

I'm not a bot





Old Town Alexandria is one of the original settlements of the city of Alexandria, Virginia, and is located about 8 miles from the United States Capitol. It lies across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C., of which it used to make up the far southern part.[1] It was the oldest district of D.C. until it was ceded back to Virginia in 1846. Old Town is situated in the eastern and southeastern area of Alexandria along the Potomac River and is laid out on a grid plan of substantially square blocks. Old Town AlexandriaAlexandria City HallName afterPhilip Alexander II and John AlexanderPopulation (2020) • Total11,872DemonymOld Towner / AlexandrianTime zoneESTArea code703 Old Town Alexandria's grid plan as drawn by surveyor George Washington, c. 1749 The area was originally called Belhaven, believed to be in honor of a Scottish patriot, John Hamilton, 2nd Lord Belhaven and Stenton. The town was formally named Alexandria in 1779, after Captain Philip Alexander II (1704–1753) and Captain John Alexander (1711–1763), who donated the land to assist in the development of the area. Much of the land on which Alexandria now sits on was part of a land grant from Sir William Berkeley who was the governor of Virginia. The land was awarded to the English ship captain Robert Howson. Shortly after the land was sold to John Alexander for 6,000 pounds of tobacco. By 1732, Philip and John Alexander farmed much of the surrounding area. Alexandria became a major trade hub and was incorporated in 1789.[2] Alexandria was known as the "Port City" of the Potomac and was one of the largest ports in the country by 1790.[3] George Washington was a Town Trustee, philanthropist, and resident. Robert E. Lee grew up in Old Town and, just as Washington did, attended Christ Church. The town was originally laid out in 1749, making it the oldest section of the city, and is a historic district.[4] On July 9, 1790, Congress passed the Residence Act, which approved the creation of a national capital on the Potomac River, formed from land donated by the states of Maryland and Virginia, two pre-existing settlements were included in the territory, the port of Georgetown, Maryland, founded in 1751,[5] and the port city of Alexandria, Virginia, founded in 1749.[6] George Washington conducted most of his business in Old Town, as it was a short trip from Mount Vernon. He was a Town Trustee and owned a house in town. It was the only house that he worked in when working late or for extended periods of time. When Washington was 14 he surveyed some of the streets in Old Town.[7] Washington donated money to his church, Christ Church, and money to found the first Catholic Church in Virginia, Saint Mary's. Both churches still exist, but Saint Mary's was moved closer to a central area of the town. The former location of Saint Mary's is now a Catholic school and graveyard.[8][9] Robert E. Lee grew up in Old Town Alexandria after his father could no longer afford for them to stay at Stratford Hall. Lee also attended Christ Church and later moved to the nearby Arlington House after marrying into George Washington's family.[10] Market Square in Old Town is believed to be one of the oldest continuously operating marketplaces in the United States (since 1753), and, during colonial times, was the site of a slave market. Today it contains a large fountain, extensive landscaping, and a farmers' market each Saturday morning. Alexandria City Hall, including the mayor's office, is adjacent to Market Square.[11] In the 1830s Alexandria's citizens petitioned Virginia to take back the land it had donated to form the district, through a process known as retrocession.[12] The Virginia General Assembly voted in February 1846 to accept the return of Alexandria. On July 9, 1846, Congress agreed to return all the territory that Virginia had ceded. A statue of a lone Confederate soldier that marked the spot at which Confederate States of America (CSA) units from Alexandria left to join the Confederate Army at the beginning of the American Civil War stood in the center of the intersection of Washington and Prince streets for 131 years until June 2, 2020. M. Casper Buberl cast the piece, entitled Appomattox, in 1889. The United Daughters of the Confederacy, which owns the statue, had the monument removed because vandals had recently damaged other segregation-era statues during nationwide demonstrations.[13] Old Town is chiefly known for its historic town houses, art galleries, antique shops, and restaurants as well as its unique cobblestone streets and red brick sidewalks.