



For Immediate Release

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Festivals Abound in the Mid-Atlantic Region

The culture and heritage of the Mid-Atlantic is easily identified through the many festivals that celebrate everything from the fruits of the vine to the bounty from the deep blue seas, the wail of the fiddle to the flicker of film on the big screen, and the roar of a Harley exhaust to the flapping of cotton sails.

The members of the Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance (MATPRA) invite travelers to discover our region through our special events. (For more information on individual listings, please contact the state tourism office or the CVB listed.)

Delaware

Home to two of the TOP 100 Festivals in the US in 2014 - the 81st Annual Dover Days Festival and the Delaware Wine & Festival! Dover Days, a FREE three-day festival, celebrates Delaware heritage and the Delaware Wine & Beer Festival showcases local breweries, wineries and distilleries. *Kent County & Greater Dover Delaware Convention and Visitors Bureau*, Lorraine J. Dion, ldion@visitdover.com, visitdover.com

Mid-Atlantic Wine and Food Festival returns to Wilmington on May 14-18, 2014. Ninety chefs from six continents will participate in 43 events scheduled throughout the state. Designed to be the region's premier wine and food event, the festival features international vintners, breweries, distilleries and chefs in collaboration with local talent. *Greater Wilmington Convention & Visitors Bureau*, Lyn Lewis, LynLewis@visitwilmingtonde.com, visitwilmingtonde.com

There's nothing better than a Southern Delaware spring! Here are just a few not-to-be missed reasons why: Rehoboth Chocolate Festival March 1, Lewes Tulip Festival April 10 – 12, Great Delaware Kite Festival April 18, Mid Atlantic Wine and Food Festival May 14 – 28, Milton Horseshoe Crab/Shorebird Festival May 24. *Southern Delaware Tourism*, Tina Coleman, tinac@visitsoutherndelaware.com, visitsoutherndelaware.com

Maryland

Maryland goes all “Star-Spangled” in 2014, with events in several destinations commemorating the 200th anniversary of the writing of our national anthem. This summer Chesapeake Campaign events in Leonardtown, St. Leonard, Brookville, Fairlee, and Bladensburg are precursors to a 10-day Star-Spangled Spectacular in Baltimore in September. See www.starspangled200.com for details. *Maryland Office of Tourism, Connie Yingling, cyingling@visitmaryland.org, visitmaryland.org*

Mark your calendars for June in Baltimore! From HonFest to the African American Festival, visitors can experience culture, music, art and more. The new three-day LGBT film festival, B'More QFest, will feature special programming in conjunction with Pride, which for the first time ever, continues on for 10 days. *Visit Baltimore, Monee Cottman, mcottman@baltimore.org, baltimore.org*

Celebrate Southern Maryland traditions at the annual Solomons Maritime Festival May 3, featuring antique boats and vintage marine engines. Taste traditional Southern Maryland foods, enjoy music, see Chesapeake Bay retrievers in action and watch traditional crafts people demonstrate their skills. Free 30-minute cruises aboard the *Wm. B. Tennison*. Free admission. *Calvert County Department of Economic Development, Joyce Baki, bakija@co.cal.md.us, choosecalvert.com.*

Great music, fun, value – that’s the Western Maryland Blues Fest May 29 – June 6, 2014. An annual community celebration centered on one of America's most enduring musical forms set amidst raw-boned guitar riffs and emotionally charged vocals, Blues Fest serves up four incredible days of musical entertainment and family fun. *Hagerstown-Washington County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Rachel Nichols, Rachel@marylandmemories.com, marylandmemories.com*

This year, visitors to Harford County, Maryland will want to enjoy several annual festivals including the Decoy Festival (May), Garden Festival at Ladew (May), Seafood Festival (Aug), Bel Air BBQ Bash (Aug), Arts and Crafts Festivals (Aug/Sept), Maryland Wine Festival (Sept) and Darlington Apple Festival (Oct). *Harford County Tourism, Wini Roche, wjroche@harfordcountymd.gov, www.harfordmd.com*

Pennsylvania

A year of regional festivals awaits visitors to Northeastern Pennsylvania's Endless Mountains: spring's annual Maple Weekend at Loch's Maple, summer's Canton Wine & Cheese Festival, the Airing of the Quilts in Fall in addition to Kiwanis' Winterfest and our annual country and county fairs! *Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau, Morgan Christopher, sales@endlessmountains.org, endlessmountains.org/Events.aspx*

Hello Festivals, Hello Erie PA! Mark your calendars for Roar on the Shore, Discover Presque Isle Days, Beer on the Bay, Harley Davidson Bike Fest, Celebrate Erie, Erie Art Museum, Blues/Jazz Festival, Microbrew Fest, Ethnic Festivals, Eerie Horror Fest, Wine Country Harvest Festival plus free concerts, fairs and performances year-round! *VisitErie, Christine Pennsy, cvb1@VisitErie.com, VisitErie.com*

Adams County, Pa., is home to a variety of annual festivals – most focused on themes beyond Gettysburg’s rich Civil War history. Music, arts and culture are the centerpiece of many large-scale events in Adams County, including the semi-annual Gettysburg Bluegrass Festival,

Gettysburg Fest, and the National Apple Harvest Festival. *Gettysburg Convention & Visitors Bureau, Carl Whitehill, cwhitehill@gettysburg.travel, gettysburg.travel/*

Lancaster County abounds with fun and unique offerings for festival-goers, including the tuneful LAUNCH Music Festival in Downtown Lancaster in mid-April, the tasty Whoopie Pie Festival at Hershey Farm Restaurant in early September, and the wild Pumpkin Madness Festival at Cherry Crest Adventure Farm in early November. *Pennsylvania Dutch Convention & Visitors Bureau, Joel Cliff, jcliff@padutchcountry.com, padutchcountry.com*

