

# escapes TRAVEL

LIGHT FESTIVALS — HOLIDAY DINING — SHOPPING AROUND VIRGINIA

A SPECIALTY PUBLICATION OF THE RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH — NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2009



## Little Washington

Village sets the stage for art, shops and a world-renowned inn

Various accommodations at the Inn at Little Washington offer great views, including this one from the patio of the gamekeeper's house.

PHOTOS BY PAULA NEELY



Galleries and shops in Little Washington offer quite a range of goods, from Americana to exquisite jewelry. Nearly every corner has another place to discover.

**BY PAULA NEELY**  
Escapes Writer

Driving toward "Little" Washington, Va., near Front Royal, about two hours northwest of Richmond, you can feel your spirits lift as Route 211 climbs toward the Blue Ridge Mountains through farmland and rolling cow pastures.

Located about a mile from the base of the Shenandoah National Park, the charming hamlet with 200 residents still hasn't outgrown the original five-by-two-block grid laid out by its namesake George Washington in 1749.

"It's the most beautiful place in the world," according to Patrick O'Connell, owner and chef of The Inn at Little Washington, a world-famous five-star hotel and restaurant in the center of town. Of all the places he's seen in America, he said, the area reminds him the most of England and Ireland.

During the holidays, the town looks like a scene from Currier and Ives, according to Laura Overstreet, tourism consultant for Rappahannock County. Little Washington is home to about a dozen high-quality art galleries and shops and two theaters that offer concerts, plays and movies; nearby are historic farms, six wineries and the Copper Fox boutique whiskey distillery. It all makes for an ideal destination for shopping, girls' weekends, family get-togethers and romantic getaways.

### GALLERIES, SHOPS SURROUND INN

If you're just visiting for a day, park in the Trinity Church parking lot, across from the Inn at Little Washington at the corner of Middle and Main streets, or along one of the streets. Then stroll around town and explore galleries, studios, shops and several B&Bs, housed mostly in historic buildings from the late 1700s and 1800s. You'll discover high-quality paintings, sculptures, pottery and other art created by local and regional artists, including Jeff MacNelly, creator of the comic strip "Shoe."

R.H. Ballard, named one of the "50 Top Shops in the South" by Southern Living Magazine, features colorful linen tablecloths from France (starting at \$60) and rugs from Egypt, India, Iran, Turkey and Afghanistan. You'll also find jewelry, scarves, handbags and home accessories, as well as paintings, etchings and other art in the intimate gallery space downstairs.

Fine jewelry for all occasions is hand-forged on site at Goodine's Designs in Gold and Silver. Prices range from \$25 to \$5,000.



Potters demonstrate their craft at Sperryville Pottery.



More galleries and shops line the streets of Sperryville.



Travel to and from Little Washington is itself a treat, with plenty of roadside stands offering local produce, honey, homemade jams and more. Here, bins of apples entice visitors.



MARY ANN DANCISIN

Little Washington's annual Christmas festival and parade will be on Dec. 6 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Continued on page 4



### DISTANCE

115 highway miles (Two hours and nine minutes drive time)

SOURCE: MAPQUEST.COM  
LEFT: ALEXA WELCH EDLUND. RIGHT: PAULA NEELY



## INSIDE

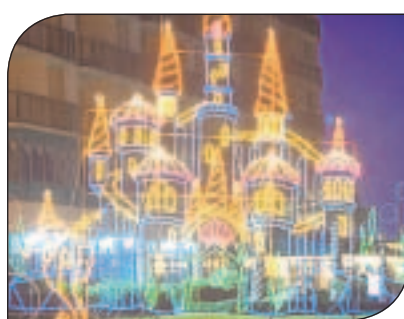


WINTER BEACH SAVINGS AND MORE TO SAVOR ..... 2



PHILIP BEAURLINE

HOLIDAY TRAVEL WITH ALL THE TRIMMINGS ..... 4



VIRGINIA BEACH TOURISM

HOLIDAY LIGHT SPECTACLES ..... 5



FREDERICKSBURG DEPT. OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

MINI-EXCURSIONS BLEND SHOPPING AND GOOD TIMES ..... 6