

JAMES RIVER ODYSSEY

INFORMATION BOOKLET

We hope this Information Booklet gives you the information you need to make a decision about joining us on the James River Odyssey. Don't hesitate to email info@virginiaodysseys.com or call [757-810-3102](tel:757-810-3102) with any questions you might have.

Table of Contents

- Itinerary
- What's Included
 1. Tour Price
 2. Payment Schedule
 3. Included in Tour Price
- When, Where & How to Arrive
- What to Expect
 1. Accommodations
 2. Food
 3. Number of Adventurers
 4. Bikes
 5. Support Vehicles
 6. Terrain and Miles per Day
 7. Multi-Sport Adventure
 8. Climate
- Before & After Your Tour
- Resources



JAMES RIVER ODYSSEY ITINERARY

Day 1 Sunday, August 16

Shuttle from Williamsburg to Natural Bridge - Approximately 4 hours
Meet at 109 Woodmere Drive, Williamsburg, VA 23185 Phone 757-229-4046
Natural Bridge Hotel, Phone 540-291-2121, www.naturalbridgeva.com

We'll meet in Williamsburg at the Turnbull's at 10:00 am to shuttle to Natural Bridge. Bikes will be transported in our support vehicles. Lunch will be enroute in Lexington before arriving at Natural Bridge about 3:00 PM. Optional afternoon walk on the Cedar Creek Nature Trail under the Natural Bride to scenic Lace Falls. Can you find where a young George Washington carved his initials while surveying? Dinner will be outside by the creek followed by the colorful light show, the *Drama of Creation*. This captivating narrative, musical, and light show has been running since 1927.



Day 2 Monday, August

Irongate to Peaks of Otter
Distance - 30 (shuttle), 35 (shuttle), or 39 miles
Peaks of Otter Lodge, Phone 540-586-9263, www.peaksofotter.com



After breakfast, a 45 minute shuttle takes us and our bikes to Iron Gate, where the Jackson and Cowpasture rivers come together to form the James River. We begin our Odyssey by biking through Glen Wilton, following the James through what could easily be a Scottish glen. Just outside Eagle Rock, we'll visit the last lock of the Kanawa Canal. Archeology notes that the Kanawa and James River Canal, beginning in Richmond, was "promoted by George Washington as a commercial link to the Ohio Valley, and opened in 1789. First made for freight boats called bateaux, it was upgraded between 1840 and 1850 to

accommodate larger boats towed by mules and horses. It closed in 1880 after a railroad was built alongside." You have a choice in Buchanan (mile 30) – hop in the van for a lift to the Blue Ridge Parkway, or "go for it!" Your heart should be pumping after the four mile climb to the top. From the top, it's a glorious five mile ride on the Blue Ridge Parkway to the Peaks of Otter, our home for the night. You'll have time to hike to the top of Flat Top Mountain for a spectacular view, but don't miss cocktail hour at 6:00 PM!

Day 3 Tuesday, August 18

Peaks of Otter to James River State Park (Bent Creek)
Distance - 20 (shuttle), 30 (shuttle), or 45 miles
James River State Park, Phone 434-933-4355, http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/jam.shtml



Are you ready for an 11-mile coast? We head north on the Blue Ridge Parkway and descend to the James River, the lowest elevation (649 ft) on this 479 mile National Scenic Highway. After learning about the canal lock system at the James River Visitor Center, we'll bike to Lynchburg, or take a shuttle in the support van. In Lynchburg we'll all bike the wonderful Blackwater Creek and James River Heritage trails to our lunch stop on the banks of the James in downtown Lynchburg. Another choice waits after lunch – bike to James River State Park, or catch a shuttle in the support van. The Group Lodges at James River State Park will be home for the next two

nights. The rooms are rustic, but very comfortable. The common areas and outdoor decks are welcome

places to “hang out.” We’ll share bathrooms for these two nights. We’ll have dinner together, but eat breakfast in our respective lodges.

Day 4 Wednesday, August 19 – Layover Day

James River State Park, Phone 434-933-4355, http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/jam.shtml

Distance - 0, 15, or 35 miles plus river activities and hiking



This is Layover Day – so you decide what you want to do! James River State Park has a complete livery, so it’s your choice of tubing, kayaking, or canoeing. A leisurely hike to Tye River overlook is a must. Be sure to bring your current summer reading to relax with in the rocking chair on the porch. There will be bike ride options as well, but relaxing is the main theme of the day! After dinner we may enjoy music by the campfire, or take an owl wagon ride, or do both.

