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Oct7

[Day Tripping: Go Ape in Williamsburg](#)

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When your kids start to act like monkeys, it's time to bring out their inner ape! Just head west on 64 to Williamsburg's Freedom Park and "Go Ape." There you can all swing through the treetops with the world's leading zip line provider. Participants are equipped with harnesses, pulleys and carabineers and receive a 30-minute training session before getting turned loose into the forest canopy. The courses feature a series of zip lines, Tarzan swings, rope ladders, bridges, swings, and trapezes. It's an adrenaline-filled adventure with a spectacular view!

The traditional "Go Ape" experience offers treetop adventures for ages 10 and up. Participants have a blast encountering 38 tree-to-tree crossings, five zip lines, and many daunting obstacles. Plus it all takes place in a forest canopy while perched 40-50 feet off the ground. It's like a huge jungle gym within a tree house for big kids and adults alike.

"Treetop Junior" fills the gap for those mini-Tarzans who are 3'3" and taller. While 20 feet in the air, participants move from platform-to-platform at their own pace. They cross over various bridges, wobbly planks, monkey bars, and swinging platforms with cargo nets below. All are guaranteed to sleep well that night after discovering previously unknown muscles. Trust me! Parents are welcome to participate but are not required unless the child is under age 6. Non-participating parents can follow the course from the ground and attend the safety briefing. Please note they do require an adult to participate with a youth on the regular course.

Starting with its own detailed safety briefing, "Treetop Junior" is extremely safe. Once participants are ready to navigate their way through the lofty forest canopy, there are two courses to explore. Each has multiple tree-to-tree crossings and two zip lines for a dramatic return to the ground. First participants must complete the initial course that includes an extra guide rope for balance. Then they can try the second course that is a bit more challenging. For their third and final run, participants can choose to repeat either course. It's comforting to know the equipment cannot detach until the participant is back on the

ground.

As a special treat on Friday nights during October, Treetop Junior will become a haunted forest! The 2nd annual Treetop Junior “Nights at Height” is designed for ages 3 – 12 and a fun family Halloween outing. Imagine swinging through a haunted forest alongside ghosts, cobwebs, and of course, some apes! Costumes are encouraged, as well as an appetite for adventure. For safety, no masks, loose clothing/capes, or paint can be worn while on the course.

Actual participants must wear secure, closed-toe shoes and comfortable clothes that can get dirty and sweaty. Also since the site is quite shaded and woody, be sure to use insect repellent and check for ticks afterwards. Reservations are recommended. If possible, book a time without a large group before or after yours. Plan to arrive 10-15 minutes early.

While at “Go Ape,” there’s much more to see and do on the vast 600 acres of Freedom Park! It is easy to make a day of it. In addition to spacious grilling and picnic areas, there are two miles of hiking trails and more than 20 miles of mountain bike trails.

Just a short walk away, the Williamsburg Botanical Ellipse Garden is a lovely four-season haven filled with 800 types of unique Virginia vegetation. Better yet, there are 2.3 miles of winding trails so visitors can meander and take it all in.

Freedom Park is also known for its many treasured American historical sites dating back to the 1650’s. The site now contains several authentically recreated 17th century cabins on display and an original 18th century graveyard. It had the honor of containing America’s earliest Free Black Settlement before the Civil War. In addition, the Revolutionary War Battle of Spencer’s Ordinary took place on the grounds. May the forest be with you!

WANT TO GO? www.GoApe.com 1-800-971-8271 Freedom Park, 5537 Centerville Road, Williamsburg, VA 23188

by Libby Carty McNamee, writer, lawyer, and mommy, loved Treetop Junior before her muscles stopped shaking and after they stopped aching.

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UVa hopes not to repeat last year's second-half meltdown against Duke today. Game begins at noon.

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