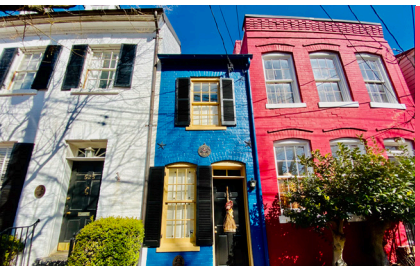
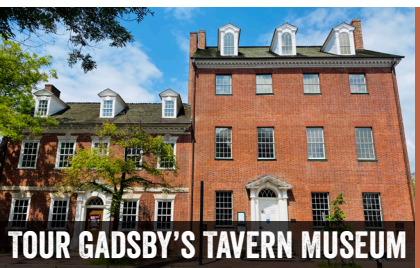


Written and Photographed by Whitney O'Halek



FIND THE NARROWEST HOUSE IN AMERICA



TOUR GADSBY'S TAVERN MUSEUM



VISIT THE STABLER-LEADBEATER APOTHECARY MUSEUM

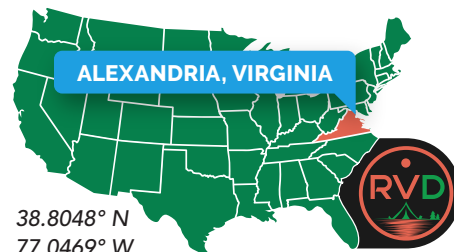


GET COFFEE AT MISHA'S



EXPLORE THE WATERFRONT

Alexandria, Virginia, is George Washington's hometown and one of the most historical cities in the United States. But it's also one of the best places to shop, grab a locally roasted coffee and soak in the authentic local vibe just outside Washington, D.C. Here are the 10 best things to do in Old Town Alexandria, Virginia.



10 How's that for a claim to fame? Measuring at just seven feet across, this former alleyway is one tiny home, the Hollensbury Spite House. You can find it at 523 Queen Street, complete with historic marker and fire insurance plaque. Looking around at the historic homes is one of the best things to do in Old Town Alexandria, and everyone who stumbled upon this little blue wonder is delighted.

9 This unique museum transports guests to the 1780s, when this was George Washington's favorite restaurant (he loved the duck), and our young country was still figuring itself out. Taverns weren't all about the drinking and wenches, but they were places where everyday life took place. In its heyday, Gadsby's was home to the largest ballroom in the country, and George Washington was said to be quite the dancer. Peek into room number eight, too—it's haunted!

8 Another unique, unmissable museum in Old Town is the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum. This former apothecary, or drug store, is a fascinating place for kids and adults. The kids will get a kick out of the dragon's blood and petrified chicken leg in the attic, but other notable artifacts include a receipt with Martha Washington's signature on it, handblown glass, medical equipment and more.

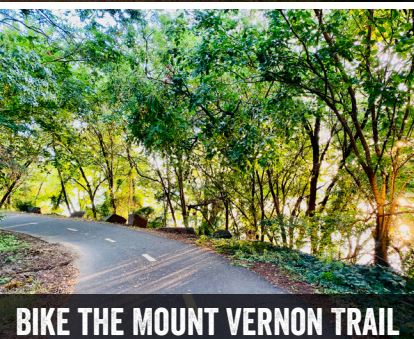
Fun fact: United States Colonel Robert E. Lee was visiting in 1859 when he got the news that he needed to go to Harpers Ferry and put down a raid led by a man named John Brown.

7 Want to rub elbows with the locals? Go to Misha's Coffee. They have two locations in Old Town, and all you have to do it follow your nose, because they roast their own coffee beans. A true local's favorite for more than 30 years, they offer single-source coffees from around the world and some fun seasonal flavors for those who want something less exotic but just as exciting.

6 The recently redeveloped Alexandria Waterfront has become a destination. Not only is the Waterfront already picturesque, but you'll also find sculptures by local artists, local restaurants with a view, the historic Torpedo Factory Art Center and more. You can even arrive in Alexandria from the water if you like. Just take a water taxi or river cruise from Georgetown, National Harbor or Mount Vernon Estate.



TOUR THE CARLYLE HOUSE HISTORIC PARK



BIKE THE MOUNT VERNON TRAIL



VISIT GEORGE WASHINGTON'S MOUNT VERNON ESTATE AND GARDENS



TAKE A GHOST TOUR OR HISTORY TOUR



SHOP AT THE FARMERS' MARKET

5 Alexandria has no shortage of historic homes, some of which are more than 300 years old. But one you can't miss (and is not a private home now) is the Carlyle House. It's one of the largest homes in the area, but it's unique because it's made of stone instead of wood or brick. It dates to 1752 and has been home to historical events during the French and Indian War, Revolutionary War, War of 1812, American Civil War and beyond.

Insider info: When you take your tour, don't forget to ask about the mummified cat in the basement wall.

4 The DC and Northern Virginia area is home to countless miles of trails—hiking, biking, running, horse—you name it; there's a trail for it. And one of the most popular is the Mount Vernon Trail, which starts just outside of Georgetown, runs through Alexandria and leads all the way to Mount Vernon Estate. The 18-mile-long trail follows the same land route that Colonial and early American travelers would've taken, including George and Martha Washington. Visitors can rent bikes for the day and follow the trail all the way to the next item on our list.

3 This is possibly already on your must-do list, and for a good reason: George Washington loved his Mount Vernon Estate more than anywhere else. It's open to the public for tours of his home, the grounds, the gardens and beyond. There's a great museum here about George Washington (that includes his famous dentures), and it's the perfect place to spend half a day or even a full day if you have the time. Looking for something special to do while you're in the area? Dine at the Mount Vernon Inn for a taste of Colonial and early American dishes.

2 Everyone loves a ghost tour. Typically laced with just the right amount of history and fun, ghost tours are a great way to get to know any old town, including Alexandria. All those old homes, historic buildings and early American churches have stories to tell about the people who lived in times past—and maybe still reside there. Prefer something more history-heavy? Take a straight-up history tour instead. Alexandria Colonial Tours offers both, complete with Colonial-costumed guides.

1 If you're lucky enough to be in Alexandria on a Saturday morning, be sure to head to Market Square with a reusable shopping bag and an appetite. Begun in 1753, it's the longest-running farmer's market in the country—George Washington even sold products here from Mount Vernon. Presently, you'll find fresh fruits, vegetables, baked goods, flowers, hand crafts and so much more for sale each week. Plan to get breakfast and a coffee while you're here and get supplies to last you a few days in the RV, too.

If you're already visiting the Washington, DC, area, don't miss a day or more in Old Town Alexandria. It's one of the most historic, most picturesque places you'll ever visit. This **TOP10 list is just the thing to get you started.**