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Small Town We Love: Staunton, Virginia

December 21, 2012 | By [Graham Averill](#) | [Comments \(17\)](#)

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Photo by Gary Clark

With a downtown energized by locally owned shops and restaurants, the Shenandoah Valley town is one of the prettiest and most progressive in the South.

Population: 23,746

Spotlight Count: 47

Charm Factor: Set between the scenic Blue Ridge and Allegheny Mountains, Staunton boasts a big city's cuisine and culture. Sample some of the state's best craft beers at Byers Street Bistro ([byersstreetbistro.com](#)). See the Bard's plays at American Shakespeare Center in the Blackfriars Playhouse, the world's only replica of the playwright's Blackfriars Theatre ([americanshakespearecenter.com](#)). Stay in the restored 1924 Stonewall Jackson Hotel & Conference Center ([stonewalljacksonhotel.com](#); rooms from \$115).

Namesake: Lady Rebecca Staunton, wife of William Gooch, colonial governor of Virginia in the 1730s. Lady Staunton's family stressed the "u" in their name, but it was dropped over time and is now pronounced "Stan-ton."

Staunton's "Main" Street: East Beverley Street (home to the Marquis Building, above) is Staunton's hub. Shoppers can browse through shoes at Design at Nine (540/886-0060), and enjoy artisan chocolates at Cocoa Mill ([cocoamill.com](#)).

Must-try Delicacy: Zynodoa's executive chef James Harris ([zynodoa.com](#)) serves farm-to-fork specialties such as Buffalo Creek Smothered Pork Roast (\$26) with caramelized Shen-Valley apples and cider onions.

Hometown Rivalry: The Split Banana Co. ([thesplitbanana.com](#)) makes its gelato daily, while family-owned Kline's Dairy Bar ([klinesdairybar.com](#)) cools off with homemade custard.

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Talk of the Town: Small-batch beers. Two bills passed by the Virginia General Assembly this summer made it legal for breweries to serve beer on-site. Since the bills passed, the Shenandoah Valley Brewing Company (540/887-2337) has opened, and Redbeard Brewing is scheduled to open early next year.

Local Boy Done Good: President Woodrow Wilson was born here in 1856. His birthplace is now the Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library & Museum (woodrowwilson.org).

Mayoral Endorsement: "Order the Reuben at Clocktower Restaurant & Bar (540/213-0665) in the old Woolworth's building," says Mayor Lacy King.

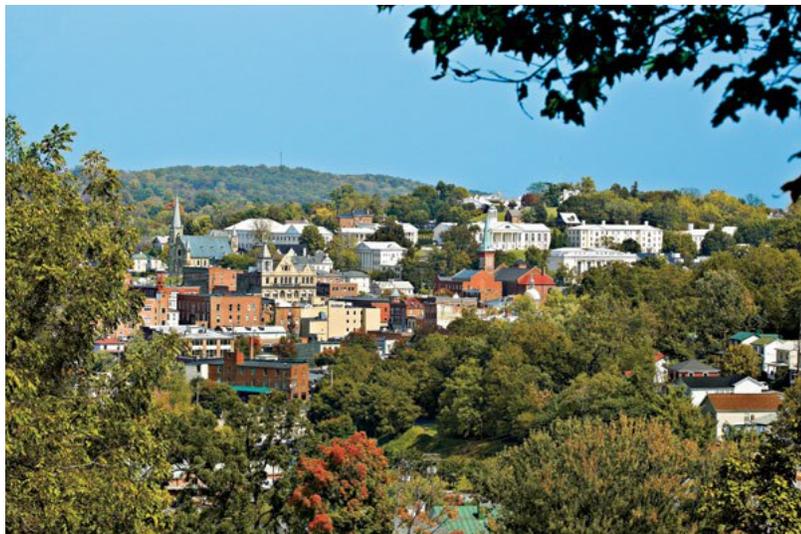


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COMMENTS



Our Foodie Appetite

We LOVE Staunton! We love it so much that we've created a post about our favorite restaurant there, Zynodoa, which you mentioned as a "must try." We couldn't agree more! You can read our most recent blog post to hear more about what you'll find if you do visit!

<http://www.ourfoodieappetite.com/zynodoa-restaurant-review-staunton-va/>

July 22, 2015 at 12:36 pm

Biznews

How many people work at the Energizer blade plant in Verona. Is that the Persona Blade making plant?

