



Contact: Sail250vainfo@festevents.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Sail250® Virginia announces final list of official Virginia Affiliate Harbors for America's 250th in 2026

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Norfolk, VA- With less than two years to go to America's 250th commemoration in 2026, **Sail250® Virginia** Norfolk organizers announced today the final list of official Virginia Affiliate Harbors that will participate in the Commonwealth's visiting ship program, **Sail VirginiaSM 2026**, as part of **Sail250® Virginia**.

Sail250® Virginia Host City Norfolk and its 10 **Sail VirginiaSM 2026** Affiliate Harbors will welcome more than 60 tall ships, military and character ships from around the world over two weekends, June 12 – 15, 2026 and June 18 – 23, 2026 throughout Hampton Roads and Virginia's Chesapeake Bay region. In addition to ship visits, each Affiliate Harbor will present landside special events and programs, free and open to the public.

Norfolk, the Sail250® Virginia Host City, scheduled June 19-23, 2026, will be the location for the International Government Sail Training Tall Ship Fleet, plus privately owned tall ships, character vessels, and military ships.

Sail250® Virginia CEO Karen Scherberger states "The interest to participate in this historic maritime event has been truly remarkable; having both Richmond and Alexandria joining as Affiliated Harbors is unprecedented. Together, our cities will make **Sail250® Virginia** and **Sail VirginiaSM 2026** the largest public event in the Commonwealth for the 250th."

She adds "It is with great excitement that we officially announce the final schedule of official **Sail VirginiaSM 2026** Affiliate Harbors:

June 12 -15, 2026

Alexandria - June 12-15, 2026
Hampton – June 12-15, 2026
Isle of Wight/Smithfield – June 12-15, 2026
Onancock – June 12-15, 2026
Richmond – June 12-15, 2026
Yorktown – June 12-15, 2026

June 18 - 22, 2026

Cape Charles – June 19-22, 2026
Chesapeake – June 19-22, 2026
Portsmouth – June 19-22/23, 2026
Virginia Beach (Ship Anchorage off Lesner Bridge June 18-19; Parade of Sail starting point, June 19 early morning.)

Norfolk- Official Sail250® Virginia Host Port- June 19 – 23, 2026.

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Background:

The year 2026 marks the 250th Anniversary of the nation's founding in 1776- the United States of America's Semiquincentennial.

For this milestone occasion, a fleet of the world's most magnificent international tall ships, historic character vessels, and modern military ships, will again sail into the harbors of Virginia as part of the national Sail250[®] tour.

More than 60 ships from 20 countries are expected to fill the harbors of Norfolk, Hampton Roads, and Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Region from June 12 – June 23, 2026. The International Fleet will arrive on Thursday, June 18, 2026, off the Virginia Beach shore in time for the traditional Parade of Sail on Friday, June 19, 2026.

Sail250[®] Virginia, with **Sail VirginiaSM 2026** Affiliate Harbors and Events throughout Norfolk, Hampton Roads, and Virginia's Chesapeake Bay region, is planned as part of America's 250th Anniversary, and one of Virginia's signature events of the Semiquincentennial year.

According to Scherberger, "We are indeed honored to partner with VA250 to present this iconic event as part of the Commonwealth's 250th events, representing the traditions and rich military and maritime history of Norfolk/Hampton Roads/Chesapeake Bay region since 1976". She adds "As with our previous OpSail and Sail Virginia maritime events since 1976, the international fleet will once again bring extraordinary experiences and opportunities to every corner of our communities". Scherberger continues "Hundreds of ship tours, events and programs sponsored by the Host City Norfolk, and our 10 **Sail VirginiaSM 2026 Affiliate Harbors** will engage residents and visitors with more than 7,000 visiting crew members symbolic of the bonds of international goodwill".

Scherberger concludes, "It is with tremendous gratitude that we thank our generous sponsors and supporters for providing their resources and encouragement to make this experience possible for our communities".

Sail250[®] Virginia sponsors include:

Virginia is for Lovers, City of Norfolk, Sentara, TowneBank, Crofton Industries, Dominion Enterprises, E. G. Middleton, Inc., W.F. Magann Corporation, Hampton Roads Shipping Association, Fairlead, Colliers International, Colonna's Shipyard, Inc., Perry Family Foundation, Light Tech, Inc., Visit Norfolk, BAE Systems, Coastal Precast Systems, Coastal Virginia Tourism Alliance, Elizabeth River Concrete, S. B. Ballard Construction Company, Bay Power Solutions, MHI Ship Repair & Services, The Dwight and Jane Schaubach Fund of the Suffolk Foundation, Bruce Bishop.

Planned in partnership with the United States Coast Guard, United States Navy, and other military commands and regional maritime partners, **Sail250[®] Virginia** is collaborating with, local, regional, and national government departments and agencies, civic and volunteer organizations, and endorsed by the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission.

Sail250[®] Virginia is one of five official US ports selected to host the 2026 **Sail250[®] America** tour, including New Orleans, Baltimore, New York, and Boston.

Sail250® Virginia is planned and directed by Sail Norfolk, the maritime division of Norfolk Festevents, Ltd., based in Norfolk, VA.

Regular updates and more information can be found at sail250virginia.com.

Inquiries and requests for more information, email Sail250vainfo@festevents.org.

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