

Frequently Asked Questions

Why should I bring my class to the Augusta Canal National Heritage Area?

Understanding that field trip funding is precious and that opportunities outside the classroom are valuable, the Augusta Canal National Heritage Area hired award-winning educators to create **complete, Standards-based lesson plans**, offering you and your students the best educational experience possible -- one that is unique yet affordable. Lessons for students from **pre-K to high school** include pre and post visit classroom activities and are tied to the latest Georgia and South Carolina educational performance standards in **history, geography, economics, science, math, and language arts**.

The hands-on, interactive Canal Interpretive Center stimulates visual, auditory, verbal and kinesthetic learning. Students experience what life was like in the late 19th Century and the importance of visionary thinkers and entrepreneurs in the development of American post civil war industrial centers. The story of the Augusta Canal really comes to life on Petersburg Boat Tours where students see the sights of the Canal firsthand. Canal Education Programs include pre and post visit activities, useful web links, and a reading list for further exploration.

Is there a size limit for groups?

We regularly serve groups of 50 to 200+ people. However, we work to accommodate **all** group sizes. Large groups of participants are divided into groups of up to 49 people to ride boats. Groups are organized so that some of the students are visiting the center while others are riding the boat. They will then switch so that everyone can enjoy both the center and the boat. We also work with very large groups and can accommodate when more than one boat is needed.

How many people can a Petersburg boat hold?

Our boats can hold a maximum of 49 people based on **Coast Guard law**. There are no exceptions to this which is why we work with you to accommodate any size group. We want everyone to be safe while enjoying the Augusta Canal.

How long is the field trip?

History/social studies field trips generally last between 2 ½ to 3 hours. The boat ride and Interpretive Center visit are 45 minutes each, a 10 minute orientation film or puppet show (based on age group), with time included for lunch, gift shop visits, bathroom breaks, etc. Science field trips last the same amount of time with 45 minutes included for the boat add-on option. The combination History/Science field trip option lasts about 3 ½ to 4 hours running from 9:45 am to 1:30 pm. For specific details please see the Education page on our website.

Can we eat lunch at the Augusta Canal?

Of course! We have a covered area in the courtyard with benches for students to bring sack lunches. We have a cart available for large coolers and boxes for your convenience. We also carry small snacks, candy, and drinks in the gift shop.

How much notice do I have to give before I plan to come?

We book field trips all year around, therefore, the earlier the better. The earlier you reserve a time, the better the date is you will be able to reserve. We have printable reservation forms available on the website and as soon as you send in a form by email or fax, if the date is available, we will put you on the calendar for that date. You will then receive a reservation contract to be filled out and sent back to us to lock in your spot. As long as we have it available, you may have that date and time. If it is not available, we will work with you to obtain the best possible date.

Are all the field trips the same for every age group?

No, our education and programs staff pride themselves in working with each teacher personally to highlight important discussion points in the field trip that relate directly to your current subject in the classroom. We can tailor your trip to focus on Social Studies, Language Arts, Geography, Math, Science, and Economics, or a general history of the Augusta Canal. We are always improving our onsite activities to better meet student and teacher needs. All of our field trips are tailored according to current standards. We want to make this trip meaningful to you and your class! Ask about our HydroWalk and Cotton-to-Cloth demonstration!

How much does it cost?

Our history/social studies field trips are \$7 per student. This covers the boat ride and visit to the Interpretive Center. For groups of 20 or more, with every 5 paid student admissions, 1 chaperone is admitted free (so for a group of 20 students, 4 chaperones would be admitted free). All other chaperones receive the \$7 student rate. School bus drivers are admitted free of charge. Our science field trips are \$4 per student. This covers a guided Heritage Area Discovery Walk, learning activities in the new Cotton Room classroom, and a courtyard/Interpretive Center hands-on activity. There is an option to add our Eco-Active boat tour for an additional \$6 (\$10 total for science trip with boat). The free chaperone admission still applies to groups of 20 or more, with all other chaperones paying \$4 or \$10 (w/ boat add-on). We also offer a science/history combination tour for \$11 per student. This covers a guided Heritage Area Discovery Walk, learning activities in the new Cotton Room classroom, Augusta Canal film, visit to the Interpretive Center, boat tour with lunch on board (6-12 grades only; K-5 eat in courtyard pavilion-lunches are still brought by students), and gift shop visit. Again, the free chaperone admission for 5 paid students still applies, with all other chaperones paying \$11 each.

Will there be someone with us or are we on our own once we arrive?

We are with you from the time you step off the bus to the time you load back up to head to school! Each group of 20 – 49 people will have a tour guide that meets them at the bus and takes them to the center for onsite activities and then presents the canal tour on the boat.

What time can we come?

We recommend arriving at 9:30 (especially during warmer months) to promptly begin the field trip. Arriving at 11:30 for a midday trip is also available. However, these times are not absolute; we realize the difficulties of scheduling. We will work with you to best suit your needs.

If I schedule a certain number of students and then add more, what should I do?

No problem! Just call us ahead of time so we can accommodate your group on the boat(s).

Do I have to pay in advance?

Payment is rendered at time of service. Once you arrive with your group, the head teacher or chaperone will pay at the front desk. Your signed, completed reservation contract will ensure your spot in lieu of a deposit.

What happens if it rains?

Our boats cast off whether rain or shine. However, if there is thunder and lightening, we will reschedule your trip for a later date.

Is the boat covered?

No, our boats are replicas of the original Petersburg boats and do not have covers. We do have umbrellas available in case of rain or extreme sun. We recommend advising students to apply sunscreen in the hotter months (May through September) and bring a light jacket if rain is forecasted.

Do the students have to wear life jackets?

No, our boats have been deemed safe enough by the National Coast Guard to warrant no life jackets. We do have them available on the boats in adult and child sizes and will show you how to use them in case of emergency before casting off.

I'm convinced; who do I contact to reserve a field trip?

Our Education and Program Coordinator will work with you directly to make the most of your experience. Her contact information is: Debbie Stankus

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