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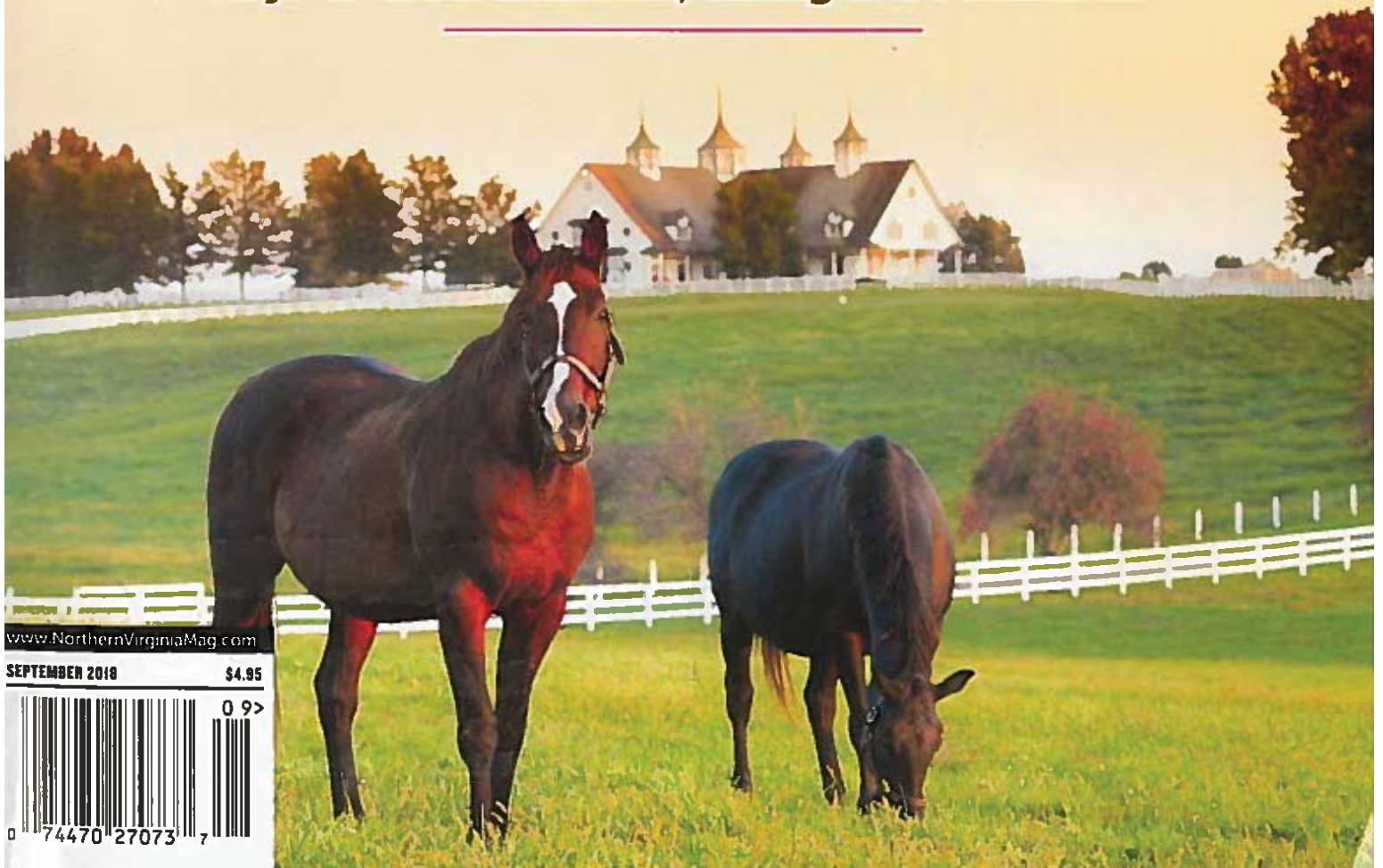
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Northern Virginia

WEEKEND

GETAWAYS

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TIMELESS BEAUTY IN A TINY PACKAGE

LEXINGTON

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LEXINGTON IS A CLASSICAL VIRGINIA town built high on a hill. Located in the Shenandoah Valley, through the 1700s Lexington served as a major stopover on the Wilderness Road during mass migration to the American West. After Scots-Irish immigrants began settling here in 1777, the town suffered multiple fires leading the community to rebuild using brick and stone (around 1860). This is the timeless architecture you still see today in Lexington.

The region's economy has always been tied to agriculture, and the surrounding landscape of Rockbridge County is dotted with farms and fields, forests covering mountainsides and fertile riverbanks along the James and Maury Rivers.

An ideal way to appreciate Lexington's notable attractions is riding in a surrey (with a fringe on top, of course). Lexington Carriage Company runs daily tours from April 1 to Oct.

Rockbridge Vineyard



Southern Inn

WHERE TO DINE

Southern Inn

A community institution, the restaurant showcases chef George Huger's take on contemporary Southern American cuisine and cocktails with favorites like fried chicken, shrimp and grits, pimento cheese and cornbread. southerninn.com, \$\$\$



WHERE TO STAY

The Georges

Travelers will rarely find a more enchanting hotel experience than this luxurious historic inn on Main Street. Located inside two of Lexington's oldest buildings, the elegant restoration retains their original character, while offering guests first-class service. TAPS bar is a popular hangout, and a sumptuous made-to-order breakfast buffet is included.

