

# OUR HISTORY

## A World To Explore

(NAPSA)—Family, faith, fellowship, freedom. These staples have been the backbone of the African-American community since the first Africans landed on American shores at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619 as unenslaved persons. These values laid the foundation for an African-American focus on a strong sense of community. The educators, activists, musicians and entrepreneurs incorporated into Virginia's heritage trails reflect this sense of community.

The monumental Supreme Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education* stems from the efforts of the 1951 student protest in the small, rural town of Farmville, now a part of the Civil Rights in Education Heritage Trail throughout southern Virginia.

The Crooked Road, Virginia's Heritage Music Trail, tells the story of traditional music through family ties, faith and daily living from generation to generation, across racial barriers. From church hymns carrying hidden messages along the Underground Railroad to the mountain music of the families that settled the Appalachian Mountains and valleys, many ethnic groups, including African Americans, have engendered growth in the fabric of Virginia's American heritage.

For a sobering journey down other trails, explore Virginia's Civil War Trails, [www.civilwartraveler.com](http://www.civilwartraveler.com). The nation's unresolved issues in the colonial and pre-Civil War eras led to the Civil War; and these trails, including historic sites as well as battle-



**Virginia is for lovers of African-American history.**

fields, offer the opportunity to reflect on the men and women behind the racial and economic issues. Exposing more than slave stories, Virginia's sites interpret the daily lives of the women and townspeople who prayed for the safety of the troops, black and white, Union and Confederate.

Other sites of interest include the Fredericksburg Area Museum. Fredericksburg also offers two self-guided walking tours that include a slave auction block. George Washington's Mount Vernon estate and his sister's plantation, Kenmore, offer looks at slave and free African-American life. One of the slaves at Mount Vernon, West Ford, started a community for runaway slaves and freed blacks in Fairfax County in 1833; you can learn more about it at the Gum Springs Historical Society's Museum & Cultural Center.

For details on Virginia's African-American heritage and other heritage trails in Virginia, please visit [www.virginia.org](http://www.virginia.org) or call 1-800-VISIT-VA to request a Virginia Travel Guide.