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| **Mid-Atlantic Museums Provide a Wide Variety of Unique Experiences****(Mid-Atlantic Region, USA, October 17, 2016)** - Museums often offer a fun or intriguing window into an area's soul, and the Mid-Atlantic is no different. The region's distinctive list of museums runs the gamut, from the sublime to the bizarre and the monumental to the modest. So make plans to visit any of the following sites collected by the members of the Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance ([MATPRA.org](http://www.matpra.org/)).  Interested in learning more about a location listed below? Contact the visitors bureau in the description for information.**Maryland****Baltimore**Baltimore's one-of-a-kind American Visionary Art Museum (AVAM) is America's official national museum and education center for original, self-taught, intuitive artistry. Featuring wonders created by farmers, housewives, mechanics, retirees, the disabled, the homeless, and the occasional neurosurgeon, the visionary transforms dreams, loss, hopes, and ideals into powerful works of art and thought. *Visit Baltimore, Kelly Nagle,**knagle@baltimore.org**,*[*Baltimore.org*](http://baltimore.org/) **Calvert County**Discover archaeology at Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum, housing over seven million artifacts including a 15,000-pound paddlewheel from the steamship Columbus and fragments of 18th century buttons. Dig for treasure, learn about local history or take a free guided tour of their lab to view unknown mysteries of the past. *Calvert County Department of Economic Development, Joyce Baki,**bakija@co.cal.md.us**,*[*ChooseCalvert.com*](http://choosecalvert.com/) **Frederick County**Frederick County boasts many strong ties to Civil War History, one of the most unique being the National Museum of Civil War Medicine. This Downtown Frederick attraction tells a story of care and healing, courage and devotion amidst death and destruction, while laying the foundation for modern medical care. *Visit Frederick, Melissa Joseph Muntz,**mmuntz@fredco-md.net**,*[*VisitFrederick.org*](http://www.visitfrederick.org/) **Harford County**Discover maritime heritage at the confluence of the Susquehanna River and the Chesapeake Bay. Visit one-of-a-kind museums like Havre de Grace Maritime Museum and Environmental Center, Susquehanna Museum at the Lock House, and Havre de Grace Decoy Museum, celebrating 30 years of preserving the legacy of decoy making on the Chesapeake Bay. *Harford County MD, Greg Pizzuto,**greg@visitharford.com**,*[*VisitHarford.com*](http://visitharford.com/) **Howard County**Visit one of only three museums in the U.S. devoted exclusively to African art. Founded in 1980, the African Art Museum of Maryland is one of the Mid-Atlantic's best hidden cultural gems. It's also the perfect complement to any trip to the newly-opened National Museum of African American History & Culture. *Howard County Tourism & Promotion, Sarah Kurtanich,**sarah@visithowardcounty.com**,*[*VisitHowardCounty.com*](http://www.visithowardcounty.com/) **Montgomery County**The National Museum of Health and Medicine inspires interest in and promotes the understanding of medicine, offering visitors a unique perspective because the public can actually see the effects of disease on the human body. Where else can you hold a human brain and also see the bullet that killed President Lincoln? *Visit Montgomery, Bethany Manimbo,**bmanimbo@visitmontgomery.com**,*[*VisitMontgomery.com*](http://www.visitmontgomery.com/) **St. Mary's County**Experience the cutting edge of U.S. Naval Aviation, get up close to the planes that safeguard the nation, and test your skills in the cockpit of an actual jet fighter simulator at the Patuxent River Naval Air Museum & Visitor Center. *St. Mary's County Tourism, Andrew Ponti,**andrew.ponti@stmarysmd.com**,*[*VisitStMarysMD.com*](http://www.visitstmarysmd.com/) **Wicomico County**Explore the world of decoy carving at the Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art in Salisbury.  Come experience the form and artistry of both antique and contemporary Chincoteague decoys and learn about this unique island and the carvers born of this place during Chincoteague Decoys Tides & Times. *Wicomico County Recreation, Parks & Tourism, Kristen Goller,**kgoller@wicomicocounty.org**,*[*WicomicoTourism.org*](http://www.wicomicotourism.org/) **Pennsylvania****Pennsylvania Tourism Office**Pennsylvania visitors looking to shake up the typical museum experience have come to the right place. Uncover a 7'6" man's skeleton and other anatomically strange specimens at Philadelphia's Mütter Museum, or take a big bite at "the most tasteful museum in the world," McDonald's Big Mac Museum in Pittsburgh. *Pennsylvania Tourism Office, Quinn Bryner,**qbryner@tierneyagency.com**,*[*VisitPA.com*](http://www.visitpa.com/) **Bucks County**Doylestown boasts several historical museums. The sophisticated James A. Michener Art museum opened in