



Events Calendar

Here are a few of the annual events and festivals you'll find along the Trails. And check out the websites listed at the end of this section to find full events listings for each county.

MARYLAND DAY

Historic St. Mary's City

March. Each year, the State of Maryland celebrates Maryland Day, which commemorates the landing of the first European settlers on the province of Maryland. This is one of the biggest days of the year at Historic St. Mary's City, the site where the settlers arrived and founded Maryland's first capital in 1634. Celebrate Maryland's anniversary with ceremony, pageantry, fun and free admission. Enjoy kids' crafts and a scavenger hunt, and try your hand at "jousting." (240) 895-4990, www.hsmcdigshistory.org

EARTH DAY ON THE SQUARE

Town of Leonardtown

April. Celebrate your love of nature with live music, entertainment, environmental demonstrations, recycling information, plants and more. Recycling, land/sea/bay conservation, live animal exhibits, organic and local produce, plants, music and children's entertainment. Free admission. (301) 475-9791, www.leonardtown.somd.com

MAY DAY

Historic St. Mary's City

May. May is a time when the weather gets warmer, the flowers start to bloom and hearts

get light. Help the colonists celebrate their May Day! Take part in a Maypole dance, play period games, see what local vendors have to offer and make a craft to take home. (240) 895-4990, www.hsmcdigshistory.org

CALVERT ARTS FESTIVAL

All Saints Episcopal Church

Second Saturday in May. This juried show features some of the best artisans in Calvert, St. Mary's and Charles counties, as well as other fine craftsmen. Musicians, dancers, children's activities, baked goods and other great food add to the festivities. Tours are available of the historic 1692 church and its labyrinth. Plenty of free parking. Proceeds benefit All Saints Parish's community projects. Rain or shine. (410) 257-6306, www.allsaints1692.org

GALA IN THE GARDEN

Sotterley Plantation

Mid-June. Beautiful river views, refreshing cocktails, gourmet palate-pleasers and fabulous live and silent auction items in the gardens to support Sotterley's educational programming. NEW theme every year! Advance reservations are required. (301) 373-2280, www.sotterley.org



JULY 4TH SEAFOOD BUFFET

Capt. John's Crab House

July 4th. Celebrate the Fourth with a sumptuous spread of all the fabulous seafood you can eat: crab balls, broiled scallops, steamed shrimp, seafood imperial, broiled fish, fried oysters and so much more! (301) 259-2315, www.cjcrab.com

STAR-SPANGLED CELEBRATION

Sotterley Plantation

July. Continue your Independence Day weekend at Historic Sotterley and celebrate our patriots! Your visit includes grounds tours, gardens, trails and Sotterley's Plantation House walk-through tours. Enjoy supper for purchase from local vendors and a concert in the barn featuring patriotic music! Admission at the gate only. (301) 373-2280, www.sotterley.org

ARCHAEOLOGY DAYS

Historic St. Mary's City

Last weekend of July. Help uncover the past at one of the best preserved Colonial sites in the nation. Work alongside archaeologists as they find and identify objects our ancestors lost or discarded. Take a guided tour of excavations and experience a once-a-year opportunity to explore the archaeology laboratory—sign up at the Visitor Center when you arrive. (240) 895-4990, www.hsmcdigshistory.org

BEACH PARTY ON THE SQUARE

Town of Leonardtown

August. This action-packed event is sure to provide a good time for all! Family entertainment, music, games, volleyball, fire truck hose-downs, "running of the balls" and more! (301) 475-9791, www.leonardtown.somd.com

MILITIA MUSTER

Historic St. Mary's City

September. Muster for drills, mock battles and fencing. Visit an encampment, watch a musket-fire demonstration and more. (240) 895-4990, www.hsmcdigshistory.org

INDIAN DISCOVERY DAY

Historic St. Mary's City

September. Explore and celebrate the culture of Maryland's first people. There will be Native American dancers, hide tanning demonstrations, canoe burning, archery and atlatl demonstrations as well as crafts to make and take home. (240) 895-4990, www.hsmcdigshistory.org

CHESAPEAKE HERB GATHERING

Centro Ashé Farm and Herb School

Last weekend in September. Join in this annual gathering of the herbal and plant community. Enjoy a weekend of workshops, local vendors and networking with local medicine-makers, teachers, clinical herbalists, healers, botanists, farmers, birth keepers, permaculturists, plant people, artists, homesteaders and more! (301) 375-6082, www.centroashe.org

MONTPELIER FARMS FALL FESTIVAL

Montpelier Farm

September through November. Weekends only. Fun for the whole family! Enjoy hayrides, corn maze, animals, giant hill slide, apple cider slushies, kettle corn and more! (410) 320-0464, www.montpelierfarms.com

THE CROP HOP

Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC)

October. The Crop Hop is a bike tour designed to highlight the connection between farms, fresh food and good health, and to help provide fresh farm foods to low-income families in Southern Maryland. The event includes cycling tours to Southern Maryland farms for riders of all levels. Early registration includes a locally sourced lunch and snacks, and a commemorative T-shirt. (301) 274-1922, ex. 1, www.crophop.com



FALL FEST & MAZE

Zekiah Farms

October. The theme of Fall Fest changes yearly based on historical, natural or locally significant topics, but there is always good family fun, including a 10-acre corn maze, hay maze, hayrides, maze challenges, face painting, straw pit, covered picnic area and a recreation area with games and pumpkin painting. Items are available for purchase. Check the website for dates of Flashlight Maze and special activities. (240) 216-4065, www.zekiahfarms.com

