toasty 98 degrees. The natural springs also fuel the adults-only Serenity Garden pool, part of the spa complex, as well as slides and a lazy river at the onsite water park. Take a break from the water with a round on the golf course or catch a movie in the theater lounge.

7696 SAM SNEAD HWY., HOT SPRINGS, VA.

– Drive time from DC: Three and a half hours –



PHOTOGRAPH BY GORDON GREGORY



BEST FOR ACTIVITIES
SALAMANDER MIDDLEBURG

If there was any question about whether you’re in equestrian country, the greeting committee puts that to rest: It’s not unusual to find the mini ponies Cupcake and Peppermint trotting into the lobby to welcome guests. Set across 340 pastoral acres, Salamander pairs classic Southern hospitality with posh country pursuits. (Think falconry, horseback riding, clay shooting, and fishing in the stocked pond.) How you spend your stay is up to you, with sporty options such as pickleball and golf; hiking and rafting in nature; culinary crusades, from mixology classes to cooking demos; or simply anchoring yourself at the resort’s renowned spa. The pool complex, which is opening this spring, includes a dramatic 40-foot infinity-edge waterfall and a new outdoor dining spot with poolside service.

500 N. PENDLETON ST., MIDDLEBURG

– Drive time from DC: An hour and 15 minutes –

BEST COUNTRY INN
GOODSTONE INN

If you’re hopping onto this year’s “farm charm” travel trend, add this bucolic resort right outside historic Middleburg to your list. With just 18 guest rooms and suites across six buildings and 265 acres, it’s an intimate escape. Balance country pursuits—greeting Greyson the llama and tubing on the creek—with luxury amenities such as farm-to-table fine dining and massages. (Michelle Obama’s massage therapist offers his signature Riders Relief Massage, designed for equestrians but enjoyed by all visitors.) The farm bona fides are legit: Meals are fueled by the property’s produce gardens, free-roaming hens, and beehives.

36205 SNAKE HILL RD., MIDDLEBURG

– Drive time from DC: An hour and 15 minutes –

PHOTOGRAPH BY GREG POWERS

GREAT FOR AN
EXTRAVAGANT STAY
THE INN AT LITTLE WASHINGTON

The Rappahannock County inn has a fairy-tale origin story: Once a humble rural gas station, it’s now a well-known destination with a Michelin-starred restaurant. Many guests come for the multi-course dinner (which concludes with a pun-wielding fromager pushing the cheese trolley), but there’s decadence to be found all weekend long. The 24 guest rooms are outfitted with classic wallpaper, and some have soaking tubs and seating areas. Explore the area by horse-drawn carriage, walk the lovely grounds, or decompress at the new swimming pool, opening this spring. Breakfast is in the conservatory, a space that’s part greenhouse and full fantasy.

309 MIDDLE ST., WASHINGTON, VA.

– Drive time from DC: An hour and 20 minutes –

GREAT FOR DESIGN-MINDED
TRAVELERS
POLYMATH PARK

It’s one thing to see the structures designed by legendary architect Frank Lloyd Wright, but what if you could spend a night in them? That’s the intention of Polymath Park, a resort with four Usonian homes sketched by Wright and his protégé Peter Berndtson. The three-to-four-bedroom houses feature the style’s signature natural light, organic materials, midcentury-modern features, and flat roofs. The onsite Tree-Tops Restaurant has a few options, including a meal in your own private treehouse. Located 30 minutes from Wright’s masterpiece, Fallingwater, it’s an experiential base camp for an architecture-focused getaway.

187 EVERGREEN LN., ACME, PA.

– Drive time from DC: Three hours and 15 minutes –



BEST FOR FAMILIES

KINGSMILL RESORT

A variety of accommodations are available at the Williamsburg resort, depending on the needs of your crew—spacious suites, condos, river-front cottages, and the 7,000-square-foot Estate, a four-bedroom retreat with its own pool. Guests can play two 18-hole golf courses, including an Arnold Palmer and Ed Seay creation, and young golfers can learn how to swing at three-day summer camps. The lazy river is a fun water-park-style pool, and adults will appreciate the full-service spa. Five restaurants mean options for all tastes, with breakfast buffets, country-club-inspired plates, and kids' menus. Colonial Williamsburg and Busch Gardens are both within a 15-minute drive.

