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Ten Destinations to Fulfill Artistic Passions in Virginia

Media Only

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RICHMOND, Va. – Travelers looking to live out their passion for art – from ballet to theater to fine artisan crafts, know that Virginia is a dream destination. The world’s finest performing artists visit Virginia every year. Virginia art museums house the works of masters – and Virginia’s own artists and crafters create masterpieces that become family heirlooms. Consider these ten choices for artistic destinations in Virginia:

- **The Virginia Arts Festival:** This annual extravaganza covers six weeks with performances in 10 Virginia cities highlighted by the [Virginia International Tattoo](#). This year’s headliners include Liza Minnelli, Emmylou Harris and Ravi Shankar. The tattoo is based on the traditions of famed Scottish military pageantry and is an absolute must-see.
- **Richmond Ballet:** What an arts destination Richmond is. Perhaps the crown jewel among museums, galleries and performance venues is the [Richmond Ballet](#). The annual Christmas performance of the Nutcracker is a generational favorite. The 2009 calendar includes Cinderella as well as classic and contemporary studio performances.
- **Staunton’s Bard:** One of the great historic downtowns of the Shenandoah Valley is full of artistic passions. The sensational [American Shakespeare Center](#) in Staunton features performances at the Blackfriars Playhouse, a replica of The Bard’s own theater. Staunton’s historic streets are lined with art galleries including the don’t-miss [Sunspots](#) glass art studio where live glass blowing takes place daily.
- **Roanoke’s Newest Treasure:** The arresting architecture of the dramatic new [Taubman Museum of Art](#) in Roanoke is artwork in itself. Inside the 81,000 square foot museum is where the real treasures lie. Works by John Singer Sargent, Winslow Homer, Thomas Hart Benton and renowned Virginia photographer Sally Mann are part of the permanent collection. In 2009, temporary exhibitions will include Rembrandt etchings and Judith Schaechter stained glass.
- **D’Art of Norfolk:** In the heart of downtown Norfolk is the [d’Art Center](#); a buzzing collaboration of more than 30 working artists who welcome the public to observe the creative process in canvass, jewelry, metal and glass. Good shopping, too. Nearby, the [Chrysler Museum of Art](#) houses an enviable collection of Impressionism, Renoir, Gaugin and Cassat, and classic works by Charles Wilson Peale, Benjamin West and Peter Paul Rubens and a dazzling display of Tiffany glass.

NEWS

- **Wolf Trap:** Northern Virginia's legendary performing arts center presents some of the world's top artists and shows in 2009 including Garrison Keillor, *Pirates of Penzance*, Celtic Woman, *Riverdance*, Peter, Paul & Mary and Disney's *High School Musical*. [Wolf Trap](#) is a collection of venues, large and small, that features workshops and intimate gatherings as well.
- **Artisan Haven:** The small town of Floyd in southwest Virginia is home to some of America's best artisans. From batik to ceramics to wood work, the artisans of Floyd have active working studios where treasure seekers can find a new bragging piece. Don't miss [Floyd's galleries](#) and plan a visit to the [Jacksonville Center](#), an active incubator and showplace for artists.
- **Shore Side Art:** Virginia's Eastern Shore is a sea-side retreat and also home to popular artists. Visit Danny Doughty's studio, the Folk House and see some of America's hottest folk art, or drop in to the [Jack Richardson Gallery](#) in Onancock and take in his oils and acrylics on canvass. You'll also find metal smiths, wood turners and renowned decoy artists in the midst of one of Virginia's great natural environments.
- **Art Away!:** On the shore of the Potomac River in Old Town Alexandria is the [Torpedo Factory Art Center](#), with three floors of open studios and galleries of more than 80 working artists. Media includes artists working in enamel, fiber, photography, glass, jewelry ceramics and painting. Art galleries abound along historic King Street and elsewhere in [Old Town](#) make the city one of Virginia's prime spots for art collecting.
- **Round the Mountain:** [Southwest Virginia's Artisan Network](#) ties together a diverse group of artists in 19 counties. Some 200 artists and 50 venues are a part of the group with members in nearly every nook and cranny of Virginia's scenic Southwest region. Farms and wineries are also among the members. Nearly every medium imaginable is represented among the artists and artisans who are among Virginia's best.

Ready to live out artistic passions in Virginia? Go to www.Virginia.org to start planning a trip or call 1-800-VISITVA for additional travel planning resources.

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