the old Bucks County prison building in 1988 to preserve the cultural heritage of the area. Across the street, the Mercer Museum houses over 40,000 artifacts from the Industrial Revolution collected by archaeologist Henry Chapman Mercer. *Visit Bucks County, Alexa Johnson, alexaj@visitbuckscounty.com,* [*VisitBucksCounty.com*](http://visitbuckscounty.com/) **Butler County**The Maridon Museum is the only museum in Western PA that features Chinese and Japanese art and culture. The permanent collection includes 800 pieces of art and 300 pieces of Meissen porcelain. The building and its art were donated by lifelong Butler resident Mary Hulton Phillips. *Butler County Tourism & Convention Bureau, Kimberly Windisch,**kimberly@krolmedia.com**,*[*VisitButlerCounty.com*](http://visitbutlercounty.com/) **Central PA**Tour behind the scenes of Beaver Stadium at the Penn State All-Sports Museum. Living historians bring WWI, WWII and Vietnam daily life to reality at the Pennsylvania Military Museum. Step into 14th century Spain at the Boal Mansion & Columbus Chapel.*Central Pennsylvania Convention & Visitors Bureau, Andy Rupert,**andyr@visitpennstate.org**,*[*VisitPennState.org*](http://visitpennstate.org/) **Endless Mountains**Eagles Mere Auto Museum is a world class private collection of classic cars open weekends and by arrangement for private group tours. The cars and automobile memorabilia on exhibit are a small sampling of a collection that has turned into a destination spot for automotive enthusiasts. *Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau, Morgan Christopher,**sales@endlessmountains.org**,*[*EndlessMountains.org*](http://endlessmountains.org/) **Indiana County**There is only one Jimmy Stewart Museum, and it's celebrating the 70th anniversary of the release of the American film classic "It's A Wonderful Life." View his movies in the 1930s vintage movie theater, or roam galleries that highlight his life as a military hero, civic leader, and Hollywood star. *Indiana County Tourist Bureau, Maria Jack,**mjack@visitindianacountypa.org**,*[*VisitIndianaCountyPA.org*](http://www.visitindianacountypa.org/) **Lancaster County**Explore a one-of-a-kind collection of military knives used by U.S. servicemen at the American Military Edged-Weaponry Museum in Intercourse. Military artifacts range from pikes and swords, to sabers and fencing bayonets, to Bowie and trench knives dating from the Spanish-American War, WWI, WWII, Korean War, Vietnam*,* and Desert Storm.*Discover Lancaster, Joel Cliff,* *jcliff@discoverlancaster.com**,* [*DiscoverLancaster.com*](http://www.discoverlancaster.com/) **Laurel Highlands**The museums of Pennsylvania's Laurel Highlands celebrate the region's rich history, heritage, art, architecture, and even cheeseburgers. Must-sees include an original 1617 King James Bible at Antiochian Heritage Museum, the drill bit used to free nine miners at the Quecreek Mine Rescue Site, Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater, and McDonald's Big Mac Museum. *Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau, Anna Weltz,**aweltz@laurelhighlands.org**,*[*LaurelHighlands.org*](http://www.laurelhighlands.org/) **Lehigh Valley**Learn about the machinery that helped shape America. The National Museum of Industrial History, a Smithsonian affiliate, is now open in Bethlehem. Housed within a former Bethlehem Steel building, visitors can get a glimpse of more than 20 Smithsonian artifacts. *Discover Lehigh Valley, Kaitie Burger,* *kaitie@discoverlehighvalley.com**,*[*DiscoverLehighValley.com*](http://www.discoverlehighvalley.com/) **Tioga County**The Pennsylvania Lumber Museum is home to thousands of objects ranging from prehistoric stone tools to 20th-century chain saws. Indoor and outdoor exhibits on the museum's 160-acre site simulate activities for visitors such as swinging an ax, sawing a tree, piloting a log raft, and racing locomotives. *Tioga County Visitors Bureau, Morgan Christopher,**morgan@visittiogapa.com**,*[*VisitTiogaPA.com*](http://visittiogapa.com/) **York County**Housed in a historic firehouse, the York County Fire Museum tells the story of York's firefighters. See historic fire trucks, alarm systems, and the jawbone of a fire-fighting horse. It's part of the York History Center, which features five museums paying homage to York's 275 years of history and more. *York County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Andrew Staub,**astaub@yorkpa.org**,*[*YorkPA.org*](http://www.yorkpa.org/) **Virginia****Alexandria**With nine intimate historic site museums in one mile, Old Town Alexandria teems with stories of its famous citizens and the city's 18th-century beginnings. The Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum is a historic apothecary that once prescribed medications to George Washington and whose walls still hold jars with their original contents. *Visit Alexandria, Leah Spellman,* *lspellman@visitalexva.com**,* [*VisitAlexandriaVA.com*](http://www.visitalexandriava.com/) **Blue