1010 KINGSMILL RD., WILLIAMSBURG
— Drive time from DC: Two and a half hours —

GREAT VALUE

THE SCHOOLHOUSE HOTEL

The former school (go, Green Devils!) was developed into a boutique hotel by the Disability Opportunity Fund, and all 30 rooms are ADA-compliant. It's an affordable option for a weekend of recreation in the New River-Greenbrier Valley. Starting rates peak at \$210 a night during the popular summer season, though they typically hover around \$150 to \$170. Rooms have double, queen, or king beds, and you can opt for accommodations with a more spacious bathroom. In this schoolhouse, the cafeteria is a restaurant with Southern flair, and recess is whenever you desire on the rooftop bar with mountain views.

125 SCHOOLHOUSE WAY, WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, W. VA.
— Drive time from DC: Four hours —

PHOTOGRAPH BY CAMERON RUSSELL

TRAVEL TREND

HUSHPITALITY

The ultimate luxury? Peace and quiet. Getaways that truly take you away from the noise are in vogue (just check the news for a reason why), from secluded locations to private amenities. These three places embrace the trend.



Mirror Villas

The deluxe villas come with their own hot tubs and saunas so you can enjoy spa-style amenities away from crowds. One-way floor-to-ceiling windows bring elements of the outside in, while a location ensconced by trees keeps the hectic parts out.

13571 BLAIRS VALLEY RD., MERGERSBURG, PA.
— Drive time from DC: An hour and a half —



Inn at Willow Grove

Book a stay in one of the four standalone cottages to promote solitude—beignets and French-press coffee are dropped off daily for slow, quiet mornings. Up the tranquility with a treatment at the spa.

14079 STONES THROW DR., ORANGE, VA.
— Drive time from DC: An hour and a half —



Ella's Enchanted Treehouses

Four treehouses are perched among the leaves at this nature escape near Deep Creek Lake. No wi-fi or cable makes for an unplugged getaway, though creature comforts such as air conditioning are available.

BITTINGER, MD.
— Drive time from DC: Three hours —



BEST EASTERN SHORE HOTEL

INN AT PERRY CABIN



A weekend in one of the Eastern Shore's most charming towns calls for nautical lodging. This Colonial mansion on the banks of the Miles River has 78 bright rooms with sumptuous bedding and botanical bath products—a hint to stop into the tranquil spa. Lest you forget the nautical setting, the pretty inn has its own fleet, offering private charters, sunset cruises, and sailing lessons along the tributary and Chesapeake Bay. You can also enjoy the bay breeze at the pool and the 18-hole golf course. Complete the shore getaway with crabcakes in view of the very river from which they're sourced.

308 WATKINS LN., ST. MICHAELS
— Drive time from DC: An hour and a half —



BEST LAKE GETAWAY

LAKE POINTE INN

The Arts and Crafts-style bed-and-breakfast on the shore of Deep Creek Lake is home to 12 cozy rooms with gas fireplaces. You can enjoy proximity to the water in a number of ways: curled up with a book in the hammocks, paddling one of the inn's kayaks and canoes, or booking a room with reservoir views. Bring your morning coffee out to a rocking chair on the wraparound porch overlooking the lake for a peaceful start to the day, then enjoy a breakfast of baked goods, fruit, and dishes such as sourdough waffles topped with jammy berries or a savory bacon-egg-and-cheese frittata.

174 LAKE POINTE DR., McHENRY, MD.

— Drive time from DC: Three hours and 15 minutes —



FAVORITE STAYCATION HOTEL

FOUR SEASONS HOTEL WASHINGTON, DC

Looking for some respite without going far? This luxury hotel in Georgetown offers an easy escape. You don't need to leave the property for a meal at Bourbon Steak or cocktails in the moody lounge, but you could also hole up in your room the entire weekend, thanks to an extensive 24-hour room-service menu. The main draw is the sumptuous spa, where treatments range from classic massages and facials to trendy contrast and vibroacoustic therapies. Complete your staycation with a restorative night's sleep in a plush suite.

2800 PENNSYLVANIA AVE., NW

— Drive time from DC: None (that's the point!) —

BEST RESORT WORTH THE DRIVE

THE LODGE AT PRIMLAND, AUBERGE COLLECTION

If you're trekking to Southern Virginia, you'll want a destination that feels like a true departure from everyday life. This Blue Ridge Mountain resort delivers. Book a breezy room in the lodge—also home to the spa—or, for additional privacy, opt for cottages by the golf course and treehouses on the edge of the gorge. Three bars and restaurants celebrate the Appalachian setting with Southern fare and bourbon drinks. Fill days with birding hikes, foraging, and RTV picnics across 20 miles of wooded trail, but don't tire out before nightfall: The off-the-grid resort has its own observatory with high-powered telescopes and in-house astronomers.

