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## Virginia Beach Story Ideas

(Virginia Beach, Va., 2007) – Escape to Virginia Beach this year to live the Beach life! Wake up with the sun to hit the hiking trails, go head to head with the mighty marlin in an all-out battle of wills, and seek solace in a quiet moment between you and Mother Nature. Throughout the year, Virginia Beach pulsates with sizzling festivals, cultural celebrations, scrumptious restaurants, and challenging outdoor adventures and competitions – bringing the sights, sounds and flavors of the world to Virginia Beach. The following story ideas are centered on Virginia Beach’s year-round events and travel options. For more information and images, visit [www.vbpressroom.com](http://www.vbpressroom.com) or [www.vbfun.com](http://www.vbfun.com).

**Virginia Beach ... an Emerging Destination:** Virginia Beach is a vibrant, growing city, offering visitors all the excitement of a large metropolitan area, nestled in the mild climate of a rich coastal environment. In recent years, Virginia Beach has invested \$300 million to enhance the resort city. Improvements include more first-class hotels, restaurants and retail stores. Virginia Beach’s most famous landmark, the oceanfront boardwalk, is “bigger and better,” after the resort city completed its \$103 million makeover. The nearly three-mile structure now features a stronger seawall, a wider concrete boardwalk and a beach that is now wider than a football field. The boardwalk is a popular thoroughfare for walking, running, biking, blading and strolling off into the sunset.



**The new Virginia Beach Convention Center Transforms the Oceanfront:** Virginia Beach is in the midst of a major renaissance. Having long enjoyed being a premier vacation destination, the city is becoming one of the nation’s most sought-after meetings and conventions destinations. The new \$202.5 million Virginia Beach Convention Center opened its final phase in January 2007, boasting more than 500,000 gross square feet of flexible meeting space. Serviced by a seasoned, award-winning staff and offering competitive rates, the Virginia Beach Convention Center features a 150,000 square-foot column-free exhibit hall, a 31,000 square-foot ballroom, 28,929 square feet of meeting space and 2,230 free parking spaces. It also offers the latest in wired and wireless technology, including a ballroom with programmable LED lighting.



**Virginia Beach is the Place to Dine:** Virginia Beach is located where the Chesapeake Bay meets



the Atlantic Ocean, which means the city’s restaurants are serving the freshest seafood year-round – tuna, flounder, tautog, you name it! Some of the region’s specialties are crab cakes – jerked, broiled, pan sautéed or fried – she-crab soup, and striped bass, better known as “rockfish.” Agriculture also is one of Virginia Beach’s top three industries, so the chefs are cooking with the freshest of produce. Fresh seafood combined with the freshest produce equals recipes and flavors unique only to

Virginia Beach. Next time you are in Virginia Beach, chat with the chefs and find out more about the Virginia Beach flavor!

**Experience the Majesty of Virginia Beach’s Dolphins and Whales:** Virginia Beach’s most

popular repeat visitors are the bottlenose dolphins that visit in the summer months, as well as the fin and humpback whales that visit in the winter months. The Mid-Atlantic’s largest population of bottlenose dolphins feed and play just off the coast of Virginia Beach. Dolphin-watching and whale-watching boat trips provide an opportunity for people to see these majestic creatures up close. To get just a bit closer to the dolphins, embark on a guided dolphin-watching kayak trip offered by several outfitters off Virginia Beach’s shores.

**Surfing’s Biggest Rippers Dominate the Virginia Beach Barrels:**

Virginia Beach recently launched several surf camps, including Billabong and Quiksilver surf camps run by former pros. One of the more popular camps are those where girls only learn to “hang ten.” Each August, more than 100 of the world’s top professional riders – male and female – and an estimated 300 amateur surfers travel to Virginia Beach to rip the waves at the East Coast Surfing Championship (ECSC). The competition promises some of the greatest shralping and shredding of the finest East Coast waves that Virginia Beach has to offer, as the competitors contend for cash prizes. Held annually in Virginia Beach since 1963, ECSC is North America’s oldest surfing contest and the second oldest continuously-run surfing contest in the world.



**The Different Beats of Diversity Explode in Virginia Beach:** Virginia Beach celebrates

diversity as it pulsates with a myriad of festivals, celebrations, and cultural events. Dance to the beat of salsa, merengue, mamba and bachata tunes presented by some of the best national, regional and local acts at the Annual Latin Festival. Explore the African origins of today’s diversified music genres during Soul Music Beachfest and the Blues at the Beach festival. Groove to Caribbean, Latin, and pop music during the steel band competition at the PANorama Caribbean Music Fest. Virginia Beach celebrates the German spirit each year with good food and good drink, during Oktober Brewfest. Indulge in pizza, prosciutto and fontina, caprese, eggplant parmesan, lasagna, espresso, gelato and all things Italian at Festa Italiana. Grab your groove thing and bring your moves down to the Virginia Beach oceanfront festivals!