Lehigh Valley is famous for its “fests” and crowds that attend them. From the world renowned Musikfest, the largest free music festival in the United States, every August, to Celtic Fest, which is home to the U.S. National Highland Games Championships, each September, there is something for everyone to enjoy. *Discover Lehigh Valley, George Wacker, george@discoverlehighvalley.com, DiscoverLehighValley.com*

With 2,400 square miles of picturesque backdrops, festivals in the Pocono Mountains offer up year-round fun and beauty. Check out the fresh blossoms at an art fair in the spring, as summer brings river trips and NASCAR while fall is harvest and foliage festivals and holiday celebrations in the winter. *Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau, Elizabeth Richardson, erichardson@poconos.org, PoconoMountains.com*

Music, history, food, art; our annual festivals celebrate all and *more* in Greater Reading, PA. Come for the smooth sounds of Berks Jazz Fest, the old-fashioned treats of Kutztown Folk Festival or the unique collections of artsFestival Reading. Fiddles, chili peppers, World War II, pretzels – yep, festivals. Experience them all. *Go Greater Reading, Lisa Haggerty, lisa@gogreaterreading.com, gogreaterreading.com*

What do mountain laurel, night football and Charles Dickens have in common? Tioga County, PA! From the PA State Laurel Festival and Dickens of a Christmas in Wellsboro to the Fabulous 1890s Weekend in Mansfield, and many cultural and regional celebrations in between, there’s year-round entertainment for all. *Tioga County Visitors Bureau, Allison Senchur, tiogapa@epix.net, visittiogapa.com*

Yorkfest is August 22-24 and features about 100 select fine artists from around the country, a juried exhibition at YorkArts, hands-on arts activities, a free community jazz concert in the Capitol Theatre, walking tours of York murals and more! *York County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Brent Burkey, bburkey@yorkpa.org, yorkpa.org.*

Virginia

To restore honor after Alexandria’s surrender to British troops in the War of 1812, on August 31, 2014, Alexandrians will join the British Embassy in a good-spirited rematch, featuring a tug-of-war, cricket match and yacht race at a waterfront event packed with interactive historical exhibits, boating activities and food trucks. *Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association, Claire Mouldoux, CMouldoux@VisitAlexVA.com, visitalexandriava.com*

Along the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, Charlottesville and Albemarle County offer a unique experience in a picturesque setting! Join us this spring for some unique events - Experience the Virginia Festival of the Book in March, and the Tom Tom Founders Festival in April. *Charlottesville Albemarle Convention & Visitors Bureau, Bri Warner, warnerb@charlottesville.org, visitcharlottesville.org.*

This year, visitors to Hampton, Virginia will want to take advantage of several “can’t miss” annual festivals including the Fourth Hampton Roads Tattoo Arts Festival (March), 15th Blackbeard Pirate Festival (May/June), 47th Hampton Jazz Festival (June), 24th Afrikan American Festival (June), 32nd Hampton Bay Days, and more. *Hampton Convention & Visitor Bureau, Ryan Downey, ryan@hamptoncvb.com, visithampton.com*

Harrisonburg is home to several dynamic music, food, beer and wine, and cultural festivals including the Rocktown Beer and Music Festival (April), Court & Market Days (June), the Harrisonburg-Rockingham African-American Festival (June), Valley Fourth (July), the Blue Ridge Music & BBQ Festival (August), the Harrisonburg International Festival (September), and more. *Harrisonburg Tourism & Visitor Services, Katey Warren, katey.warren@harrisonburgva.gov, visitharrisonburgva.com*

Experience the best food and wine flavors of Virginia during the second annual Epicurience Virginia. The three-day festival begins Aug. 29th in Loudoun County- DC’s Wine Country. Taste award-winning wines from some of Loudoun’s 40 wineries, savor cuisine by celebrated chefs from across the country and enjoy live music. *Visit Loudoun, Jennifer Buske-Sigal, Sigal@visitloudoun.org, visitloudoun.org.*

Bacon Lovers Unite! The 2nd Annual BaconFest VA will be held in downtown Roanoke on August 2nd at the newly renovated Elmwood Park Amphitheatre. Bacon-inspired culinary samples galore - Is there such thing as too much bacon? You decide: “Piglet Portions”, “The Whole Hog” or “The Triple Bypass”! *Roanoke Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau, Catherine Fox, cfox@visitroanokeva.com, visitvablueridge.com*

Shop till you drop at the Annual “Route 11 Yard Crawl” on the second Saturday in August. Crawl through seven towns, along 43 miles of antiques, yard sales, and local business sales. Find unique treasures ranging from a suit of armor or a pitching machine to furniture and local crafts. *Shenandoah County Tourism, Jenna French, jfrench@shenandoahcountyva.us, shenandoahtravel.org*

If you love the excitement, food and family entertainment associated with festivals, Winchester-Frederick County, VA is the place to be! The Bloomin’ Wine Fest, Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival, Apple Harvest Arts & Crafts, Pumpkin Festival, Virginia Herb Festival, Virginia Gourd Festival, and Main Street Agriculture top the list! *Winchester-Frederick County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Sally Coates, coates@visitwinchesterva.com, visitwinchesterva.com*

About the Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance

The Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance is a cohesive unit of regional tourism partners encompassing Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and Washington D.C. The group serves travel journalists by creating a regional resource that ignores geographical boundaries. The Alliance promotes common threads and offers saleable stories to journalists about the Mid-Atlantic destination as a whole. Learn more about our partnership at matpra.org.

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