



# THE HERMITAGE

## VISITOR GUIDE

### WELCOME TO THE HERMITAGE!

The Hermitage story begins in the late 19th century during the Gilded Age, a time when capitalism was king and enormous fortunes were made overnight. Among this new class of wealthy Americans were the Hermitage’s original residents, Mr. and Mrs. William Sloane.

William and Florence Sloane moved to Norfolk from New York City shortly after their marriage in 1893. Mr. Sloane worked as superintendent and part owner of Berkeley Knitting Mill in Chesapeake while Mrs. Sloane oversaw the design and construction of their first home in South Norfolk. In addition to mothering two small boys (William Jr., born 1903, and E.K., born 1906), Mrs. Sloane spent her time collecting art; a pastime that ultimately led to the founding of the Hermitage art collection and the Norfolk Museum of Arts and Sciences, now the Chrysler Museum of Art.

Mrs. Sloane’s many achievements include the design of the Hermitage estate, including twelve acres of formal gardens, a water tower, a horse and cow stable, and a gardener’s cottage.

EXPLORE AND ENJOY  
Garden guides are available at the admissions desk

Constructed on thirty acres of farmland purchased in 1908, the Hermitage began as a modest, five-room summer cottage with large windows facing the Lafayette River. By 1936, and after several periods of expansion, the modest cottage grew to the Hermitage you see today—a stately 42-room mansion in the American Arts and Crafts style.

Mrs. Sloane intended for her home to be a public museum, and as a result the house is divided between public and private spaces. The public spaces are home to the Sloane Collection, an assemblage of fine and decorative art which rivals the house itself in both scope and inventiveness.

Brochure photos by Justin Hankins and Christiana Caro



### THE SLOANE COLLECTION



Sloanes’ original purpose: “to encourage the development of Arts and Crafts and to promote the study and understanding of Art as a living and progressive influence in the consciousness of the public.” Whether you are touring the historic house, walking the gardens or taking a class at the Visual Arts School, the staff at the Hermitage hope that you enjoy your visit.

The Sloane Collection includes over 5,000 objects, spans 5,000 years of art history, and represents over 30 countries. The collection is unique in that it was assembled over a fifty-year period by one woman, and remains in its original building almost entirely intact. Mrs. Sloane believed that museums were the most important component of civilized, learned society, and as a result she filled the Hermitage and the Norfolk Museum of Arts and Sciences with thousands of objects from all over the globe. Mrs. Sloane worked tirelessly to build a cultural life for the people of Norfolk until her death in 1953, and her legacy persists at the Hermitage.

On display to the public since 1937, the private, nonprofit Hermitage Museum & Gardens continues to serve the



MUSEUM + GROUNDS HOURS  
Open Tuesday–Sunday, 10am–5pm

FREE ADMISSION

SMITHSONIAN AFFILIATE  
+ AAM ACCREDITED

The Hermitage is proud to be a part of the prestigious Smithsonian Affiliations program and is the only museum in the Tidewater region to be accepted. The Hermitage was also recently awarded accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums in 2017.