



## The D.C. Alternative: Old Town Alexandria, Virginia

📅 Jun 30, 2014

✍️ Nubia DuVall

💬 No comments yet

📌 Home Slider, Travel

★ old town, travel, virginia

👁️ 366 Views

### Related

[Hotel Review: The London – New York City](#)

[STM's Annex Collection | Stylish and Durable Everyday Bags](#)

[Last Minute Father's Day Gift Ideas](#)

## The D.C. Alternative: Old Town Alexandria, Virginia



Photo Credit: ACVA

We know you've done Washington, D.C. (or at least considered it)—but what about Old Town Alexandria in Virginia? Only 20 minutes from the capitol, this hip waterfront town is brimming with restaurants, bars, art galleries, shopping, and high-end hotel options. Here's my *Shop, Eat, Play, Stay* guide with special suggestions from General Manager Matthew Hurlburt of [Hotel Monaco Alexandria](#), where I recently stayed.

### **Getting Around**

Walk: Leave your car behind because everything is within walking distance.

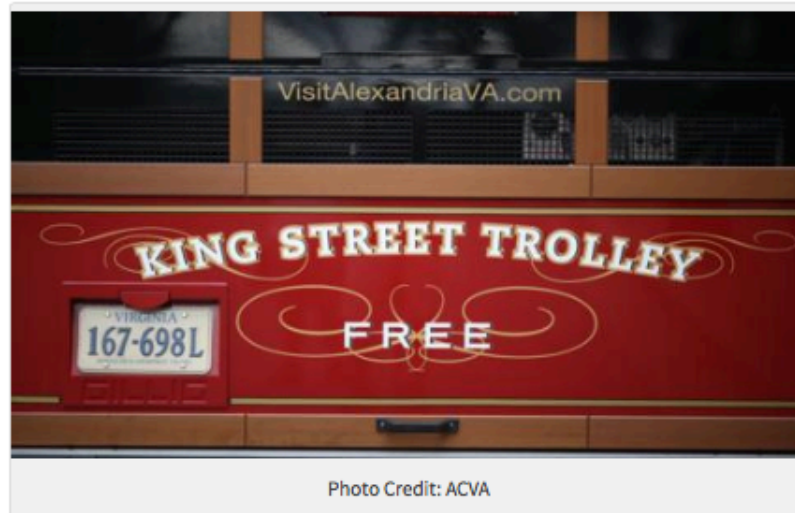


Photo Credit: ACVA

**Free King Street Trolley:** Take the King St. Metro to get around D.C. and V.A., which you can walk to or take the trolley that runs every 15 minutes along King Street to the waterfront.

From GM Hurlburt: Catch the **Water Taxi** at the Pier to visit Georgetown, National Harbor, Mount Vernon, and even over to Nationals Stadium for a baseball game. The views are spectacular. We offer complimentary PUBLIC bikes. Ride them from here to Mount Vernon and get lunch at Mount Vernon Inn or the Food Court.

### **Shop**

Old Town features big names like Banana Republic and Anthropology, as well as art galleries, a large farmers market, and locally owned boutiques:

Art: Find photography, sculpture, contemporary art, and jewelry for sale from 82 artists' studios and six galleries at the **Torpedo Factory**. Artists produce their work in studios and are open to chatting with you about their creative process. Open daily 10 am – 6 pm (Thurs 10 am – 9 pm)

Old Town Farmers' Market: So what makes this market standout? BBQ Sauce and New Zealand meat! Check out [Hudson Sauce](#), an all-natural locally made BBQ Marinade that is worth taking up extra space in your suitcase. For a late-morning pick me up, eat Kiwi Cuisine's sausage roll. Market Sq. Plaza, Sat, 7 am – 12 PM year round

From GM Hurlburt: [King Street Clothiers](#) sells beautifully crafted Italian men's clothing, including suits, shirts and ties. [Gold Works](#) has unique cufflinks handmade by the owner.

