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The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation  
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## **Grand Illumination Expands to Three Weekends This Year**

### **Fireworks, 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Inspired Holiday Entertainment Mark the Return of Williamsburg's Grand Tradition**

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. (July 15, 2021)– Fireworks and the spirit of the season will fill the sky above Colonial Williamsburg as the community comes together to celebrate Grand Illumination over three weekends in December.

“We have much to be grateful for in 2021,” said Cliff Fleet, president and CEO of The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. “The pandemic is finally releasing its grip on our community and life is starting to return to normal. This holiday season, we invite guests to gather and reflect on our friendships and living in such a welcoming community.”

Grand Illumination events, programming and fireworks will take place Dec. 3-4, 10-11, and 17-18, 2021. The expanded schedule replaces the one-night event that had been the tradition for decades prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Three weekends of programming and fireworks offer more options for visitors and the community to enjoy Greater Williamsburg’s hospitality,” said Williamsburg Mayor Douglas Pons. “We welcome everyone to spend time with neighbors and friends as we celebrate the season along Duke of Gloucester Street.”

Grand Illumination programming begins Fridays at 6 p.m. with a community Yule Log procession along Duke of Gloucester Street and a bonfire near the Magazine. Cressets will line the historic street, which will be alive with 18th-century entertainment until 8 p.m. Guests will enjoy the full Colonial Williamsburg holiday decoration experience starting Dec. 4 thanks to the foundation’s landscaping team and Historic Area residents.

Programming continues each Saturday starting at 5 p.m. with traditional Grand Illumination festivities, including a dramatic presentation of an original holiday story, 18th-century music and other Yuletide favorites, and an appearance by Father Christmas, culminating in simultaneous 18th-century-inspired pyrotechnic displays at the Governor’s Palace and Capitol building. Special programming all three weekends at the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg will feature familiar favorites and new entertainment offerings.

Complete details about this three-weekend holiday celebration are available at [Colonialwilliamsburg.org/gi](http://Colonialwilliamsburg.org/gi), including details about special promotions that include up to two length-of-stay admission tickets for guests who book direct at an official Colonial Williamsburg hotel. The page will be updated regularly as events are added.

The health and safety of guests and staff is Colonial Williamsburg's highest priority. All guests will be required to follow any government requirements or Colonial Williamsburg policies relating to health and safety that may in place at the time of the event. For the latest COVID-related updates please visit [colonialwilliamsburg.org](http://colonialwilliamsburg.org).

All Colonial Williamsburg employees have received special safety training to limit the risk of COVID-19 spread or infection. The training includes general and site-specific safety requirements such as basic sanitization procedures, use of face coverings where appropriate, and social distancing requirements to follow with colleagues and guests. Signs posted throughout the Historic Area, the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg and sites will remind guests of safety precautions to protect themselves and others from risks associated with COVID-19 exposure.

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*The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation preserves, restores and operates Virginia's 18th-century capital of Williamsburg. Innovative and interactive experiences highlight the relevance of the American Revolution to contemporary life and the importance of an informed, active citizenry. The Colonial Williamsburg experience includes more than 600 restored or reconstructed original buildings, renowned museums of decorative arts and folk art, extensive educational outreach programs for students and teachers, lodging, culinary options from historic taverns to casual or elegant dining, the Golden Horseshoe Golf Club featuring 45 holes designed by Robert Trent Jones and his son Rees Jones, a full-service spa and fitness center, pools, retail stores and gardens. Philanthropic support and revenue from admissions, products and hospitality operations sustain Colonial Williamsburg's educational programs and preservation initiatives.*

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