Day 5 Thursday, August 20

Bent Creek to Scottsville

Distance - 23 (shuttle) or 44 miles

Chester B&B, Phone 434-286-3960, www.chesterbed.com or

High Meadows Vineyard Inn, Phone 434-286-2218, www.highmeadows.com

Our destination today is Scottsville on the James, a delightful village on the horseshoe bend in Albemarle County. Scottsville served as the first county seat when the James River was the highway for wilderness travel. The annual James River Batteau Festival starts in Lynchburg and makes an overnight in Scottsville. The hills start to flatten out and become “gently rolling” as we continue east following the James. Quiet backroads take us through Wingina, Howardsville, and Hatton Ferry as we click off the miles on the north side of the James. You can bike and paddle today as we work with outfitters to tube, canoe, kayak, or raft portions of the river. Off the bike and the river, we’ll stroll the streets of Scottsville and visit the museums. Accommodations are at one of two inns tonight, either the Chester Inn or the High Meadows Vineyard Inn. Chester will host our four-course dinner soiree complete with wine, which you’ve earned by conquering the “gently rolling” country roads and maybe the “gently rolling” river!



Day 6 Friday, August 21

Scottsville to Richmond

Distance - 24 (shuttle), 35 (shuttle), 57 (shuttle), or 72 miles

Crowne Plaza Richmond Downtown, Phone 804-788-0900, www.crowneplaza.com/ric-downtown

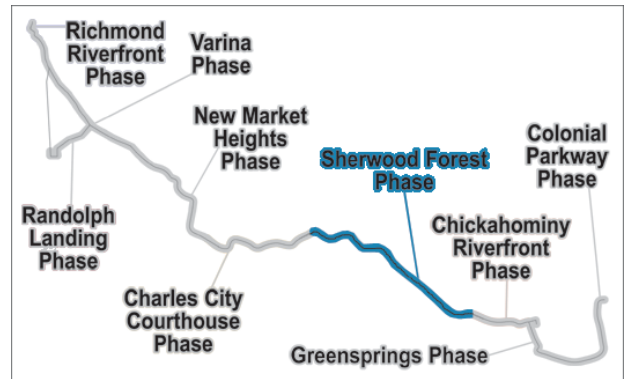


We start out on the lightly traveled roads of Goochland County as we bike toward Richmond. In Richmond, the river drops 105 feet over a seven-mile stretch, creating class I - IV whitewater. We’ll enjoy the view biking alongside these rapids on the urban Riverside Trail, which is a part of the City of Richmond’s James River Park System. You’ll be surprised at how easily you can bike right into the heart of downtown Richmond at Shockoe Bottom. We’ll pause at the Gothic Revival Pump House and learn about the dual purpose of this building. Approaching downtown, you’ll see the famous Carillon, traverse Bryd Park, skirt Maymont Park (option to visit), and bike by Hollywood Cemetery (option to visit). More history, exploration and adventure await as we visit the American Civil War Center at Tredegar, Belle Isle, and the Canal Walk in the River District. This day is overflowing with activities – we may need a week just

in Richmond alone! We spend the night overlooking the river at the Crowne Plaza Richmond Downtown.

Day 7 **Saturday, August 22**
Richmond to Williamsburg
Distance - 30 (shuttle), 40 (shuttle), or 55 miles

The Virginia Capital Trail beckons as we bike the Route 5 corridor from Richmond to Williamsburg. Both VDOT and the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation have been hard at work developing this world-class trail. First we'll stop at Fort Harrison, site of the 1864 Civil War battle. We'll enjoy separation from traffic biking the newly paved sections of the VCT just opened (New Market Heights Phase and Charles City Courthouse Phase). We'll enjoy our "celebration" lunch overlooking the River at Lawrence Lewis, Jr. Park. After lunch we'll be able to cross the new Chickahominy Bridge on a separate bikepath. After a Rest Stop at Jamestown (option to visit Jamestown Settlement and Jamestown Island), we're back in Williamsburg having completed our epic, seven-day odyssey along the James River.