2000 BUSTED ROCK RD., MEADOWS OF DAN, VA.

— Drive time from DC: Five and a half hours —

GREAT FOR GLAMPING

SANDY RIVER OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

Channel summer-camp fun without sacrificing creature comforts in the 650-square-foot luxury glamping tipis, complete with heated floors, air conditioning, full baths, and memory-foam beds. Cozy log cabins and a three-bedroom cottage offer additional options. Adventure is built in: Tackle the 60-obstacle treetop course with ziplines or rent kayaks and standup paddleboards to explore the Sandy River Reservoir. A heated pool, a sauna, a hot tub, and yoga classes provide quieter leisure. Dining is relaxed, with wood-fired pizzas, fresh salads, and handcrafted spirits. For those who opt to leave the property, the High Bridge Trail is ten minutes away, and the former rail bed is a solid path for rental bikes.

147 MONROE CHURCH RD., RICE, VA.

— Drive time from DC: 2 hours and 45 minutes —



READERS'
PICK

BEST BOUTIQUE HOTEL

THE WILDSET

A Scandinavian-chic standout in the heart of St. Michaels, the hotel—spread across four restored 19th-century buildings—delivers a hip alternative to the town's more traditional inns. Thirty-four bright, minimalist rooms feature Parachute linens, and some also have soaking tubs, balconies, and fireplaces. Pedal around the charming hamlet on one of the cruiser bikes, then spend cool Eastern Shore evenings huddled around the outdoor fire pits with complimentary s'mores. The coastal restaurant and raw bar Ruse is a destination in its own right, piloted by James Beard-nominated chef Michael Correll.

209 TALBOT ST., ST. MICHAELS

— Drive time from DC: An hour and 45 minutes —

TRAVEL TREND

ASTROTOURISM

The hottest tourist attraction? All things celestial. Dark skies, clear walls, and telescopes are in-demand amenities at these accommodations made for stargazing.



Beehives Domes

The seven domes here have a clear wall and skylights so you can fall asleep under the stars—without being exposed to the elements. The rural area has minimal light pollution, meaning good stargazing conditions. Private bathrooms and saunas plus a sleek kitchenette keep the experience squarely in glamping territory.

1 BUMBLEBEE CAMP, ACCIDENT, MD.

— Drive time from DC: Three hours —



Coopers Rock State Forest Cabins

This past fall, West Virginia State Parks opened five A-frames with floor-to-ceiling windows and skylights to highlight starry nights. The cabins, intended for charting the constellations, are situated in the dark forest, with telescopes at each abode.

