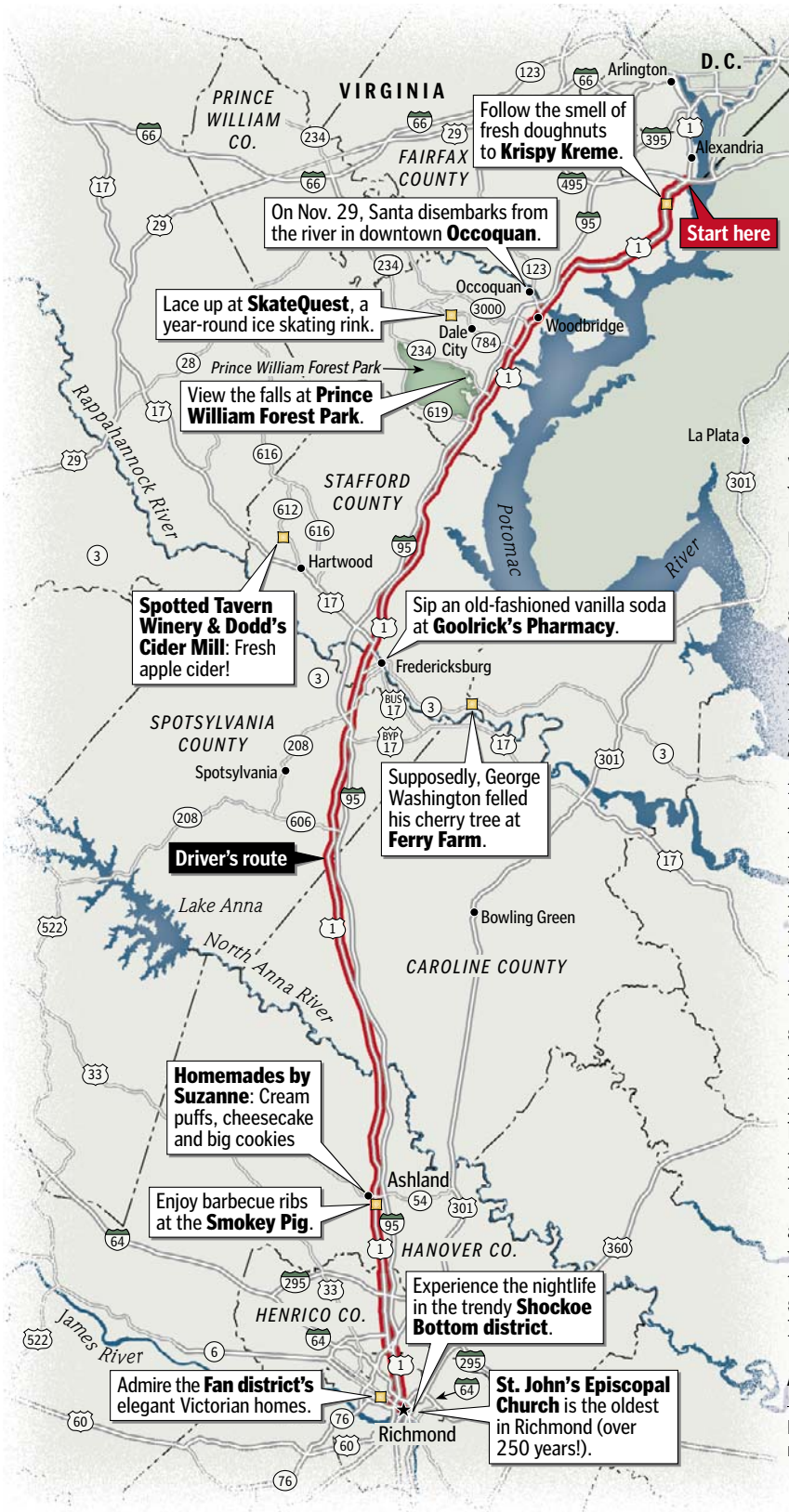
ROADTRIP | Tour the 'Grossology' Exhibit



WHERE: Science Museum of Virginia in Richmond

WHY: Ice skating, fresh apple cider and everything you ever wanted to know about your bodily functions.

HOW FAR: 105 miles, or about 90 minutes from Alexandria.

Burp and fart humor is no longer the exclusive playground of sophomoric comedians. In "Grossology: The (Impolite) Science of the Human Body," showing now at the Science Museum of Virginia, you can giggle your way through an educational exhibit rife with gurgles, toots and belches. As the name suggests, the display is gross—if you're easily offended by the word "pee," you'd best stay home. But it's also not just for children or the frat-house set. The exhibit, based on the best-selling series of books of the same name by former science teacher Sylvia Branzei, has been museum-hopping since 1999. Everyone will be entertained by Gas Attack, a pinball game in which players score points by hitting food items most likely to cause flatulence. In another installation, pump soda into Burp Man's stomach and see how excess air turns into noisy belches. Kids can scale a wall that resembles wart- and pimple-covered skin, or slide down a replica of the digestive system. And don't miss the huge nose that drips snot while it explains how much you swallow in a single day (a whole quart!).

On your way to the museum, enjoy a more pleasant tour for the senses. Begin with hot-from-the-conveyor-belt doughnuts at Krispy Kreme in Alexandria. Then feel the chill during a spin around the ice at SkateQuest in Woodbridge, or stop at the 17,000-acre Prince William Forest Park to breathe in the fresh air and walk off breakfast on the Quantico Falls Trail. In Fredericksburg, you can pop in to Goolrick's Pharmacy—the oldest soda fountain in the nation—to refresh the palate.

If you make the trip on a weekend, don't miss the tasty, fresh apple cider (regular or hard) at Spotted Tavern Winery in Hartwood, open from noon to 4 p.m. And after the museum, if you feel the need to counteract the "ick" factor with a little sophistication, stroll through Richmond's gorgeous Fan district, said to be the largest intact Victorian neighborhood in the United States.

Grossology is on display through Jan. 4. For directions, hours and ticket prices, visit www.smv.org. **— Kelly DiNardo**

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BY JEROME COOKSON FOR THE WASHINGTON POST