### Eat



[Jackson 20](#): Named after President Andrew Jackson, Hotel Monaco Alexandria's nouveau American tavern will please meat lovers—a bronze pig statue in the front will make sure of it. Try the fried green tomatoes and deviled farm eggs with habanero, bacon and green onions for appetizers. My entrée was the homemade kielbasa sausage served with pierogi, sauerkraut, and beer mustard. Very filling! Bourbon lovers in need of a cocktail should try the J20 Manhattan with Maker's Mark, sherry and angostura bitters. Prefer beer? Try over a dozen local craft beers like Flying Dog UnderDog Lager from Maryland. Serves breakfast, brunch, lunch and dinner; hours vary.

Seafood: You can't leave the area without eating seafood. Check out the [Chart House](#) with views of the Potomac River for fine dining. The [Fish Market](#) offers a more laid-back atmosphere with seating on its balcony for people watching.

Breakfast: An on-the-go (or quick dine-in) option is [La Madeleine](#) Country French Café on the corner of King and N. Pitt Streets.

Reserve a Table: The art deco 75-year-old restaurant [The Majestic](#) features a rustic American menu with cuisine all made in-house (even the pickles) aside from the butter. Guacamole and caesar salad are prepared at table. Look for the original phone booth that still works for 25¢.

## Play



Photo Credit: R. Kennedy

From GM Hurlburt: For happy hour, a lot of the younger members of our team like to hang out at the [Light Horse](#). They have good drink prices, casual atmosphere, and games available to play (skee-ball, shuffleboard tables, etc.). Happy hour, Mon – Fri, 4 – 7pm

Cigar Bar: [Two Nineteen Restaurant](#)

Enjoy a single malt Scotch like Dalwhinnie “Distiller’s Edition” while smoking a cigar in the New Orleans Room lounge. Open nightly for all without a membership fee, the smoking room is next to the Basin St. Lounge, which features live blues Tuesday through Saturday. \$5 Cover on weekends for Basin St. Lounge.

## Stay



Photo Credit: David Phelps

---

I was thrilled to find a Kimpton hotel option in Old Town. If you visit, you must stay at the very stylish-yet-comfortable [Hotel Monaco Alexandria](#). The room options, service, and location make it a perfect option.

I had the pleasure of staying in the Monaco Loft Suite, which I highly recommend. The 750-sq-ft one-bedroom duplex boasts a half bath, two TVs, living room, floor-to-ceiling windows, two closets and a large master bathroom with a deep soaking Fuji jet tub with jets—scented bath salts are complimentary. Other amenities include a yoga mat (one can request a “yoga turndown” with water and fruit/trail mix) and a pet goldfish (automatically given to solo guests and families, but also available upon request).

---



Photo Credit: David Phelps

Here are other highlights:

- • 28 Monte Carlo Terrace rooms feature an outdoor patio with settees for two
- • The 1,600-sq-ft Majestic Suite is outfitted with a dining table for six, seating area, wet bar, and two bedrooms
- • Heated indoor pool is open year-round. Dive-in Movie Nights are hosted on Fridays and Saturdays at 8 pm
- • Like all Kimptons, there is a wine happy hour daily at 5 pm in the lobby, and coffee and tea in the morning
- • The hotel is undergoing a room refresh that will include new design touches (upholstery, lighting, etc.), completed by the end of the year
- • Complimentary hotel shuttle from Reagan Airport 7 am – 10:30 pm upon request

To learn more about the Hotel Monaco Alexandria or to book, go to [www.monaco-alexandria.com](http://www.monaco-alexandria.com)

Nubia DuVall Wilson is a contributing travel writer for LuxuriousPROTOTYPE. She is a luxury travel expert and published author of *Encounters with Strangers*. Learn more at [www.encounterswithstrangers.com](http://www.encounterswithstrangers.com). Follow her on Twitter @NubiaWilson.