

Yorktown Victory Center

Escort Notes

IT ENDED AT YORKTOWN. On October 19, 1781, a long and bitter battle for independence culminated with the British surrender to General George Washington. A new nation was born.

Today at the Yorktown Victory Center, your groups can experience the drama of the American Revolution and the birth of the United States. Extensive indoor galleries chronicle the Revolutionary era—from the beginnings of colonial unrest to the adoption of the Constitution and Bill of Rights—through the eyes of those who were there.

Vivid illustrations combined with more than 500 original artifacts bring the Revolution to life. An evocative film, *A Time of Revolution*, transports viewers back in time to a Continental Army encampment, where soldiers spend an evening reminiscing and musing on their lives and the war that has brought them together.

Outdoors, the sights, sounds and scents of 18th-century Virginia will surround your group in the re-created Continental Army encampment and 1780s farm.

In the encampment, musket and cannon firing demonstrations fill the air with the faint smell of gunpowder as your group explores the quarters of an Army surgeon, privates and officers. Historical interpreters may recruit someone in your group for a military drill or to help prepare the cannon for firing.

A fire crackles in the open hearth of the log kitchen as costumed historical interpreters prepare the midday meal using vegetables and herbs grown right outside their door. The farmhouse beckons your group to experience life as an 18th-century middling farmer. The pungent odor of drying tobacco fills the farm barn.

"The Meeting of Washington and Lafayette at Yorktown, 19th October 1781," by Georges-Jules-Auguste Cain, oil on canvas, circa 1890, collection of the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation.



An American Revolution Chronology

1763 - The Treaty of Paris ended the Seven Years (French and Indian) War, with France giving up most claims to North American territory.

1764-70 - Britain imposed a series of taxes on the American colonies to help pay the war's debts, but finally, after protests and resistance from the colonists, repealed all but the tax on tea, which cannot be grown in North America.

1773 - The Tea Act gave the British East India Company a monopoly on sales. In December, Patriots dressed as Indians boarded ships in Boston harbor and dumped more than 300 chests full of tea overboard. The following March, Parliament passed the Boston Port Act, closing the harbor.

1774 - The First Continental Congress met and formed the Continental Association, an agreement calling on the colonies to stop all imports from Britain.

1775 - In April, British troops attempting to capture colonial military supplies exchanged gunfire with Massachusetts minutemen at Lexington and Concord. In June, the Battle of Bunker and Breed's hills took place in Boston. George Washington was appointed commander-in-chief of the Continental forces, and Congress enacted the Articles of War.

1776 - The Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence on July 4.

1778 - France and the United States signed treaties of alliance and commerce.

1781 - American and French forces laid siege to the British army trapped at Yorktown, Virginia. This climactic military campaign of the Revolution concluded with the formal British surrender on October 19.

1783 - The final treaties ending hostilities were signed in Paris.

1788 - The Constitution went into effect in June after nine states ratified it. By December 15, 1791, ten amendments, known as the Bill of Rights, had been ratified by enough states to make them part of the Constitution.



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