Ranges from \$180-\$360; thegeorges.com



The Georges

NOTE

Music lovers could schedule their visit around the annual Nothin' Fancy Bluegrass Festival, Sept. 20-22.

WHERE TO DINE

Haywood's Restaurant

Contemporary, upscale restaurant with nightly jazz, classic cocktails and craft beer. Known for locally-sourced ingredients like grits from Wade's Mill and meats from Polyface Farm. thegeorges.com/haywoods, \$\$

31 narrated by expert guides who share their town's history and tell funny stories about their horses. The carriage ride passes the two stately college campuses of Washington & Lee University and Virginia Military Institute, as well as the Stonewall Jackson Memorial Cemetery and Lexington's antebellum homes.

Infinitely walkable and an easy place to park, plan to spend time exploring Lexington's historic downtown and its many shops and restaurants. Stop by the visitor center to pick up a self-guided walking tour map. For refreshments, Lexington also has cute coffee shops like Sweet Treats Bakery and Lexington Coffee Shop filled with hard working students when college

is in session.

Gallery Row on West Washington Street contains exciting creations by local and regional artists. You'll be charmed by Earth, Fire & Spirit Pottery's quirky wooden bowties and canvas rugs. At Artists in Cahoots, enjoy the vast array of hand carved canes and ducks, blown glass and earthenware. Also, check out Cabell Gallery's fine art, including sculpture and paintings of the region.

Lexington residents have a taste for classic style, which is what you'll find in these upmarket retailers. Nicknamed Lexington's "cutest darn store," Pumpkin-seeds boutique sells ladies' apparel, gifts, shoes and lo-

tions. Pappagallo is the chief supplier of trendy merchandise favored by the town's co-eds. Shenandoah Attic is stocked from floor to ceiling with collectibles, including Washington & Lee and VMI memorabilia; the owner serves apple cider while shoppers browse. Book lovers should not miss Books & Co. This inviting multi-function workshop tempts customers to read or make crafts in the company of the owner's friendly cat.

Lexington is 20 minutes from one of the East Coast's most impressive natural wonders—Natural Bridge State Park. Descend over 100 steps or hop a shuttle bus to view the 215-foot limestone arch and karst landscape. Continue on the Cedar Creek Trail to the Monacan Village, a living history settlement of Native Americans who inhabited the region, then onto the cascading whitewater at Lace Falls.

Craft beer lovers should check out Great Valley Farm Brewery to taste fruity Belgian-style brews or Devils Backbone Outpost Brewery & Tap Room to sample their award-winning craft beer. There's plenty to keep visitors busy in Lexington, a jewel among the commonwealth's many tiny treasures.

WHERE TO STAY

Sheridan Livery Inn

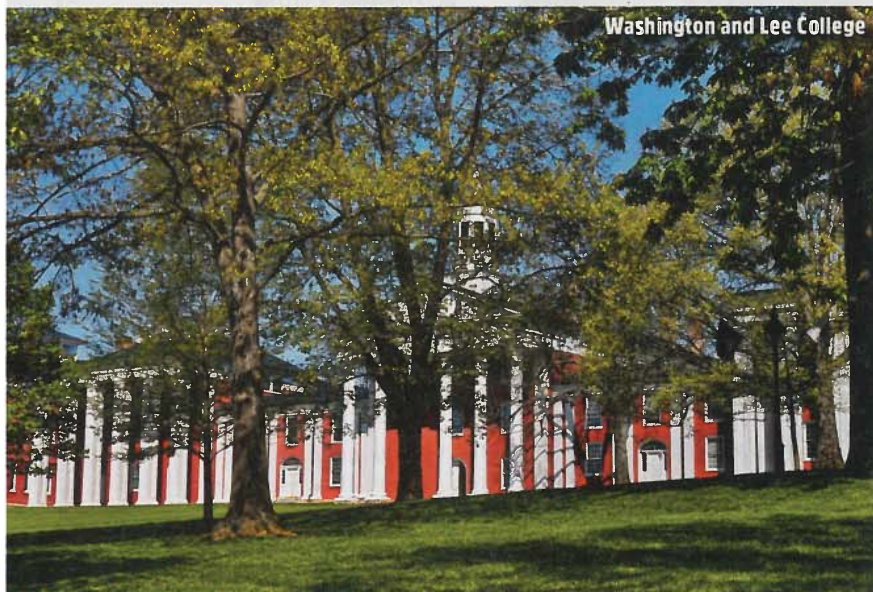
This family-owned inn has a trendy wine bar and beverage shop. Formerly a horse stable, the historic building was updated and is located in the downtown district. Continental breakfast is included.

Ranges from \$140-\$270; sheridanliveryinn.com

Devils Backbone Brewery



Washington and Lee College



WHERE TO STAY

Natural Bridge Historic Hotel & Conference Center

This no-frills hotel is located at the entrance to Natural Bridge State Park with spectacular views of the Blue Ridge Mountains and Shenandoah Valley. The hotel has a casual restaurant, snack shop and tavern. Room options include cottages, suites and standard guest rooms.

Ranges from \$79-\$169; naturalbridgeva.com/rooms

WHERE TO DINE

Pure Eats

Located inside a vintage gas station, this family friendly hangout features daily house made doughnuts, sandwiches, burgers, salads, craft beers and cider. Dishes sourced from nearby Buffalo Creek Beef and Homestead Creamery. pure-eats.com, \$