

Pilot Schooner *Virginia*

Virginia Maritime Heritage Foundation

Guest Crew Information, Guidelines, and Application Forms

Please keep this information for your reference

Thank you for your interest in *Virginia*, The Commonwealth of Virginia's Goodwill Ambassador. *Virginia* is the world's only existing example of the last pilot schooner that sailed on the Chesapeake Bay over 80 years ago. The vessel sails the globe on a mission to promote the maritime heritage of the commonwealth and the engagement of education of its youth, tourism expansion and the state's future economic development.

Virginia is owned by Virginia Maritime Heritage Foundation, a (501) (c) (3) non-profit organization, and is governed by a Board of Directors. She depends on corporate and individual contributions, honorary crew memberships, souvenir sales, charter, and guest crew fees to continue her mission around the globe.

The original *Virginia* was a pilot schooner used on the Chesapeake Bay to provide navigation services to the ship traffic entering and leaving the Chesapeake Bay. The service was vital to the safe transit of shipping. The tall ship was the last sailing pilot schooner on the Chesapeake Bay and serviced the Virginia Pilot Association from 1917 until 1926 as a station vessel off the Virginia Capes.

ABOUT YOUR PASSAGE

Having expressed an interest in sailing aboard *Virginia*, you have embarked on an adventure of a lifetime. The information in this packet is provided to better inform and prepare you for a passage aboard *Virginia*.

It is important to understand as a Working Crew member, you will be working alongside the crew during your passage. **Remember, this is not a cruise vessel!** You are requesting a passage aboard *Virginia* with the understanding that you should be prepared to handle sails, work as a deckhand, stand watch, wash dishes, and adhere to the vessel's chain of command. *Virginia* has a communal guest crew berthing area, there are no private cabins. You will be provided three meals a day as prepared by the ship's cook, and eat alongside the crew.

Section I Reservations & Payment

1. **Reservations:** Complete the enclosed Response Form and return immediately to secure your space aboard *Virginia*. Along with the response form, a release of liability is required. We can not guarantee your requested passage without these documents.

- Each passage will be made on a first-come, first-serve basis.
- You must include a credit card number and the release of liability with your Response Form to hold you reservation
- Fees include room and board
- *Virginia's* "Honorary Members" receive a discount based on their membership level.
- VMHF is not responsible for transportation to and from the vessel

Note: RELEASE OF LIABILITY: Each working Guest Crew member must complete all insurance information, including the enclosed Release of Liability form. A completed Release of Liability form also serves as your acknowledgement of passenger responsibility and safety aboard *Virginia*. This release must be returned with your Response Form.

2. **Payment:** Payment and payment schedules are based on the type of program you are engaged in with Virginia Maritime Heritage Foundation. This document is a general guideline. If you have different pricing, deposit requirements and/or scheduling details outside of this document please follow them unless otherwise instructed. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the office.

- 50% deposit will be charged to your credit card to hold your reservation. 5% discount on PIF
- Final payment for your passage is due 10 days prior to boarding.
- Cancellations 7 days or more prior to departure deposit refunded minus \$30 processing fee
- Cancellations within 7 days of departure, no refund of deposit or 50% of passage, which ever is greater.

Note: Interview: On International passages, coastwise, offshore and passages longer than 14 days, you will need to be interviewed and approved for passage by the Captain. The Captain will call you upon receipt of your response form. This conversation is an important part of our passenger selection process. Sailing on Virginia can be physically challenging, so you need to have a clear understanding of what will be involved and what will be expected of you. The Captain has final word as to who will or will not be accepted as a Guest Crew member.

Section II Do's and Don'ts on what to bring

TRAVEL CHECK LIST

There are a number of items you will need to bring with you during your passage aboard *Virginia*. In order to better prepare you for the journey, we have provided you with a suggested list that we feel is a must, we have compiled this list based on all types of weather conditions. Please keep in mind that you may get "dirty" on board the boat. Do not bring clothing with you that you do not want to get messed up. However we do suggest that you bring one set of clothing that can be saved and used in the event we go ashore.

Wool & Polypro materials are recommended for winter and cottons are recommended for summer.

