



----- MEDIA ALERT -----

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**New Virginia Green Travel Chapters Program
Strives to Promote Virginia Communities as *Green Travel Destinations*
Original 10 Charter Chapters Are Announced!**

RICHMOND, VA. – The Virginia Green Travel Alliance is proud to announce its new initiative to actively promote green tourism efforts within Virginia communities. The new Virginia Green Travel Chapters Program engages with regional and local tourism partners towards the goal of branding these communities as *Virginia Green Travel Destinations*.

The Virginia Green program is Virginia's partnership program to encourage green practices throughout the tourism industry. The Virginia Green program is supported by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality; the Virginia Tourism Corporation; the Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association; and the Virginia Green Travel Alliance (VGTA). To date, more than 1600 tourism businesses have certified their green practices through the program, including hotels, B&B's, restaurants, attractions, wineries & breweries, and festivals and events. As such, the Virginia Green program provides green travel choices for consumers wherever they travel in Virginia.

Many regional and local tourism organizations have supported the Virginia Green program and its growth. However, to date, there has not been a concerted local effort in place to actively promote the abundance of green tourism options available to the public. The new Chapters Program will seek to make Virginia Green Travel efforts relevant locally by promoting the number of green tourism partners in each community.

"We are excited to be one of the original chapters of this program," said Brenda Black, the Director of Harrisonburg Tourism & Visitor Services. "Our goal for 2016 is to increase the number of Virginia Green businesses and events in Harrisonburg so that we are demonstrating our commitment to green tourism."

Each new chapter has committed to work with the VGTA to develop a straightforward plan for increasing the number of Virginia Green partners and promoting their efforts. Chapters are

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encouraged to even brand themselves uniquely relative to their local interests. The VGTA will also assist in reaching out to local environmental groups, businesses, and citizens, as well as to community-based sustainability efforts.

“Through the new chapters program, we want to help our local and regional partners get the credit they deserve for having an abundance of Virginia Green certified businesses in their communities”, says Tom Griffin, the Director of the VGTA. “We want our chapters to be recognized as a resource to local environmental efforts, and we hope that the community will embrace the efforts of Virginia Green certified partners.”

The ten (10) *Charter Chapters* of the Virginia Green Travel Chapters Program are:

- Arlington Convention and Visitors Service
- Blacksburg/Christiansburg/Montgomery County Regional Tourism
- Charlottesville Albemarle Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Discover Prince William & Manassas
- Hampton Convention & Visitor Bureau
- Harrisonburg Tourism & Visitor Services
- Newport News Tourism
- Richmond Region Tourism
- Shenandoah County Tourism
- Virginia Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau

The *Charter Chapters* of the program were recently recognized for their commitments at the 3rd annual Virginia Green Travel Conference & Awards held on February 23-24, 2016 in Arlington, VA. First Lady of Virginia Dorothy McAuliffe and Rita McClenny, the President/CEO of Virginia Tourism Corporation were on hand to help commemorate the new program.



Questions can be directed to Virginia Green Travel Alliance at 804.986-9119 or VirginiaGreen@Virginia.org.

Resources / Links:

- [Virginia Green Travel Chapters Program](#).
- [Virginia Green program requirements](#)
- [Marketing \(VirginiaGreenTravel.org\)](#)

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