May 26, 2015 at 5:12 pm

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Betsy31

Energizer announcing closure of the Verona Personna blade facility in June.

May 25, 2015 at 7:34 am

Jlg

I heard that the Verona blade plant was going to be shut down as well?

May 25, 2015 at 7:32 am

Hackfeld

Any news on Energizer closing the Personna blade plant in Verona, VA?

May 25, 2015 at 7:29 am

Patricia Lee

"the hand-written menu reads like a bipolar expression of flavors" ? The slur on mental health sufferers sounds especially bad in the home of a state psych hospital

August 14, 2014 at 7:30 am

George Eager

On my way to Camp Maxwelton in Rockbridge County, we'd pass through Staunton. That was from 1958 to 1962, but I recognized what a lovely town Staunton was and vowed to come back some day. We'll, here I am fifty years later retired and living in the former Robert E. Lee High School in Staunton, and loving it. It goes to show how important first impressions are!

April 28, 2013 at 4:26 pm



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[...] Small Town We Love: Staunton, Virginia (thedailysouth.southernliving.com) [...]

February 12, 2013 at 9:26 am



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February 6, 2013 at 9:51 am

Lisa Kirby

As a child I remember waiting in line for Leggett department store to open bright and early for school shopping! My brothers and I waited anxiously for a fresh donut that was served as you walked in the door! Forty years later, downtown Staunton still has that charm. The buildings are beautiful! If you ever have the opportunity to wonder about Beverley Street, check out the tops of those buildings! The streets are lined with restaurants, specialty shops, beautiful churches and even a couple of theaters... the Dixie and Visulite! Blackfriars Playhouse, Frontier Culture Museum, Woodrow Wilson's birthplace, Mary Baldwin College, Sunspots Studios, and Gypsy Hill Park are just a few of the attractions as well! Wow! There really is no place like home!

January 3, 2013 at 11:55 am

Rebecca Schneider

Also, don't forget to stop into one of Staunton's oldest gift shops, Turtle Lane, located a few buildings down from the Marquis Building. You'll be sure to find an affordable, one-of-a-kind, locally made gift for someone you love!

December 23, 2012 at 8:20 pm

MPK

My husband and I have returned to this area after 30 years and are in awe of this town's spirit. Lady Rebecca Stanton would be happy with her namesake. How we got the u in our name is anyone's guess! Many stories abound but none have been verified. Some say it was to mislead union soldiers as the U made it appear to be a northern sympathizing town. Others

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say the U appeared after a courthouse fire assuming a U would appear more aristocratic. Regardless of the folk lore it is verified by birth records that the U was not in Lady Stanton's name hince the pronunciation of StaUnton!

Native Stauntonians

December 23, 2012 at 2:58 pm



phil1960

Visited Staunton 20 years ago and loved it. Hope to return sometime in 2013. Staunton is a wonderful place and I would recommend everyone try to visit.

December 22, 2012 at 7:47 pm

Billy Shoemaker

Don't forget to stop by Shenandoah Pizza, for great pizza and live music! Staunton is also home to a host of great musicians who play at the drop of a hat. You can't throw a rock in this town without hitting a guitar player somewhere!

December 22, 2012 at 10:21 am

Judy and Bill moyer

We are are so fortunate to live in Churchville about 10 miles West of Staunton and own and operate a local TV business in the city of Staunton. It is a lovely place with grateful hearts that we call home....also Home of the Statler Brothers!

December 22, 2012 at 10:02 am

Jeff Mauzy

I was also born and raised in this small, beautiful little town. As I grew up I was always impressed with the deep history of this place! As I now live many miles west of the Rockies, I am always proud to speak of my hometown, Staunton, Virginia where everyone says hello and the four seasons are amazing! Whenever I engage in conversation about Staunton with a friend from the west coast, their eyes almost fill with envy as I educate them on the town's rich colonial history!

December 22, 2012 at 9:53 am

Jane D. Bruce

What a surprise to see Staunton spotlighted! It is my hometown and I grew up walking these main streets and shopping at the local Woolworth's (now gone) as well as other stores long taken over by modern shops. One aspect of the town not mentioned is that at any given time during the school year groups of cadets from the now closed Staunton Military Academy populated downtown. The Sunday dress parade at SMA was a treat for all.. Stuart Hall and Mary Baldwin College are also the source of young people populating the town during the school year. How lucky I am at the age of 82 to remember growing up in this small town in the Shenandoah Valley.

December 22, 2012 at 9:13 am

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