[1] Some of the historic landmarks in Old Town include: Carlyle House, Christ Church, a historic church whose congregation has included notable individuals, such as George Washington and Robert E. Lee, Christ Church Robert E. Lee's houses: His boyhood home and the Lee-Fendall House, Gadsby's Tavern, Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Shop, Hollensbury Spite House, Shiloh Baptist Church Saint Mary's Basilica (the first Catholic church in Virginia), Athenaeum Lyceum Vowell-Smith House The Torpedo Factory art studio complex A replica of George Washington's townhouse The Washington Metro's King Street station opened in 1983. It led to a spurt of new hotel and office building developments in western Old Town, and gentrification of townhouse areas west of Washington Street which were previously an African-American community. The Athenaeum is one of only two of Alexandria's surviving examples one Greek revival architecture. The building stands out because of its four large doric columns and pink paint. It was built in 1852 as a bank. Robert E. Lee was a patron of this bank when he was in Old Town.During the Civil War, it was a Union office. After the war it was an apothecary, factory, and church. In 1964 the Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association (NVFAA) bought the building and repurposed it as the Athenaeum.[14] The historic Gadsby's Tavern located at the corner of North Royal Street and Cameron Street Alexandria Archaeology Museum is an institution dedicated to preserve and study Alexandria, Virginia's archaeological heritage and foster within residents and visitors a connection between the past and present, inspiring a sense of stewardship and adventure. The museum and its laboratory are located on the third floor of the Torpedo Factory Art Center, at 105 N. Union Street in historic Old Town Alexandria, Virginia. Founded in 1954, the Historic Alexandria Foundation is dedicated to reserving Old Town with preservation grants, restoration work, plaques, and recognition grants. HAF has been credited with saving hundreds of buildings in Old Town.[15] King Street is the major commercial street that runs through the center of Old Town. Market Square in Old Town is believed to be one of the oldest continuously operating marketplaces in the United States (since 1753).[16] and, during colonial times, was the site of a slave market.[17] Today it contains a large fountain, extensive landscaping, and a farmers' market each Saturday morning. Alexandria City Hall, including the mayor's office, is adjacent to Market Square. The King Street corridor, which starts at the foot of the George Washington Masonic Memorial, and runs directly east until arriving at the west bank of the Potomac River, is where most of Old Town's commercial footprint lies. The street is lined on both sides with stores, restaurants, and bars, many of which are independent establishments. King Street-Old Town Station on the Washington Metro The Washington Metro's King Street station connects Alexandria with other locations in Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. At the station are located bay stations for all the buses that operate in the city. Parts of Old Town are walkable from the Metro's Braddock Road station. A free trolley bus with information of the historic places through speakers while the passengers ride on it. River cruise boats and street entertainers frequent the large plaza at the foot of King Street; the Mount Vernon Trail also passes through. Sailing and fishing is common on the Potomac. The main independent media company in Alexandria is The Zebra, an "all good news" company that publishes a free monthly paper magazine with local news and events, a website and a YouTube TV channel called Z-TV.[18][19] The newspaper is called the Old Town Crier and was established in 1988.Their motto is "From the Bay to the Blue Ridge". The Crier began as a community paper that promoted the history and lifestyle of Old Town, but it has gradually become a regional source for general news.[20] The George Washington Masonic National Memorial overlooks Old Town The George Washington Masonic National Memorial, which was built to honor the first president of the United States and former resident of Alexandria, George Washington, was completed in 1932. The memorial is located on the very northern edge of Old Town. Much of Alexandria and parts of Washington, D.C. are viewable from the memorial. Appomattox is a statue cast by M. Casper Buberl in 1889.[21] It is a statue of a lone Confederate soldier that marked the spot at which Confederate States of America (CSA) units from Alexandria left to join the Confederate Army at the beginning of the American Civil War. The statue stood in the center of the intersection of Washington and Prince streets for 131 years, until June 2, 2020.[21][22] The United Daughters of the Confederacy, which owns the statue, had the monument removed because vandals had recently damaged other segregation-era statues during nationwide demonstrations.[22] In Old Town, the following events are often celebrated: Restaurants, occupying old rowhouses, with outdoor dining on King Street, Saint Patrick's Day Parade[23] George Washington's Birthday,[24] The Red Cross Waterfront Festival in June. The city's birthday celebration with fireworks show in July, and various ethnic heritage days at Tavern Square The Scottish Christmas Walk The "First Night Alexandria" presents many family-friendly entertainments on New Year's Eve Historic Homes and Garden Tour Springtime Art Festival Festival of Speed Many early Americans as well as Civil War soldiers are buried in Christ Church's graveyard. Summer Festival Old Town Fall Art Festival Holiday Boat Parade of Lights[25] These parades and other official events are typically led by Alexandria's town crier, who, often dressed elaborately, by a tradition dating to the 18th century, in a red coat, breeches, black boots and a tricorn hat, welcomes participants.