**Race to the Virginia Beach Finish Line:** Virginia Beach hosts not one, but TWO high-profile half-marathons – the Shamrock Half-Marathon on St. Patty’s Day weekend and the Rock-N-Roll Half Marathon on Labor Day weekend.

The Shamrock course is guaranteed to be fast and festive, as participants race along the Virginia Beach boardwalk. Watch out for the leprechauns along the way! In September, more than 20,000 runners descend on the Virginia Beach oceanfront for the Rock-N-Roll 13.1-mile foot and wheelchair race. With live music at every mile and a course that's flat and fast, the Rock 'n' Roll Half Marathon has become a "must run" event for all runners. Labor Day weekend also features the Verizon Wireless American Music Festival, with a blockbuster lineup of national recording acts.

**History comes alive in Virginia Beach:** On April 26, 1607 - before settling Jamestown - the first permanent English settlers landed in the New World at what is now Cape Henry in Virginia Beach. This year, Virginia Beach is hosting a variety of commemorative events to celebrate America's 400th Anniversary, including a reenactment of the First Landing, and a Boardwalk History Festival. In addition, one of only four existing original copies, or "exemplars," of *Magna Carta* will be on loan to Virginia Beach from the Lincoln Cathedral in Lincolnshire, England. Delve further in Virginia Beach's history, and learn more about Virginia Beach's resident witch, Grace Sherwood. In 1706, a jury accused Sherwood of practicing witchcraft. A trial by "ducking" ensued, following a belief that guilty persons bound and thrown into water would float and the innocent would drown. Sherwood was pronounced guilty after she surfaced, apparently unhurt, and served a seven-year jail sentence for witchcraft.



**Nature's Gifts Abound in Virginia Beach:** More than 18,600 acres of state parks and wildlife refuges, over 121 navigable miles of waterways and 35 miles of ocean and bay beaches give visitors a variety of options for exploring the great outdoors. Venture on an eco-safari through Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, False Cape State Park or First Landing State Park. Kayak, hike or bike along the miles of pristine trails and waterways through beach, back dunes, tidal marsh and cypress swamps.

**Indulge in a Massage and Learn more about Holistic Spiritualism in Virginia Beach:** Treat yourself to a day in the spa at one of Virginia Beach's full-service day spas. One of the more renowned is the Association for Research and Enlightenment (A.R.E.) the former headquarters of Edgar Cayce, the 19th century's most documented holistic practitioner and noted psychic. In addition to the health services including massage therapy, facials, reflexology and acupuncture, visitors from around the world gather at the A.R.E. in Virginia Beach to learn more about the late Edgar Cayce and to peruse the metaphysical library, one of the world's largest such libraries, second only to the Vatican. With a growing public awareness of holistic medicine and spiritualism, physicians worldwide are finding Cayce's research to be on the cutting edge of many health care concerns today, particularly the mind-body relationship to health and healing.

**Gone Fishin' In Virginia Beach:** Where the Atlantic Ocean meets the food-rich Chesapeake Bay, anglers find a fisherman's paradise in Virginia Beach. Known as the "Striped Bass Capitol of the World," Virginia Beach offers some of the best sport fishing on the East Coast. "Hook" the mightiest tuna, wahoo, marlin, striped bass, red drum, flounder, and much, much more during half-day, full-day, inshore or offshore fishing adventure. Virginia Beach boasts two inlets, Lynnhaven Inlet and Rudee Inlet. Landlubbers can cast their line from one of four fishing piers. Virginia Beach also hosts a number of fishing tournaments year-round, including the Striped Bass World Championship, the Red, White & Blue Billfish Tournament and Waterman's Rockfish Shoot-Out.



*Virginia Beach entices visitors to "Live the Life" every season of the year! Located in the southeastern corner of the state, Virginia Beach is four hours southeast of D.C. by car and within a day's drive from Quebec. For visitor information, call 1-800-VA-BEACH (800/822-3224) or visit the Web site [www.vbfun.com](http://www.vbfun.com) for online trip planning. For media information and digital images, click on [www.vbpressroom.com](http://www.vbpressroom.com).*

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