

# RoadTrip

## Beer and Chocolate the Williamsburg Way

**WHERE:** Williamsburg.

**WHAT:** Chocolate and beer lovers, things that go boom and spooky inmates.

**HOW FAR:** About 2½ miles from start to finish, and about 150 miles from Washington.

When it comes to indulging, our forefathers knew best. This fall, Colonial Williamsburg brings back its decadent programs, the Art and Mysteries of Brewing and the Secrets of the Chocolate Maker, which illustrate the Revolutionary-era techniques of turning hops and cocoa beans into sinful bliss. Experts demonstrate how chocolate and beer were made from scratch in the 18th century, using period utensils and stoves to roast, grind and boil. The chefs also discuss the history of beer and chocolate, emphasizing the important role these edibles played in trade and everyday life.

"We get a crowd," says Dennis Cotner, a baker and historical interpreter at the Governor's Palace Kitchen, one of the hundreds of original or reconstructed buildings in Colonial Williamsburg's 301-acre Historic Area. "They follow their noses."

Sadly, the smell of chocolate and home brew is the most you'll get to sample. (Fie upon the abominable 21st-century health codes!)

Unlike today's chocoholics, the Colonials generally imbibed their sweets as hot cocoa. However, for those who prefer to eat their chocolate, a number of stores in "towne" sell handmade "sticks" made from authentic Colonial recipes, which were heavy on the spices. For an ale or porter brewed with bygone tastes in mind, try a house beer at Josiah Chowning's Tavern, where the servers are dressed in period attire.

"Back then, people had beer for breakfast," says tavern manager Robert Walker. Mind you, the Colonials weren't drunks; during that era, beer was healthier than water.

And though tastes (and sanitation) have changed since the 1700s, beer's potency remains just as strong. "As we say around here," says Cotner, "beer preserves everything but secrets."

— Scott Elder

Colonial Williamsburg's Historic Area: 101A Visitor Center Dr., Williamsburg. 757-229-1000. [www.history.org](http://www.history.org)

The Art and Mysteries of Brewing: Today, Oct. 25 and Nov. 2, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. The Secrets of the Chocolate Maker: Tuesday, Nov. 4 and Dec. 2, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Demonstrations, performances and historical trade sites are included with admission, which is \$37-\$43, ages 6-17 \$18-\$21, 5 and younger free.

**Road Trip maps are available at [www.washingtonpost.com/roadtrip](http://www.washingtonpost.com/roadtrip), as are addresses and hours of operation. (Be sure to check before you go.) Have an idea for a trip? E-mail [roadtrip@washpost.com](mailto:roadtrip@washpost.com).**