[26] A popular Christmas time attraction in Alexandria is the Scottish Christmas Walk, which was established in 1969.[27] The event, which involves a parade through the center of Old Town Alexandria, celebrates the city's Scottish heritage, and is the centerpiece of a yearly holiday festival.[28] It serves as a fundraiser for social services in Alexandria.[27] Carlyle house Henry Lee House Walees Alley Cobblestone portion of Prince Street Basilica of Saint Mary (the oldest Catholic Church in Virginia) The Shipbuilder The Potts-Fitzhugh House, Robert E. Lee's boyhood home Saint Mary's School Spite House George Washington's Town House Neighborhoods of Alexandria, Virginia ~ a b "Old Town Alexandria". Visit Alexandria. Retrieved June 30, 2018. ~ Ducklow, Hugh W. (September 2008). "Long-term studies of the marine ecosystem along the west Antarctic Peninsula". Deep Sea Research Part II: Topical Studies in Oceanography. 55 (18–19): 1945–1948. Bibcode:2008DSRII..55.1945D. doi:10.1016/j.dsrz.2008.05.014. hdl:1912/2566. ISSN 0967-0645. ~ "Getting to Know the DMV: Old Town Alexandria | GW Today | The George Washington University". GW Today. Retrieved 2024-03-10. ~ "National Historic Landmarks Program". Archived from the original on 2008-01-01. ~ "Georgetown Historic District". National Park Service. Archived from the original on July 2, 2008. Retrieved July 5, 2008. ~ "Alexandria's History". Alexandria Historical Society. Archived from the original on April 4, 2009. Retrieved May 6, 2015. ~ McBrien, David Rainey and Sallie (2022-06-22). "7 Alexandria Fun Facts: How Well Do You Know Virginia History?". YourAtHomeTeam.com. Retrieved 2024-03-10. ~ "Wayfinding: George Washington in Alexandria". City of Alexandria, VA. Retrieved 2024-03-10. ~ "History and Founding". The Basilica of Saint Mary. Retrieved 2024-03-10. ~ "The Life of Robert E. Lee | American Experience". www.pbs.org. Retrieved 2024-03-10. ~ "Alexandria City Hall & Market Square". Visit Alexandria. Retrieved 2024-03-10. ~ Greeley, Horace (1864). "The American Conflict: A History of the Great Rebellion in the United States. Chicago: G. & C.W. Sherwood. pp. 142–144. ~ Sullivan, Patricia (2020-06-03). "131-year-old Confederate statue removed from Alexandria intersection". Washington Post. ISSN 0190-8286. Retrieved 2024-03-10. ~ "History | Athenaeum | NVFAA | Old Town Alexandria". Athenaeum | NVFAA. Retrieved 2024-03-10. ~ "Historic Alexandria Foundation - Activities". www.historicalexandriafoundation.org. Retrieved 2024-03-10. ~ "Farmers' Markets". 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Alexandria Mayor Justin Wilson (D) said the United Daughters of the Confederacy, which owns the statue, opted to remove the memorial a month ahead of schedule because of demonstrations nationwide in which segregation-era statues have been vandalized. ~ Cooper, Rachel. "2015 Alexandria Virginia Saint Patrick's Day Parade". About.com Travel. Archived from the original on April 6, 2015. Retrieved May 6, 2015. ~ "George Washington Birthday Celebration – Alexandria, VA". Visitalexandriava.com. Archived from the original on May 6, 2015. Retrieved May 6, 2015. ~ "Annual Events in Alexandria, VA | Festivals & Celebrations". Visit Alexandria. Retrieved 2024-03-10. ~ [1][dead link] ~ a b "Scottish Christmas Walk - St. Andrew's Society of Washington, D.C.". Saintandrewsociety.org. Archived from the original on June 20, 2015. Retrieved May 6, 2015. ~ "Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend". Campaigncenter.org. Archived from the original on May 14, 2015. Retrieved May 6, 2015. Retrieved from "Of all the cities I have visited in the United States, Old Town Alexandria, Virginia is my favorite. My connection to Old Town formed when I first moved to the Washington, DC area after college; my first "real" job was with an organization located a few miles north of the historic city center. Old Town Alexandria hosted countless happy hours and dinners with people who became my closest friends. Adam and I spent many happy evenings having dinner and walking along bustling King Street when we started dating. It was in Old Town Alexandria that we said our marriage vows and celebrated our first hours as husband and wife with family and friends. There's an old idiom that says all road lead to Rome; for me, all roads lead to Old Town Alexandria. Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary MuseumOld Town Alexandria is a vacation destination in its own right, although visitors most often spend a few hours there as part of a longer trip to Washington, DC. Steeped in history and brimming with great bars, restaurants, museums, and outdoor space, Old Town has a lot to offer whether you have a few hours or a few days to commit to it. This guide introduces you to some of our favorite Old Town Alexandria attractions. If you are planning a visit to the DC area, don't miss out on this terrific town! Things to See in Old Town Alexandria Alexandria ► Alexandria Black History Museum House in the Robert H. Robinson Library, which was once segregated and designated for African Americans only following a sit in at the Alexandria Library, the Alexandria Black History Museum provides visitors with an excellent education. The library itself is home to the museum's permanent exhibitions, while a newer expansion building features temporary galleries which regularly rotate. The museum owns more than 3,000 artifacts that detail the African American experience from the mid-1700s until present day. The museum itself is rather small, but consider checking out their educational calendar to see if you might be able to supplement your visit with a guest lecture or other special presentation. More Information: AlexandriaVA.gov ► Alexandria National Cemetary Although Arlington National Cemetery is more recognizable by most visitors to the area, Alexandria National Cemetery is worth a visit if your walking takes you to Old Town Alexandria's outskirts. The cemetery is one of the oldest in the nation, and it is the final resting spot for thousands of Union soldiers who fought during the USA's Civil War. In fact, Arlington National Cemetery was developed in response to how quickly Alexandria's cemetery filled up. It is a peaceful, well-maintained spot to make if you are learning about Old Town Alexandria's history. More Information: NPS.gov ► Carlyle House One of the oldest houses in Old Town Alexandria, Carlyle House was built in 1753 as a residence for city founder John Carlyle. In fact, Carlyle and General Edward Braddock met in the house to discuss funding options for the impending French and Indian War, which occurred from 1754-1763. The house was primarily a family residence until the mid-1800s. It was during this period that new owner, James Green, built the Mansion House Hotel in front of Carlyle House, effectively blocking it from the street view. The hotel ultimately converted to a makeshift hospital for union troops during the Civil War. Carlyle House is interesting because so much of its house reflects the challenges and events that occurred in Old Town Alexandria across several centuries. Today tours are available to the public for a nominal fee, and guides share great stories about the house and the Carlyle family. More Information: CarlyleHouse.org ► Captain's Row There are only two blocks in Old Town Alexandria that are paved with cobblestones, and one of them is Captain's Row. Located right by the Potomac River on Prince Street, Captain's Row once served as the residence for many of the sea captains who were based in Old Town. You'll only see beautiful real estate here—there aren't shops or restaurants on this block—but the stones date back to the late 1700s, which means walking down the block is as close as you can get to stepping back in time. ► DC South Boundary Stone Washington DC boundary stone markerOne of Washington, DC's most important monuments is actually located just south of present day Old Town Alexandria in Jones Point Park. In 1791, Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson appointed Major Andrew Ellicott to conduct a survey that would identify the boundaries of the fledgling country's new capital. Ellicott placed boundary stones throughout the region to demarcate what would become Washington, DC. 36 of the original stones remain intact, but the very first stone—the south boundary stone—has the distinction of being the USA's first federal monument. Today the stone is difficult to see, as it is protected by a plexiglass shield due to its location just outside of the Jones Point Lighthouse, but it's worth a visit to see a very unique part of the city's and country's history. More Information: NPS.gov ► Freedom House Old Town Alexandria's Freedom House is located at the former Franklin and Armfield Slave Office, one of the last slave trading companies in the Washington, DC area. This museum is a powerful testament to the people who were unjustly sold and enslaved until all slaves were emancipated in 1863. With exhibits that provide first-person stories and insights, a visit to the Freedom House is an emotional but important experience. Self-guided tours are offered to the public. More Information: VisitAlexandriaVA.com ► Gadsby's Tavern If I were to play favorites, Gadsby's Tavern would be at the top of my list—but for good reason. Adam and I got married there in 2011, and we chose the location because of it's fascinating history. John Gadsby's tavern and connected hotel served as an important social and political gathering spot, and Gadsby's Tavern regularly hosted the men who became the first five presidents of the United