61 COUNTY LINE DR., BRUCETON MILLS, W. VA.

— Drive time from DC: Three hours and 15 minutes —

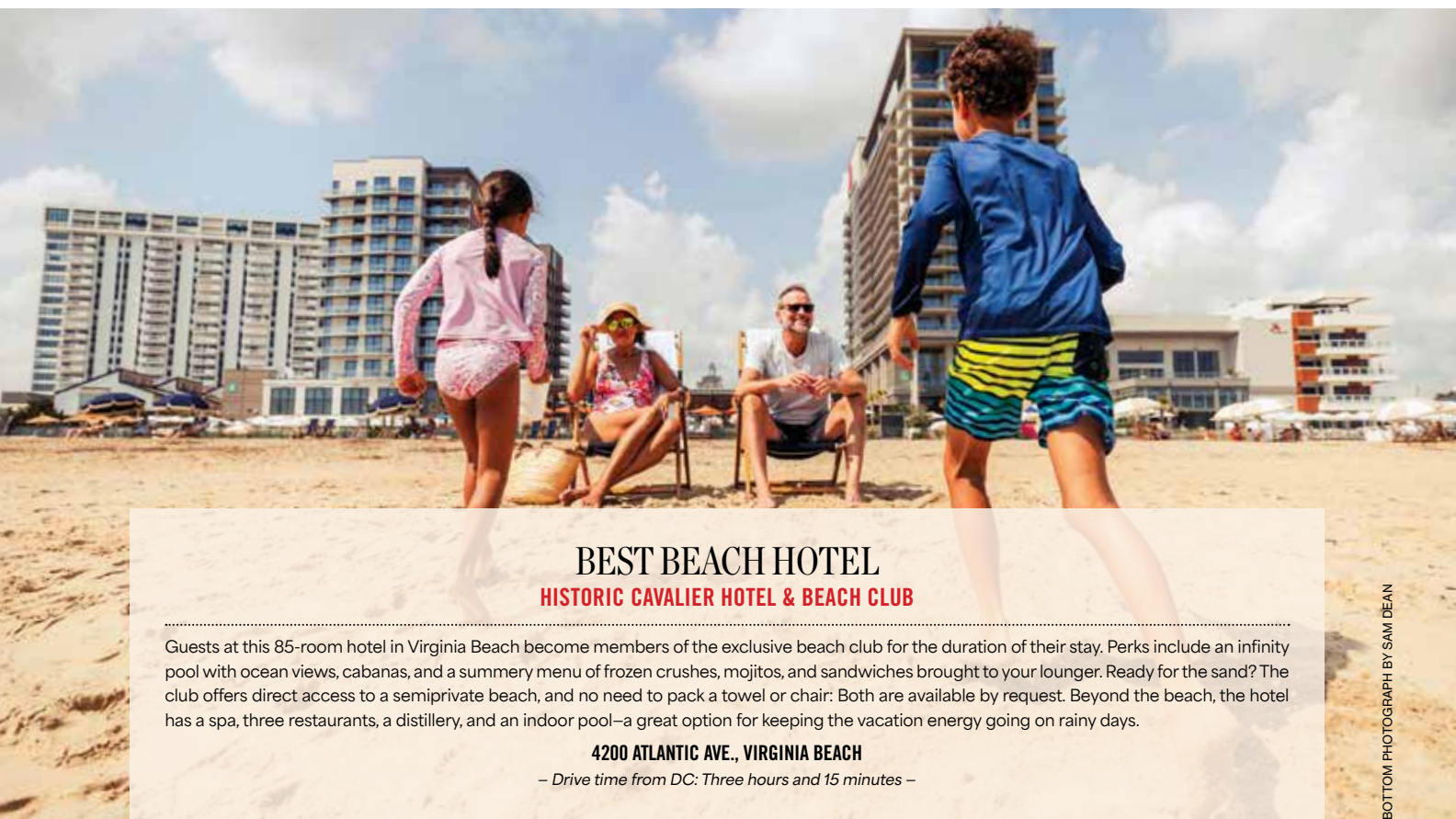


Camp Potomac Peak

When you book the Lodge—a dog-friendly accommodation with three bedrooms, two bathrooms, a living room, and kitchen—there's an extraterrestrial twist: The third bedroom is actually a clear dome on the roof, equipped with a telescope for astronomical pursuits.

3865 CACAPON RD., BERKELEY SPRINGS, W. VA.

— Drive time from DC: Two hours —



BEST BEACH HOTEL

HISTORIC CAVALIER HOTEL & BEACH CLUB

Guests at this 85-room hotel in Virginia Beach become members of the exclusive beach club for the duration of their stay. Perks include an infinity pool with ocean views, cabanas, and a summery menu of frozen crushes, mojitos, and sandwiches brought to your lounge. Ready for the sand? The club offers direct access to a semiprivate beach, and no need to pack a towel or chair: Both are available by request. Beyond the beach, the hotel has a spa, three restaurants, a distillery, and an indoor pool—a great option for keeping the vacation energy going on rainy days.

4200 ATLANTIC AVE., VIRGINIA BEACH

— Drive time from DC: Three hours and 15 minutes —



BEST MOUNTAIN INN

IRIS INN

Hole up in one of six treehouse-inspired cabins reserved for couples on a romantic mountain escape. These modern glass-and-timber structures sit on the hillside with floor-to-ceiling windows, screened decks, private hot tubs, and in-room fireplaces. The main inn has six guest rooms and three spacious cottages, many offering Shenandoah Valley vistas. Mornings bring a breakfast spread of housemade pastries and savories, while evenings feature seasonal dishes such as steamed mussels and spring-vegetable risotto. Make time for self-care at the onsite spa, which offers facials, massages, manicures, and body treatments. Skyline Drive is minutes away, and Shenandoah National Park's Rockfish Gap entrance is less than five miles by car, making scenic drives and hikes nearly effortless.

191 CHINQUAPIN DR., WAYNESBORO, VA.

— Drive time from DC: Two and a half hours —

BEST HISTORIC HOTEL

WILLIAMSBURG INN

For slumber steeped in history, this lodge places you in the middle of a Colonial village, though the inn itself opened in 1937. Built by John D. Rockefeller Jr., the landmark has welcomed royalty, world leaders, and a parade of US Presidents. You're a ten-minute walk from the Governor's Palace, where a fife-and-drum corps marches along Duke of Gloucester Street and costumed interpreters bring the Revolutionary era to life. Sixty-two rooms and four suites artfully blend old-fashioned elegance with modern comfort. Think marble bathrooms, rainfall showers, Bose sound systems, and nightly turn-down service. Mornings begin in the Terrace Room with avocado toast and crispy prosciutto or banana-nut flapjacks.

W

136 E. FRANCIS ST., WILLIAMSBURG

— Drive time from DC: Two and a half hours —