Fall/Winter

- ♦ Foul weather gear and sea boots (waterproof)
- ♦ Heavyweight sweater or sweatshirt
- ♦ Knit turtleneck/pullover
- ♦ Waterproof shoes with non-skid soles
- ♦ Sturdy jeans or Khakis
- ♦ tee shirts, and underwear
- ♦ Several pairs of socks
- ♦ Hat/gloves/scarf
- ♦ Books, cards, or other recreational items
- ♦ A sturdy coffee mug (travel mugs are great)
- ♦ Toiletries, including sunscreen

Spring/Summer

- ♦ Shorts
- ♦ Swimsuits
- ♦ T-shirts
- ♦ Light long sleeve shirt
- ♦ Jeans & khakis
- ♦ Sun Hat (ball cap)
- ♦ Sneakers
- ♦ Sandals (w/ back strap)
- ♦ Wind breaker
- ♦ Light rain jacket
- ♦ Toiletries
- ♦ Sunscreen
- ♦ Water bottle
- ♦ Extra Towel

*****Valid passports are required for all international passages*****

- All recreational items (camera, books, games, cards, musical instruments etc.) can be brought with you. Remember however that the gear you bring must stow in your bunk.
- Do not bring hair dryers, electric razors, or other small electric appliances that require electricity.
- Sheets, towel and wool blankets are provided, you may bring an additional towel for swimming. If the weather will be cold, we recommend that you bring a sleeping bag.
- To fully participate in the watch system, you should bring full foul-weather gear. At minimum, a waterproof jacket or slicker is required. Remember, you will be exposed to the elements while on watch.
- Your gear should be packed in a duffle bag or other soft luggage. Bunk space is ample but not generous.

Section III Boarding

The cost of a particular passage between ports is enclosed for your review and consideration. Please note that these prices include room, and board and passage aboard *Virginia*. Transportation to and from the ports, all necessary passports, and visas are not included in the price. These costs are your responsibility. We will notify you of *Virginia's* docking location well in advance of your departure date.

- a. Each boarding time is based on the departure time. Please check your itinerary as to when you are able to board the ship. Unless otherwise arranged, passengers are invited to board at these times only. *Meals are not provided upon initial boarding times.*
- b. After boarding you will be taken on a brief tour of the vessel by one of the crew members who will describe life on board. They will fully explain the watch system...we expect you will participate!

Section III What to expect aboard *Virginia*

- a. Guest Crew space is amidships in the Main Saloon, bunks are assigned first come, first serve basis. Like other crew accommodations, guest crew space is communal.
- b. Always remember that it is colder on the water. Dress wisely and bring plenty of layers of clothing. The vessel's heat is provided by the galley stove, and there is no air conditioning!
- c. *Virginia's* supply of fresh water is limited. Hot showers are restricted while underway and are generally available every other day.
- d. Three meals are provided daily and served according to watch routine. You will be advised of the times when you come aboard.
- e. Participating in the watch system is the most rewarding part of the passenger experience and you are encouraged to take part in the day-to-day operations of the vessel by handling sail, standing watch, maintaining the vessel and fulfilling the other duties of a deckhand.
- f. Smoking is only allowed on deck.
- g. While the ship is underway, there is to be quiet after 2200 hours (10:00 PM)
- h. *Virginia's* mission is to serve as The State of Virginia's Goodwill Ambassador. As such, she often hosts sailing or dockside receptions for individual, corporate, or government groups. If part of your passage involves a port visit where receptions are scheduled, you may choose to stay aboard while these activities take place, or take the opportunity to pursue interests you may have on shore.
- i. Sailing aboard a traditional vessel such as *Virginia* is a unique experience. In the finest traditions of the sailor's craft, we ask that you be courteous and respect the rights and privacy of your shipmates.
- j. There will be no alcohol consumed while the ship is underway, unless otherwise specified by the captain.
- k. ***Meals are served family style aboard Virginia. The vessel's cook, galley layout and the storage of supplies do not facilitate or support accommodations of individual dietary desires or religious desires of food served aboard Virginia other than medically known and verified allergies.***

Section V Disembarking

- a. "Check out" time is 1600 hours (4:00 PM) on the day that *Virginia* arrives in port, (unless her itinerary requires different arrangements), but you may leave earlier if you wish. If you decide to leave the ship earlier than 4:00 PM, please be sure to tell the captain and ship's cook of your plans.

If you have any questions concerning any of the information included in the packet, please call the office at (757) 627-7400. We would be happy to assist you in any way we can.

Thank you again for your interest in sailing with *Virginia*. We look forward to welcoming you aboard!