States—George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and James Monroe. Andrew Jackson even spent the night of his 1829 inauguration at Gadsby's Hotel (now part of Gadsby's Tavern) to escape the rowdiness and control inagural parties at the White House. If that's not enough for you, many people say Gadsby's Tavern is haunted by the Female Stranger, an unidentified woman who died shortly after arriving at the tavern. She was accompanied by a man who made every person who encountered the woman swear an oath that they would never reveal her identity—or his own. After she died, she was buried at St. Paul's Cemetery under the same Female Stranger, and to this day many people claim her spirit visits tavern staff and visitors alike. More Information: Alexandria.gov This video from Historic Alexandria provides more details on the story of the Female Stranger, as told by Gadsby's Tavern staff. If you enjoy learning about the spooky side of things, be sure to check out one of the Old Town Alexandria Ghost Tours during your visit! More Information: VisitAlexandriava.com/alexandria-colonial-tours ► The Lyceum The Lyceum is a 19th century Greek revival building that is now home to Alexandria's history museum, which makes it a can't-miss stop if you are interested in developing your Old Town knowledge base. Its roots date back to a group of locals who identified a need to find space for educational discourse. After joining forces with the Alexandria Library the Lyceum opened its doors in 1839. Like many of the other museums in Old Town, the Lyceum hosts guest lecturers and rotating exhibits. ► Market Square If you're walking down King Street, you won't be able to miss Market Square. In warm months you'll first notice the water fountains (as well as an occasional pair of ducks floating through them). During most times of the year you'll also see the enormous American flag that hangs from City Hall, which was built between 1871 and 1874. On many weekends Market Square hosts a lovely farmers market that is very popular with local residents. No matter when you visit, though, you'll see dozens of people meeting friends or passing for a few minutes to check their email or take in the busy street views. Market Square is a very popular gathering point, so even if you don't spend time there you are sure to recognize it. There is a great, convenient paid parking garage located underneath Market Square, and since weekend parking is only \$5 it's an affordable place to leave your car for a day in Old Town Alexandria. ► Spite House The Spite House (in blue) is just 7 feet wider!One of the best Old Town Alexandria stories I like to share is about the Spite House, a townhouse located at 523 Queen Street that spans just 325 square feet of living space. There are a few tales about how the house came to be. The most popular version is the story of a family who lived in a larger home and grew tired of locals cutting through the alleyway next door. To stop foot traffic, the family built the tiny house completely out of spite—hence its nickname. Measuring 7 feet wide by 36 feet long, the house is occupied and it's not possible to look around inside. Still, it's a fun stop to seek out. ► Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum Long before modern medicine there was the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary. Serving clients that included George and Martha Washington, the apothecary once provided prescriptions made from common ingredients like cottonseed oil and cod liver oil, less common ingredients like dragon's blood and unicorn root, and slightly more dangerous ingredients like opiates and heroin. The walls are lined with the original bottles, measuring scales, and other artifacts from when the apothecary served residents throughout the area. Today the museum connects visitors to what a trip to the pharmacy would have meant for Old Town Alexandria residents in the 1700s and 1800s. 30 minute tours are conducted for a modest fee, which gives you access to the pharmacy as well as a medication manufacturing space on the second floor. It's one of the most interesting museums in the city. More Information: ApothecaryMuseum.org ► Torpedo Factory At first glance, the Torpedo Factory looks exactly the way it sounds. Built in 1919, it supplied torpedoes to both World War I and World War II before it was converted to storage for the City of Alexandria. That's not where the building's story ends, though; in the 1970s, a group of artists reimaged the space as series of studios where people could create and sell their works to the public. Today visitors can walk through the building, watch artists at work, and purchase the items they sell. More than 150 artists occupy space in the Torpedo Factory, which means when the building is open you are almost guaranteed to see someone producing something inventive and interesting. If you are looking for a great alternative to a typical art gallery, don't miss the Torpedo Factory. More Information: TorpedoFactory.org ► Washington Masonic National Memorial Washington Masonic Temple