



AP Photo/Matt Rourke

In this April 19 file photo, members of the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) march past Independence Hall during opening ceremonies for the Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia. A year after its opening, officials say the museum will have sold more than 350,000 tickets, meeting expectations, and it is in a healthy financial position.

# AMERICAN REVOLUTION MUSEUM WINNING BATTLE FOR TOURISTS

By KRISTEN DE GROOT  
Associated Press

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**P**HILADELPHIA — The Museum of the American Revolution is a year old this month and officials say it has landed a decisive victory in capturing tourists' attention in a city with lots of revolutionary competition.

In honor of its first birthday on April 19, also the anniversary of the shots fired at the battles of Lexington and Concord in 1775 that ignited the war, the museum is making some additions while holding the line on the its most popular exhibits.

"The American Revolution has always been on the razor's edge of the culture wars. We had no idea how people were going to receive

this story of the revolution as we have written it," said Scott Stephenson, the museum's vice president of collections, exhibitions and programming. "But the public response has been tremendous, across the political spectrum."

The campaign to build and open the museum closed at \$173 million, when the goal was \$150 million. They opened with no construction debt and have a hearty endowment in place, he said.

It's been an extraordinary year to open a museum about the American Revolution, Stephenson said, with every-

thing from the uproar over the removal of Confederate statues to the Second Amendment debates in the wake of school shootings.

The museum's exhibit starts with the moment in New York City where citizens pulled down the statue of King George III after hearing the Declaration of Independence read aloud. Stephenson said he's overheard a number of debates from visitors about the toppling of statues around the country.

"Most people would agree, regardless of their political affiliation, that this

is one of those moments of deep reflection of who we are as a people," he said. "The American Revolution has incredible relevance."

Upcoming new additions include a trip through Alexander Hamilton's Philadelphia and the opening of the "Revolution Place Discovery Center" featuring recreated historical environments to immerse families.

On a recent morning, the museum was jam-packed with school groups, senior citizen bus tours and visitors from all over.

Bill and Amanda

Hrehowsik were visiting the museum from Middletown, New Jersey, with their two sons. They were in Philadelphia for the kids' spring break and had already visited the Franklin Institute, gone to a Flyers hockey game and seen the Liberty Bell.

The short films and Washington's tent were their favorites.

"I like that it has a modern twist with all the interactive exhibits, so the kids are engaged," said Amanda Hrehowsik.

The museum was on the list of must-sees because it was new, and because 10-year-old Matthew was studying the Revolution in class.

"It's really interesting, because there was some stuff I learned here that I didn't learn in school," he said.

Maud Lyon, president of the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, said it's a challenge for all Philadelphia museums to get tourists to move "beyond the bell" — meaning the Liberty Bell.

"This is a major anchor that was much needed in Philly to tell the historic story we are known for," she said of the museum.

From her perspective, the American Revolution museum has done all the right things. Their inclusion of the previously untold roles played by Native Americans, African-Americans and women, and their interactive displays really create modern feel.

"These days, it's not easy to tell history. We have very diverse perspectives," she said.

## Gardening: quick and easy strawberries

By LEE REICH  
Associated Press

Given how quickly strawberries begin to bear fruit and how easily they are grown, it's a wonder that strawberry beds aren't as common in backyards as lawns are in front yards.

The most compelling reason to grow strawberries is, of course, flavor.

Variety selection and premature harvest make grocers' berries large and firm, but usually not much else. In your backyard, though, you can grow the most flavorful varieties, and wait to pick them until they're sweet and oozing strawberry-ness. At that point, perishability doesn't matter because the berries need not travel further than arm's length to your mouth or a basket.

Depending on how soon you want to start eating strawberries, choose between "everbearers" and "junebearers."

Everbearers offer the quickest crops, less than three months after planting, and bear all season long. Tristar is among the best of these types. Some of the older types bear in spring and fall only.

Junebearers come in greater variety and yield more, but wait to bear their first crop until the year after planting. Once started, they bear once per season, in spring or early summer. Planting two or more different junebearing varieties can extend the harvest.

### Growing guide

Spring is a good time to plant strawberries, although they can also be planted in late summer or fall — if you can get plants then.

