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**CHARLOTTESVILLE & ALBEMARLE COUNTY
FEATURES A VARIETY OF FUN FESTIVALS THIS SPRING**

Virginia Festival of the Book, Dogwood Festival, Taste of Monticello Wine Trail Festival, Tom Tom Founders Festival, Foxfield Spring Races, Historic Garden Week, Festival of Cultures, and Crozet Arts & Crafts Festival all prepare to engage locals and visitors alike

Charlottesville, VA (March 2, 2018) – Charlottesville and Albemarle County features a grand selection of exciting spring festivals in the months ahead. These festivals will celebrate a wide range of interests including books and literacy, innovation, wine, horse races, gardening, exploration of cultures, and hand-crafted artisan treasures. Here are some of the area festivals not to be missed this spring in the Charlottesville area.

The **Virginia Festival of the Book** kicks off the region's spring festivals, taking place from **March 21 - 25**. Produced by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities (VFH), this Festival brings more than 30,000 readers and writers together for a five-day celebration of books, reading, literacy, and literary culture. The 24th year of this event will feature 250 programs with engaging discussions about important current issues, ranging from traditional author readings to children's programs and hands-on workshops. This year's festival will include a talk from University of Virginia president-elect James E. Ryan, who will be speaking about "Life's Essential Questions" on **March 24**. All programs are open to the public and many are free to attend. www.vabook.org.

The **Dogwood Festival** is a staple Charlottesville area event that celebrates the arrival of spring in a major way, with events from **March 24 - May 5**. Featuring an array of activities such as a pageant, parade, concert, fireworks and a family-friendly carnival, the Dogwood Festival is named in honor of the official flower and tree of Virginia. This year marks the 69th anniversary of the Festival. charlottesvillegdogwoodfestival.org/

A celebration of Charlottesville's love affair with wine, the **Taste of Monticello Wine Trail Festival** offers wine enthusiasts a celebration of the best wines Central Virginia has to offer. In its seventh year, the Festival features various wine-focused events over a 6-day span, from **May 7 - 12**. These events include the Monticello Cup Awards at The Jefferson Theater, winery visits with wine brunches, lunches, and dinners, plus a tasting event at the Sprint Pavilion on Charlottesville's Downtown Mall. Featuring more than 25 wineries and live entertainment, this tasting event on **May 12** gives visitors the opportunity to sample a vast variety of local wines, all under one roof. Special VIP packages are available. monticellowinetrailfestival.com/

The **Tom Tom Founders Festival** returns in 2018 for its seventh anniversary as the gathering of the year for innovators, inventors, and entrepreneurs in the Mid-Atlantic region. For one week centered around Founder's Day (April 13 – Thomas Jefferson's birthday), the city of Charlottesville is reimagined as a creative canvas for innovators, visionaries, and artists. Featuring more than 70 bands, 400 speakers, and 400 community organizations, this Festival fills outdoor spaces, theaters, galleries, concert halls, and more. Tom Tom will also host an impressive musical lineup through block parties and a series of acoustic front porch concerts called Porchella. This year, Tom Tom will feature keynote speakers John Cleese of *Monty Python* and iconic news anchor Dan Rather during its Summits, which explore the future with innovators and visionaries. The Summits allow attendees to choose from programming centered around entrepreneurial innovation or civic leadership - or both. The week-long Festival also includes numerous free performances, workshops, and seminars sure to draw innovators from around the nation to Charlottesville **April 9 - 15**, transforming the city's picturesque Downtown Mall into a teeming hub for multi-disciplinary innovation and creativity. Intrigued? Find out more at tomtomfest.com/

Historic Garden Week celebrates its 85th anniversary this year with roots going back to 1927, when a flower show organized by the Garden Club of Virginia raised an impressive \$7,000 to save some of the trees planted by Thomas Jefferson on the lawn at Monticello. Today, The Garden Club of Virginia operates as a non-profit organization comprised of 47 member clubs and 3,400 volunteers. Garden lovers are invited to take part in the many activities scheduled during Historic Garden Week, **April 21 - 28**. During the 8-day event, attendees will have the opportunity to enjoy the unforgettable gardens in full bloom and beautiful houses with more than 2,000 flower arrangements. All proceeds from this event go toward the restoration and preservation of Virginia's historic public gardens. www.vagardenweek.org/.

A true Charlottesville tradition not to be missed is the 41st running of the **Foxfield Spring Races**, which will be held on **Saturday, April 28**. For several decades, the Foxfield Racing Association has provided a beautiful setting for the equestrian sport of steeple chasing. The alluring, but challenging, Foxfield course was designed to attract thoroughbred owners and trainers, and to provide the jockey and his mount with a beautiful ride over rolling lush green turf. Visit www.foxfieldraces.com/spring for more details.

The **Festival of Cultures**, a celebration of the cultural and linguistic diversity of the Charlottesville area community, will take place on **May 12**. This Festival is a day of free, family-friendly fun with all-day entertainment options including music, dance, song, and storytelling. Enjoy hands-on cultural crafts activities, cultural exhibits, food, and artisan vendors at Washington Park off of Preston Ave in Charlottesville. www.festivalofcultures.org/.

The ever-popular **Crozet Arts & Crafts Festival** will return to Claudius Crozet Park on **May 12 & 13** for another season of celebrating the area's fine artisans. Dozens of juried fine art and craft exhibitors will show and sell their handcrafted works in the soaring high-peaked tents and park pavilions at this family-friendly event. Live music can be enjoyed throughout the weekend, as well as great food from a variety of on-site vendors and beverages including Virginia wine, plus draft beer by the glass. www.crozetfestival.com

Starting in April, **Fridays After 5** will return to the Sprint Pavilion on the historic pedestrian Downtown Mall for its 31st year. Each Friday afternoon through the spring and summer, the Sprint Pavilion offers free concerts from great local artists representing a myriad of musical styles. Enjoy local craft beverages while relaxing on the grassy lawn outside of the pavilion at this family-friendly concert series. <http://www.sprintpavilion.com/events-tickets/fridays-after-five-line-up>

The official destination website offers a complete calendar of events at <http://www.visitcharlottesville.org>.

About the Charlottesville Albemarle Convention & Visitors Bureau (CACVB):

In addition to serving as the global resource for marketing the tourism assets of [Charlottesville](#) and [Albemarle County](#), Virginia, through www.visitcharlottesville.org, the CACVB assists tour operators, meeting planners, reunions and other groups in planning visits to the destination. CACVB's mission is "to enhance the economic prosperity of City and County by promoting, selling and marketing the City of Charlottesville and County of Albemarle, as a destination, in pursuit of the meetings and tourism markets." CACVB operates the [Downtown Visitor Center \(610 E Main St\)](#) which is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and a second visitor center, the [Albemarle Tourism and Adventure Center](#) in downtown Crozet ([5791 Three Notch'd Rd](#)) at the historic train depot; it is open Wednesday - Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and Sunday Noon - 5:00 p.m. The CACVB also provides a touch-screen kiosk at Monticello's Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center. The official website of the CACVB is www.visitcharlottesville.org. In addition, the organization manages powerful social media channels; ExperienceCharlottesville on Facebook, @VisitCville on Twitter, CvilleVA on Pinterest, and @CharlottesvilleVA on Instagram and Vimeo.

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