StatueThe George Washington Masonic National Memorial sits at the far-end of Old Town Alexandria, where it serves several functions: it is an active masonic lodge, a museum, and a tribute to the deep ties freemasons have to the area and to Old Town specifically. The freemasons are a fraternal organization that once drew members from stonemasons. While their meetings are highly ritualized, today they primarily engage in social and charitable activities. The George Washington Masonic Temple provides a nice tour of the memorial, including a replica lodge room, several exhibits, and the Knight Templar Chapel that is notable for its four impressive stained glass windows. A highlight is the observation desk, which provides sweeping views of Old Town Alexandria and Washington, DC. On a sunny day it's a great place to visit! More Information: GWmemorial.org Where to Eat in Old Town Alexandria You won't go hungry in Old Town Alexandria! Some of our favorite restaurants line King Street and the surrounding area. Here are our top picks for fueling up before, during, or after a day of walking and exploring. ► Fish Market We love the Fish Market, which you may think specializes in fresh seafood. You'll find everything from clam chowder to lobster rolls to oysters on the menu, but if you're looking for a local delicacy don't miss the crab cakes. Chesapeake Bay blue crab is primarily associated with Maryland, but Virginia also borders the Chesapeake Bay and therefore serves the same tasty broiled or fried crab cakes as well! More Information: FishMarketVA.com ► Fontaine Caffé and Crêperie One of my favorite lunch spots is Fontaine, where you can find both sweet and savory crepes that are perfect for a lighter lunch or dinner. The savory crepes are served with a small salad and make for a delicious meal, but save room to share a sweet crepe for dessert. My favorites are the Norwegian, a smoked salmon and onion crepe, and the Marathon, which combines bananas, Nutella, peanut butter, and chocolate sauce. Don't worry—you'll walk off those calories! More Information: FontaineCaffe.com ► Gadsby's Tavern Gadsby's TavernWhile many visitors only tour the museum, Gadsby's Tavern also has a more upscale dining room specializing in colonial fare. You'll find crowd pleasing meals like chicken and seafood, but we recommend trying some of the traditional favorites. They have a decent happy hour, and they also have live music on some nights. Their daily specials are worth the trip, especially on Tuesdays for Southern fried catfish or Wednesdays for fried chicken and waffles, both of which are scrumptious. ► Union Street Public House When we have friends visiting from out of town, Union Street Public House is our go-to restaurant for consistently great meals. In fact, that's where we took our wedding guests the night before we got married! You'll find a great array of sandwiches, salads, and bigger plates like crab cakes and fried chicken; they also have a solid beer and wine list. Located right near the waterfront, they occupy a building that dates back to 1790, which provides a great atmosphere for visitors enjoying Old Town's historic charm. More Information: UnionStreetPublicHouse.com Where to Stay in Old Town Alexandria ► The Alexandrian As far as location goes, you won't get much better than the Alexandrian. Situated right on King Street adjacent from Market Square, most sights are just a short walk from the hotel. Adam and I stayed there when we got married, and our guests loved the experience. If budget isn't an issue, spring for one of the four two-story suites—we love how unique they are! More Information: Booking.com/Alexandrian ► Hilton Alexandria Old Town Located right across from the King Street Metro station, the Hilton is a comfortable property that is ideal for people who don't mind walking a bit to get to destinations or are planning to use public transportation. Old Town's free trolley runs from the Metro station, so there are good options for getting closer to the action. More Information: Booking.com/Hilton-Alexandria-Old-Town How to Get Around in Old Town Alexandria ► Metro If you are trying to get to Old Town Alexandria from Washington, DC or surrounding suburbs, the Metro (DC's subway system) will get you to Old Town's outskirts but not into Old Town itself. The Metro station is very close to the Washington Masonic Memorial, and from there it's 14 blocks down King Street to the Waterfront. You'll need to get off at the King Street stop in order to continue your journey. More Information: WMATA.com ► Trolley Old Town Alexandria has a great, free trolley that will take you from the King Street Metro all the way down to the waterfront. In addition to being convenient, it's a lot of fun to ride on the trolley—it has more charm than a standard bus! The trolley runs in a continuous loop and departs roughly every 20 minutes, and stops are located on King Street throughout Old Town. You can hop on, ride as long as you need, and hop off with a lot of ease. More Information: VisitAlexandriaVA.com ► Walk