Your new plants may look forlorn, but don't worry. They



**FILE - This 2009 file photo shows strawberries as they are picked from the patch at Popp's pick-your-own farm in Dresden, Maine. Trimming the roots and then setting a strawberry plant in the ground with just the upper part of its crown, the knob where leaves are attached, gets the plant off to a good start.**

soon grow new roots and leaves. In fact, you can shear their roots back to 3 or 4 inches long with a scissors so you can more easily fan them out in the planting hole. Adjust the planting depth carefully, leaving only the top half-inch of the crown exposed so that it neither dries out from exposure nor suffocates from burial.

Ever wonder how such a luscious fruit came to be called "strawberry?" The name might reflect the plants' habit of strewing about with runners, which are horizontal stems punctuated along their length by daughter plants. The daughter plants eventually root and make

their own runners.

The name "strawberry" might also come from a centuries-old favorite mulch for strawberries: straw. No matter how the strawberry got its name, the plants love to be mulched. Mulch keeps the soil moist, suppresses weeds and keeps the fruit cleaner. Give strawberries a year-round, organic mulch.

### Adopt a system

Spacing for strawberry plants depends on your method of growing them.

With the "hill system," you plant them close together — 9 inches apart in a double row, with 9 inches between rows — and avoid future crowding by pinching off all runners. More plants are needed to get started, but initial yields are highest. This system is especially suited to those junebearing varieties that naturally develop fewer runners, and to everbearers.

With the "matted row system," you set plants at wide spacing — 24 inches apart in single rows, with 4 feet between rows — and allow plants to make runners like crazy. Fewer plants are needed to get started, but the first crop is smaller than with the hill system.

Never allow the mat of mother and daughter plants to spread wider than 18 inches, and periodically thin out crowded plants. No matter which system you adopt, pinch off all flowers that appear during the month after planting in order to coax plants to put their energy into growing strong roots. One advantage of everbearers is that they continue to flower after that month of pinching, which means you get to pick fruits later this season from this spring's planting!



Sara Moulton via AP

### STRAWBERRIES BAKED ALASKA

**Start to finish: 30 minutes**

**Servings: 4**

- ½ cup vanilla ice cream
- 10 medium to large strawberries
- 1 large egg white at room temperature
- Pinch of cream of tartar
- 3 tablespoons plus ½ teaspoon sugar, divided
- 1½ teaspoons Grand Marnier or balsamic vinegar
- ¼ cup crushed gingersnaps or cookies of your choice
- Mint sprigs for garnish

Using a melon baller, scoop out 12 balls from the container of ice cream, put them on a plate, cover them with plastic wrap and freeze them while you prepare the rest of the recipe.

Cut off the leaves from the top of each strawberry. Cut 4 of the strawberries into 1/4-inch pieces and in a bowl toss them with ½ teaspoon sugar and the Grand Marnier. Halve the remaining strawberries lengthwise and, using a melon baller, scoop out a hollow on the cut side of each strawberry half (this is where you will put the ice cream ball). Cut a tiny sliver off the other side of each strawberry half so the half will lay flat when the cut side is up.

In a small bowl beat the egg white on medium speed with electric beaters. When it is foamy add the cream of tartar. Continue beating the egg white until it holds soft peaks. Slowly add the remaining 3 tablespoons sugar in a stream, beating the whole time. Increase the speed to high and continue beating until the meringue holds stiff peaks.

Preheat the broiler. Position an oven rack about 6 inches from the flame. Arrange the strawberries on a rimmed sheet pan with 2 or 3 inches between them. Fill the hollow of each strawberry half with a ball of ice cream. Working quickly, spoon the meringue over the ice cream and top of the cut strawberry and spread it out with a small offset spatula or butter knife, making little peaks with the meringue if desired.

Place the sheet pan on the rack set 6 inches from the broiler and broil the strawberries for 45 seconds to 1 minute or until the meringue is lightly browned. Transfer 3 strawberries to each of 4 plates. Spoon a mound of the marinated strawberries next to them, sprinkle the cookie crumbs over the plate and garnish with a sprig of mint. Serve right away.