RIVERSIDE WINEFEST AT SOTTERLEY

Sotterley Plantation

First full weekend in October. Celebrate the best of Maryland! Enjoy wineries, live music, free mini-tours of the Sotterley sites, artisans, demonstrations, exhibits, children's activities and fine Maryland foods for purchase. Discount tickets available online. Member discounts available. (301) 373-2280, www.sotterley.org

ST. MARY'S COUNTY OYSTER FESTIVAL

St. Mary's County Oyster Festival/ Rotary Club

Third Weekend in October. If you're an oyster lover, each year the St. Mary's County fairgrounds transforms to nirvana. Enjoy oysters served up raw, scalded, grilled on the "barbie," on bread, on the half shell, stewed, nude, cooked in savory sauces, in salads, even in desserts—just about every way imaginable and then some. Proceeds from the Oyster Festival go to local charities. (301) 863-5015, www.usoysterfest.com

GHOSTS OF SOTTERLEY

Sotterley Plantation

October. A favorite annual event for Southern Maryland with a new script each year, this event features a spooky dramatic production and walking tour around the Sotterley grounds. Advance reservations are required. No walk-ins. Purchase tickets online. (301) 373-2280, www.sotterley.org

VETERANS DAY PARADE AND CEREMONY

Town of Leonardtown

November. This annual parade features Veterans, dignitaries, elected officials, local school marching bands, military units, color guards, bagpipers, classic and antique cars, boy and girl scouts, cheerleaders, motorcycles, horses, fire, police and emergency personnel and equipment. Immediately following the parade, spectators are encouraged to remain in the town square for a memorial ceremony to include patriotic music and laying of wreaths. (301) 475-9791, www.leonardtown.somd.com

TRASH TO TREASURE GREEN CRAFT FAIR

Watkins Nature Center

Second Saturday in November. Go "green" with your holiday shopping this year! Explore handmade goods (created by local artists) that are made from at least 50 percent recycled/up-cycled, responsibly harvested, fair trade or sustainable materials. Items for sale include jewelry, bee products, knitwear, wood carvings and more! Other activities include a raffle table with unique items to benefit the nature center, a book exchange table, recycled kids crafts and hands-on activities at local non-profit booths. Free admission. (301) 218-6702, www.pgparcs.com

CHRISTMAS ON THE SQUARE

Town of Leonardtown

November, day after Thanksgiving. Ring in the holiday season with Leonardtown's annual Christmas on the Square and Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony. Enjoy live entertainment including holiday music, sleigh rides, horse and carriage rides, train rides, hayrides, fire truck rides, a petting zoo, live nativity, face painting, make-and-take crafts, festive decorations, food and much more. Stop by Mrs. Claus' tent for stories and crafts, but make sure you are in the square for Santa's arrival and the lighting of the town Christmas tree! (301) 475-9791, www.leonardtown.somd.com

HEARTH AND HOME IN EARLY MARYLAND

Historic St. Mary's City

Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving.

Explore the Colonial table and discover how Maryland's first settlers celebrated the end of the harvest season. Help churn butter, shuck beans, grind corn and learn about the many tasks required to cook the family feast over a 17th-century hearth. (240) 895-4990, www.hsmcdigshistory.org

COLONIAL CHRISTMAS

Historic St. Mary's City

December. Celebrate Christmas with the first Marylanders. Bring the family and enjoy crafts, entertainment, games and a walking tour of holiday traditions. (240) 895-4990, www.hsmcdigshistory.org

SOTTERLEY CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS BY CANDLELIGHT

Sotterley Plantation

December. Celebrate the season at Sotterley Plantation with a living history tour of the 300-year-old Plantation House decorated for the holidays. Experience the varied Christmas traditions of the families who have lived at Sotterley throughout history. Enjoy light refreshments and seasonal music at this quintessential Sotterley event. Advance reservations are required. No walk-ins. Purchase tickets online. (301) 373-2280, www.sotterley.org

FAMILY PLANTATION CHRISTMAS

Sotterley Plantation

December. Kick off your Christmas season at this delightful event! Visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus, enjoy breakfast with Santa, horse-drawn carriage rides, children's crafts and activities, Santa's Secret Shop, a holiday hunt around the grounds, greens and gifts sale, "Elves Mall," live seasonal music and more! (301) 373-2280, www.sotterley.org

HOLIDAY MADRIGAL DINNERS

Historic St. Mary's City

First two weekends in December. Herald the start of the holiday season with feasting, firelight, fun and song at a Colonial Madrigal Dinner in the historic State House. Enjoy delectable fare, lavish decorations, music and fun with friends. Be sure to make a reservation. (240) 895-4990, www.hsmcdigshistory.org

CHRISTMAS MARKET

All Saints Episcopal Church

Second Saturday in December. The elves at All Saints Episcopal Church can help with your holiday shopping. Come to the Christmas Market for handmade treasures from local craftsmen. Also available: hot spiced wine (Glühwein), hot cocoa, home-baked goodies, 50/50 raffle and more! No admission fee. Proceeds benefit parish and community projects. (410) 257-6306, www.allsaints1692.org

Check with individual sites above for exact dates and times. And visit these websites for extended calendars of events throughout Southern Maryland ...

Regional: www.destinationsouthernmaryland.com

Calvert County: www.choosecalvert.com

Charles County: www.charlescountymd.gov

Prince George's County: www.visitprincegeorges.com

St. Mary's County: www.visitstmarysmd.com