Old Town Alexandria is a very walkable area, and walking may in fact be your best bet. Starting from the Metro station and walking down King Street toward the Waterfront, you will pass many of the restaurants and museums that are likely to be on your list. Take a few detours and walk down a few of the other parallel streets; you'll find additional restaurants and attractions as well as the more quiet charm of the residential areas. Prince Street, Cameron Street, and Queen Street are scenic and run in the same direction as King Street, as Old Town is laid out as a grid of streets running east to west and north to south. ► Water Taxi The water taxi option is impractical if you are planning to spend your time exclusively in Old Town Alexandria, but if you want to visit the nearby neighborhoods of Georgetown in DC or the National Harbor in Maryland, the water taxi is a much more interesting choice that allows you to skip traffic and instead sail along the Potomac River. It will be more expensive to take the water taxi than a regular taxi or the Metro if you are in a larger group, but the experience is worthwhile (and Metro doesn't run to either Georgetown or the National Harbor). If you are interested in watching the Nationals (DC's baseball team) during the spring and summer, there is a special Baseball Boat that runs directly to Nationals Park. The service is seasonal, so be sure to check the schedule! More Information: PotomacRiverBoatCo.com Map of Old Town Alexandria There are a lot of places we've mentioned in this post, so we added them to a map and included that below. We hope this helps you plan your own visit to Old Town Alexandria. View in New Window View Old Town Alexandria! Old Town Alexandria is one of the most interesting, cultural, historical, and fun places I have ever visited—or lived. Take a day or two away from Washington, DC to fully explore what Old Town has to offer—and leave a comment to let us know if you love it as much as we do! Related Posts Planning to visit Alexandria? Here are a few interesting places near Old Town in the Washington, DC metropolitan area! [PBN] Productions/Getty ImagesThis quirky compliment describes something truly excellent or delightful — the best of the best. Whether or not bees actually even have knees (do they?) is irrelevant here: The phrase became popular in the 1920s to describe someone or something uniquely wonderful, stylish, or cool. Use it to praise anything you think is top-notch.Zcatsanddotcom/Getty ImagesThis old saying is a friendly warning to stay sharp and avoid getting duped. Wooden nickels were sometimes handed out as tokens or gimmicks — not real money. The phrase became a way of reminding someone not to fall for scams or shady deals.Advertisement - Continue Reading Below3Sjöberg Bildbyrå/Getty ImagesSomeone who's "mad as a hatter" is completely bonkers — eccentric, unpredictable, or downright loopy. The phrase dates back to hat makers in the 18th and 19th centuries who were exposed to mercury in the felt-making process, often resulting in erratic behavior. Think whimsical, not dangerous.RELATED: Vintage Items You May Want to Borrow From Grandmá4D. Corson/ClassicStock/Getty ImagesWhen someone "spills the beans," they let a secret slip. The phrase likely comes from an ancient voting practice involving beans as ballots — if someone tipped the jar, the results were revealed. Today, it's all about those juicy details that weren't meant to be shared; just say.Advertisement - Continue Reading Below5Jena Ardell/Getty ImagesThis practical proverb encourages early action. The idea is that fixing a small tear now saves you from having to fix a bigger one later — nine stitches instead of one. It's a timeless reminder that a little effort today can prevent a whole lot of trouble tomorrow.6Nehring/Getty ImagesThis vivid metaphor warns against accidentally discarding something valuable while trying to get rid of something unwanted. It's a reminder to think carefully before tossing out the whole idea — or the whole system — just because one part of it isn't working.Advertisement - Continue Reading Below7Michael Grabois/Getty Imagesa reminder to mind your manners, this phrase's origins are debated — it could reference lowercase letters or tavern shorthand for "pints and quarts." Either way, it's all about behaving politely and watching what you say, especially when you're in company or out in public.8Jocelyn Michel/Getty ImagesWhen someone says they're "over the moon," they're absolutely thrilled — bursting with happiness. The expression has poetic roots in nursery rhymes and speaks to a kind of joy that's so big, it feels like it could launch you into orbit. It's pure delight in phrase form.Advertisement - Continue Reading Below9Jena Ardell/Getty ImagesNow synonymous with sitting in the front passenger seat, this phrase actually traces back to stagecoach days when someone rode next to the driver with a shotgun for protection. These days, it's called out to claim the best seat — no weapon necessary.10dm909/Getty ImagesA slightly sassy