Disclaimer/Responsibility Statement

Virginia Odysseys, LLC acts only as an agent for various independent suppliers that provide accommodations, transportation, activities, or other services connected with this tour. Such services are subject to the terms and conditions of those suppliers. Virginia Odysseys and their respective employees, agents, representatives, and assigns, accept no liability whatsoever for any injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or other incident which may be caused by the negligence, defect, default of any company or person in performing these services. Individual travelers are responsible for purchasing a travel insurance policy, if desired, that will cover some of the expenses associated with the loss of luggage or personal effects, and trip cancellation.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Tour Price \$ 1,495 per person, double; \$ 1,695 per person, single

Payment Schedule January 30 \$ 500 deposit per person (or upon reserving a place)
May 30 \$ 995 due
Please make checks payable to: Virginia Odysseys LLC.
Address: 109 Woodmere Dr., Williamsburg, VA 23185

Included in the Tour Price

- 6 nights accommodations
- 6 breakfasts, 5 dinners, 3 lunches and all snacks and drinks for each day's ride
- Full support along the route
- Maps and Cue sheets
- Entrance fees to all planned activities
- Luggage transfers
- Transportation from Williamsburg to the start of the tour – cyclist *and* bike
- Experienced guides

Cancellations Full refund if cancellation before July 1 (less \$50). Refunds after July 1 based on amount refundable from hotel and travel support vendors.

WHEN, WHERE, & HOW TO ARRIVE

The Start: Williamsburg, Virginia on Sunday, August 16 at 10:00 AM at the Turnbills, [109 Woodmere Dr.](#), Williamsburg, VA 23185. Phone 757-229-4046

The End: Williamsburg, Virginia on Saturday, August 22 at 4:00 PM at the Turnbills, [109 Woodmere Dr.](#), Williamsburg, VA 23185.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Accommodations



Lodging will be in hotels, country inns and B&Bs, and two nights in Lodges at James River State Park. The accommodations with links to websites are shown in the Itinerary. All are unique and very comfortable – some are icons in Virginia travel such as the Inn at Natural Bridge (shown here) and the Peaks of Otter Lodge. Needless to say, we'll sleep very well after our day of adventures both on and off the bike.

Food

We'll also eat well! All meals are included, except for several lunches where route and mileage options may prevent the group from all being in the same place at the same time. We'll have a cookout overlooking the river at James River Park, a four-course dinner with wine in Scottsville, and in Richmond you are free to choose your



favorite restaurant. Our breakfasts (Chester B&B shown here) will be ample and supply the needed energy for an active day!

Number of James River Adventurers

The lodging and transportation logistics require that our group size be capped at 26, plus two leaders.

Bikes

Cyclists will use their own bike. The route is paved, except for 1 mile on Day 1. Either a road, touring, or hybrid bike with a wide gear range would be appropriate.

Support Vehicles

Support Vans and trucks will be capable of carrying cyclists and bikes as needed. They will carry luggage, water, snacks, and picnic lunch supplies. The Support Vans will provide shuttle service for some of the shorter mileage options.

Terrain and Miles per Day

We're biking in the same direction that the James River is flowing, but that does not mean the route is entirely downhill! It is flat when we are beside the river, but when we leave the river it can be challenging, especially in the area west of Lynchburg. None of the climbs are longer than one or two miles, and all can be conquered with a "granny" gear. Shorter mileage options, with Support Van shuttles, are available to allow a recreational cyclist to complete a typical day. Daily mileages are listed in the day-by-day itinerary.

Multi-Sport Adventure

The James River Odyssey will allow for biking, hiking, paddling, and floating! You can only bike if you wish, but opportunities will be available on several days to "get on the water." The river outfitters generally offer tubing, canoeing, kayaking, and rafting. All water adventures are extra, and the cost will depend on the options selected.

Climate

Temperatures:	August average High 86° F; Low 67° F
Daylight:	Sunrise 6:30 AM - Sunset 7:50 PM
Precipitation:	August average 4.1 inches

BEFORE & AFTER YOUR TOUR

We recommend spending a few days in Williamsburg before or after the tour. Williamsburg is known world-wide as a cultural and historical treasure. American history from the first English settlement at Jamestown, to stirrings of independence in Colonial Williamsburg, to where victory was won over the British at Yorktown comes alive in Virginia's Historic Triangle. Browse the James River Odyssey Links page to find websites that contain all the information about where to stay, where to eat, and what to do. We'll be glad to offer suggestions.

JAMES RIVER ODYSSEY RESOURCES

Books

The River Where America Began: A Journey Along the James, Bob Deans, 2007.