Ridge**Fascinating exhibits like Art and Sole: Fantasy Shoes from the Jane Gershon Weitzman Collection at the Taubman Museum of Art in Downtown Roanoke. This exhibition features inventive and imaginative examples of shoes constructed from unexpected materials such as bronze, ceramic, wire, Plexiglas, corrugated cardboard and more. Changing exhibits quarterly. *Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge, Catherine Fox,**cfox@visitvablueridge.com**,*[*VisitVABlueRidge.com*](http://www.visitvablueridge.com/) **Charlottesville and Albemarle County**Charlottesville and Albemarle County feature a unique selection of museums. The Fralin Museum of Art at UVA, the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection, and the museum at Michie Tavern all provide great experiences for the young and old. *Charlottesville Albemarle CVB, Bri Warner,**warnerb@charlottesville.org**,*[*VisitCharlottesville.org*](http://visitcharlottesville.org/) **Fairfax**Fairfax County is home to the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum Udvar-Hazy Center, the only place in the world you can see Space Shuttle Discovery and the Enola Gay. Together with its sister site in D.C., this museum complex houses the largest aviation and space collection in the world. *Visit Fairfax, Ali Morris,**amorris@fxva.com**,*[*FXVA.com*](http://www.fxva.com/) **Hampton**The Hampton History Museum has opened a new addition to its 17th-century section commemorating the 1619 arrival of the first Africans in colonial Virginia. The exhibit tells the story of the Africans' home in Angola, their enslaving, their harrowing voyage to Virginia, and their lives in the new colony. *Hampton Convention & Visitor Bureau, Elizabeth Severs,**elizabeth.severs@hamptoncvb.com**,*[*VisitHampton.com*](http://www.visithampton.com/) **Harrisonburg**The Museum of American Jewelry Design and Manufacturing is one of a kind. Hugo's vision was to design a museum that would give visitors a visual, aural, and sensory experience of jewelry manufacturing. An elevated floor allows you to browse the retail store while watching artisans create timeless pieces. *Harrisonburg Tourism & Visitor Services, Jessica Williams,* *jessica.williams@harrisonburgva.gov**,* [*VisitHarrisonburgVA.com*](http://www.visitharrisonburgva.com/)**Lexington**The George C. Marshall Museum's "Victory Chef Cook-Off" competition features mystery ingredients readily available during WWII - including SPAM! The competition is part of the "Let's Get a Move On" exhibit focusing on the industrial mobilization as well as other civilian initiatives that aided the war effort. *Lexington and Rockbridge Area Tourism, Patty Williams,**marketing@lexingtonvirgina.com**,*[*LexingtonVirginia.com*](https://lexingtonvirginia.com/) **Loudoun**Uncover the history of America's top sporting industries at the National Sporting Library & Museum.  Located in the heart of Loudoun's famed hunt country, the museum and world-class library features a collection of more than 26,000 books and works of art chronicling everything from shooting and steeplechase races to fox hunting and horsemanship. *Visit Loudoun, Jennifer Buske-Sigal,* *sigal@visitloudoun.org**,*[*VisitLoudoun.org*](http://www.visitloudoun.org/) **Prince William & Manassas**Pay tribute to those that served our country at the Freedom Museum and the National Museum of the Marine Corps. Visit one of the oldest and most haunted homes in Virginia at the Weems-Botts Museum, or try the Mill House Museum where the first automated mill in the U.S. was created. *Prince William & Manassas CVB, Nicole Warner,**nwarner@discoverpwm.com**,*[*DiscoverPWM.com*](http://www.discoverpwm.com/) **Shenandoah County**Unleash your inner child as you watch 15-foot polar bears come to life at American Celebration on Parade featuring historic parade floats with pieces from Rose Bowl Parades, Thanksgiving Parades, and Presidential Inaugurals. The late owner, Earl Hargrove, designed floats for every presidential inaugural from Truman to Obama. *Shenandoah County Tourism, Jenna French,* *jfrench@shenandoahcountyva.us**,*[*ShenandoahTravel.org*](http://visitshenandoahcounty.com/) **Shenandoah Valley**In the Shenandoah Valley, immerse yourself in the art, history, and culture of this iconic destination at the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley in Winchester. Get hands-on with your history at the Frontier Culture Museum in Staunton, an outdoor living history museum that powerfully recreates the journey of the Valley's first settlers. *Shenandoah Valley Travel Association, Kathy Moore,* *kathy@moorepublicrelations.com**,* [*VisitShenandoah.org*](https://www.visitshenandoah.org/) |

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| **About Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance**The Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance (MATPRA) 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. For more information, visit [www.matpra.org](http://www.matpra.org/).     |