way to say "be quiet," this saying may have originated from cooing sounds to muffle the sound of early gramophones. It's a playful (if a bit rude) way to hush someone who's talking too much or being too loud.Advertisement - Continue Reading Below11Sherman/Getty ImagesWhen you're ready to "hit the hay," it's time to go to bed. The phrase comes from when mattresses were often sacks stuffed with hay. It's a cozy, down-home way of saying you're ready to turn in for the night and get some rest.12Leila Grossman/Getty ImagesAdvertisement - Continue Reading Below13PhotoQuest/Getty ImagesWhen someone keeps repeating themselves — to the point of annoyance — they're "like a broken record." The phrase comes from vinyl records that skip or loop. It's still a perfect way to describe someone who won't let a point go (again, and again, and again).14Leila Grossman/Getty ImagesWhen someone criticizes another person for a fault they also have, it's "the pot calling the kettle black." The phrase points out hypocrisy — especially when the accuser isn't exactly innocent themselves. It's a timeless check on self-awareness and fairness.Advertisement - Continue Reading Below15Interim Archives/Getty ImagesIf you're up late working or studying, you're "burning the midnight oil." Before electricity, oil lamps lit the way for those pulling late-night shifts. This phrase still captures that sense of quiet dedication and long hours put in after the rest of the world goes to sleep.16George Marks/Getty ImagesThis saying means going all in, giving everything you've got. Its origin is unclear, though some trace it to World War II ammunition belts or fabric measurements. Whatever its origin, its meaning refers to total effort, full commitment — no holding back.Advertisement - Continue Reading Below17ODO CREATIVE/Getty ImagesTo "chew the fat" is to chat casually, often about nothing in particular. The phrase may have started as sailors talking while eating salted meat. It's a leisurely, friendly kind of conversation — the verbal equivalent of just hanging out with a friend on a lazy afternoon.18Harold M. Lambert/Getty ImagesOriginally heard at carnival games, this phrase means you almost won... but not quite. In the early 20th century, cigars were given as prizes, and missing the mark meant no reward. Today, it's used to acknowledge a good effort that still came up just short.Advertisement - Continue Reading Below19Chris Ware/Getty ImagesMore charming than just saying "go dancing," this phrase conjures visions of swinging, twirling, and jitterbugging the night away. To "cut a rug" is to dance with enthusiasm and joy — especially in the context of a fun night out. It's full of retro rhythm and flair.RELATED: Classic Movies Every Woman Should See20Jena Ardell/Getty ImagesThis classic bit of advice means it's best not to stir up old conflicts or bring up past issues. The image is clear: Don't wake a peacefully sleeping dog, or you might regret the consequences. Rather, it's better to let things be, especially if the tension has cooled down.Alexandra DubinContributing WriterAlexandra is a digital travel and lifestyle journalist based in Los Angeles whose work has appeared in Good Housekeeping, Woman's Day, Prevention, Insider, Glamour, Shondaland, AFAR, Parents, TODAY and countless other online and print outlets. Alesandra has a masters degree in journalism with an emphasis on cultural reporting and criticism from NYU, and a bachelor's degree from UC Berkeley. An avid traveler, she trots the globe with her husband and their twins. Watch Next Advertisement - Continue Reading Below 1 a : dating from the remote past ; ancient b : persisting from an earlier time they brought up the same old argument c : of long standing 2 a : distinguished from an object of the same kind by being of an earlier date many still put in after the old name b capitalized : belonging to an early period in the development of a language or literature 3 : having existed for a specified period of time 4 : of relating to, or originating in a past era old chronicles record the event 5 a : advanced in years or age b : showing the characteristics of age 6 : experienced an old trooper speaking of the last war 7 : former 8 a : showing the effects of time or use ; worn, aged b : no longer in use ; discarded c : of a grayish or dusty color d : tiresome 9 a : long familiar b —used as an intensive c —used to express an attitude of affection or amusement Old Town is Alexandria's beloved downtown and nationally designated historic district on the Potomac River waterfront. The King Street Mile and surrounding brick-lined sidewalks are studded with centuries-old architecture, historic attractions and independent businesses. Old Town is the heart of Alexandria, located just minutes from Washington, D.C., voted one of Travel + Leisure's Best Cities in the U.S. 2024 and one of The South's Best Cities 2024 by Southern Living. Jump toSummaries (3)Synopsis (1)EditSuggest an edit or add missing contentWhat is the running time for Old (2021)?AnswerYou have no recently viewed pages