# MediaMix

## A Quick Take on New Releases

TITLE	BASIC STORY	SAMPLE GRAB	WHAT YOU'LL LOVE	WHAT YOU WON'T	GRADE
<b>BOOK</b> <b>Death With Interruptions</b> By José Saramago Harcourt \$24	A brilliantly imagined fable wherein Death reneges on her duties (namely, killing people) and falls in love with an unsuspecting cellist.	"I should explain that the reason that led me to interrupt my activities . . . was to give those human beings who so loathe me just a taste of what it would mean to live forever . . . [and so on for another 40-plus lines until the next period]." — Death explains her actions	The Nobel Prize winner ("Blindness") continues to impress, once again exploring what happens when you take the rules of the universe, turn them on their head and ask, "Then what?"	The lack of paragraph breaks and punctuation, other than way too many commas, renders the story frustratingly tricky to plow through. — Reviewed by Alexis Burling	<b>B</b>
<b>BOOK</b> <b>The Wordy Shipmates</b> By Sarah Vowell Riverhead \$25.95	The NPR contributor and best-selling humorist ("Assassination Vacation," "Take the Cannoli") puts her idiosyncratic spin on personalities that dominated the religion-fueled culture of the early American Colonies.	"At his city-on-a-hill best, [John] Winthrop is Pete Seeger, gathering a generation around to sing their shared folk songs. [Roger] Williams is Bob Dylan plugging in at Newport, making his own noise." — On the personas of two Puritan leaders	Middle-school history teachers should pay attention to how Vowell's funny, imaginative take on musty, buckled-up Pilgrim notables brings the era wickedly to life.	The undertaking would have felt a bit more relevant if Vowell had made more of an effort to contextualize the work. It's hard to get too wrapped up in what feels like ancient history when the daily news is so much more compelling. — Sara Cardace	<b>B-</b>
<b>CD</b> <b>Dig Out Your Soul</b> Oasis Warner Bros./Reprise \$18.98	The brothers Gallagher continue the melodic comeback initiated by 2005's "Don't Believe the Truth," confirming they have indeed found the will to rock again.	"Belief does not existence make / It's only in your mind" — "The Nature of Reality"	"The Shock of the Lightning" is ferociously anthemic, like the Oasis of old. Li'l Liam Gallagher wrote three songs, and they aren't half bad.	Liam's songs are not flattered by their proximity to those by big brother Noel, whose 15-plus-year experience advantage rings loud and clear. — Chris Klimek	<b>B</b>
<b>CD</b> <b>Elephants . . . Teeth Sinking Into Heart</b> Rachael Yamagata Warner Bros. \$15.98	Four years after her full-length debut, the Arlington-born connoisseur of the many (many!) flavors of heartbreak resurfaces with nine beautiful, mopey ballads; three middling rockers; then two even sadder ballads.	"I remember what we said, as we lay down to bed / I'll be here if you will only come back home" — "Duet," featuring Ray Lamontagne (and you can hear his beard filling up with salty tears)	Yamagata knows her way around a torch song, and she's got the pipes to pull it off.	Two songs break the eight-minute mark, but they're not the ones that make this two-part opus feel bloated. After 65 minutes, sad songs say only so much. — C.K.	<b>B</b>
<b>COMIC</b> <b>The Alcoholic</b> By Jonathan Ames and Dean Haspiel Vertigo/DC Comics \$19.99	In his graphic novel debut, the celebrated author of "Wake Up, Sir!" spins a quasi-autobiographical story that stumbles from teenage blackouts to the shock of Sept. 11 as lead character Jonathan A. wrestles with addiction.	"I had thought, at first, that I would just get sober again, but the booze had gotten into my skin, my psyche. I had felt some relief that day in Asbury Park. It was the relief of oblivion."	With Haspiel's art imparting a manic joy and fearsome dread to the narrative, Ames recounts poignant traumas, sexual escapades and coming-of-age angst with equal aplomb.	Even sympathetic readers may determine that it's really self-absorption that's driving Jonathan A.'s self-destruction, especially given the abrupt ending. — Evan Narcisse	<b>A-</b>
<b>DVD</b> <b>30 Rock: Season 2</b> Not rated Universal \$39.98	In the Emmy-winning NBC comedy, conservative corporate suit Jack Donaghy (Alec Baldwin) dates a Democratic congresswoman, page Kenneth (Jack McBrayer) becomes addicted to coffee and Liz Lemon (Tina Fey) deals with her ex becoming a local hero.	"A drinking contest? What am I, 12 and at my boyfriend's frat party?" — Jenna (Jane Krakowski) feigns a lack of interest in taking on the Teamsters	The throwaway gags, such as Tracy Morgan's video for "Werewolf Bar Mitzvah," are even funnier than the main story lines, which are very, very funny. The package has plenty of commentary and deleted scenes from Fey and Co.	Sometimes the satire is laid on a bit thick (as when Jack's management of an inner-city baseball team mirrors that of the Iraq war), but that's a small complaint. — Greg Zinman	<b>A-</b>
<b>DVD</b> <b>The Visitor</b> Rated PG-13 Anchor Bay \$29.97	After a Connecticut college professor (Richard Jenkins) returns to his New York apartment to find a Syrian drummer (Haaz Sleiman) and his Senegalese girlfriend (Danai Gurira) living there, he invites them to stay. Cue the immigration drama.	"Now, Walter, I know you are a very smart man, but with a drum you have to remember not to think." — Tarek (Sleiman) teaches the uptight, classical-music-loving professor about polyrhythm	The performances, especially Jenkins's award-worthy turn and Hiam Abbas's portrayal of Tarek's warm and worried mother, elevate the film from an exercise in white-liberal-guilt hand-wringing.	The commentary spends too much time on location details and not enough on the film's politics. — G.Z.	<b>B</b>
<b>GAME</b> <b>Pure</b> PlayStation 3, Xbox 360 Rated Everyone Disney Interactive \$59.99	This off-road ATV racing game focuses on the fun factor (perhaps that's what the ultra-vague title refers to), rather than overly technical realism.	You build your own ride, part by part, from the chassis up, pretty much ensuring that no two players' vehicles will be the same.	The controls are easy to learn, so it won't be long before you can dive into an online race — against 15 competitors — and pull off some awesome, high-scoring stunt jumps.	So what is up with that title, anyway? Thank goodness there's a picture of an ATV on the cover, or there'd be no chance of guessing what the game was about. — Christopher Healy	<b>B+</b>

ALEC BALDWIN, TINA FEY AND TRACY MORGAN FROM NBC VIA REUTERS