

GREAT ESCAPES

Fall Foliage, 40 Free Attractions In Valley Forge Area

(NAPSA)—Gorgeous foliage plus more than 40 free museums, attractions and historic sites make the Valley Forge area a great spot for a fall getaway. Just 20 miles outside of Philadelphia, it's conveniently located and affordable.

Valley Forge National Historical Park is a 3,600-acre tapestry of spectacular golds, reds and oranges. There's no admission to the park, the Welcome Center exhibits or Washington Memorial Chapel; there is a \$3 charge to tour Washington's Headquarters.

Less than a mile away is the King of Prussia Mall, where eight major department stores and close to 400 other shops and restaurants offer a diversion from history, a bite to eat and no sales tax on clothing.

To the north, Peter Wentz Farmstead is a German Georgian farmhouse where Washington lived while planning the Battle of Germantown, in October of 1777. Hearth cooking, spinning, fraktur painting, and other Colonial crafts are demonstrated at special events.

More German history is on display at three free museums. At the Goshenhoppen Folklife Museum and Library there's a country store, blacksmith's shop and artifacts of early Pennsylvania German life. The Mennonite Heritage Center's Fraktur Room highlights this beautiful artwork brought to America by Germans seeking religious freedom. The Protestant Reformation and the Schwenkfelder faith are the subjects of exhibits at the Schwenkfelder Library and Heritage Center.

Fancy a factory tour? Asher's Chocolates has been producing delectable sweets for more than 100 years. Herr Foods, makers of potato chips and pretzels and other



There's plenty to see and do in the Valley Forge area, and much of it is free.

tasty treats, offers free weekday factory tours.

There are more public gardens and arboreta here than anywhere else in North America, with many of them—including Scott Arboretum of Swarthmore College, Jenkins Arboretum and Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve—offering free admission.

Abington Art Center marries the natural landscape with sculpture. A whimsical woodland installation by Winifred Lutz includes a stone solstice tower. Other sculptures are throughout the grounds, and the gallery has changing shows. At Arcadia University, Grey Towers Castle, built in the late 19th century, incorporates elements of English castles and French chateaux—and lots of gargoyles.

So pack up the car and get ready to go—the open roads of the countryside are beckoning! For hours of operation, nearby sites, special events, and a listing of all 40 free sites in the Valley Forge area, log onto www.valleyforge.org. A free copy of the Valley Forge Visitors Guide and Calendar of Events can be obtained by calling 1-888-VISIT-VF.