

WILLIAMSBURG, *October 3, 1771.*

I beg leave to acquaint the Publick that I have opened TAVERN in the House, behind the Capitol, lately occupied by Mrs. *Vobe*; where those Gentlemen who please to favour me with their Custom may depend upon genteel Accommodations, and the very best Entertainment. —

* I shall reserve Rooms for the Gentlemen who formerly lodged with me.

CHRISTIANA CAMPBELL.

When Christiana Campbell announced her new location in the *Virginia Gazette*, she was already an experienced tavern keeper, having learned the business from her father. After her husband, apothecary Ebenezer Campbell, died in the mid-1750s leaving Christiana with two young daughters, she opened a tavern in Williamsburg to support her family.

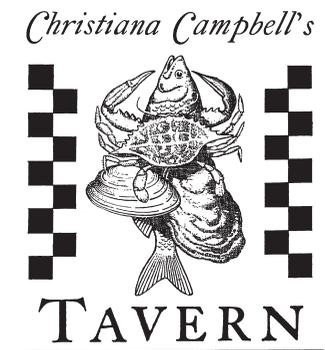
George Washington and other leading gentlemen of the colony who periodically came to town for business, politics, or pleasure often met with local residents at Mrs. Campbell's tavern. They dined, supped, or spent the evening drinking, visiting, and gambling in the public room or in another first-floor room. Lodgers who reserved a private room slept upstairs in a chamber adjoining the public lodging room, where travelers shared beds with strangers when the tavern was crowded.

Informal groups of gentlemen and the Williamsburg Masonic Lodge met in the private club room in the 1770s. Lodge records indicate that the Masons occasionally hosted balls at the tavern. In December 1776, for instance, they agreed to “dine and Sup and have a Ball for the Entertainment of the Ladies at the House of Mrs. Campbell's as usual.”

Well-run taverns flourished in Williamsburg while it was the capital of Virginia. Mrs. Campbell retired around 1780 rather than follow the government when it moved to Richmond. A traveler stopped at her house one February day in 1783 and requested a fire in the room and “Oysters Cook'd any way.” Mrs. Campbell retorted, “I don't keep a house of entertainment, nor have not for some years.” The disappointed traveler described Mrs. Campbell as “a little old Woman, about four feet high; & equally thick, a little turn up Pug nose, a mouth screw'd up to one side.”

Mrs. Campbell eventually moved to Fredericksburg, where she died in 1792 at the age of 70.

Today Christiana Campbell's Tavern specializes in seafood. Artifacts found during excavation of the site and a sketch of the tavern drawn on a late 18th-century insurance policy aided in reconstructing the tavern. The deliberate mix of reproduction chairs, tables, and case pieces represents the kind of furniture that Mrs. Campbell owned. The dinnerware is based on fragments of an 18th-century squirrel pattern excavated in Williamsburg. Other accessories—pewter and brass candlesticks, tin sconces, and framed prints and maps—are typical of those that would have been used in an establishment like Mrs. Campbell's, which was neither the most elegant nor the most common tavern in town.



Christiana Campbell's TAVERN

GIVING Satisfaction to TRAVELERS and TOWNSPEOPLE
with a Taste for SEAFOOD

EVENING BILL OF FARE

Soup & Salad Selections

All Suppers Include Seasonal Vegetables, Soup OR Salad and Dessert

She Crab Soup

Chesapeake Blue Crab, Cream and Sherry

Tavern Corn Chowder

Sweet Garden Corn, New Potatoes, Vegetables, Fresh Herbs and White Wine,
Topped with Crispy Bacon

Seasonal Salet

Baby Spinach and Romaine Lettuces Tossed with a Pomegranate Mint Dressing
Topped and Served with Roasted Walnuts, Dried Cranberries and Goat Cheese

Christiana's Favorite Salet

Wedge Boston Butter Lettuce, Roasted Cherry Tomatoes,
Golden Raisins, Sunflower Seeds, Carrots, Peppercorn Buttermilk Dressing

Chesapeake Bay Bounty

Daily Oyster Selections \$12 half dozen \$22 dozen

finest selection of sustainable oysters from the eastern shore

Classic Oyster Rockefeller \$12.95 half dozen \$22.95 dozen

spinach, bacon, parmesan cream

Campbell's Signature Baked Oysters \$12.95 half dozen \$22.95 dozen

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Supper Selections

All Suppers Include Seasonal Vegetables, Soup OR Salad and Dessert

Waterman's Supper

Jumbo Lump Crab Cakes, Herb Roasted Baby Fingerling,
Tavern Sweet Corn Relish with Remoulade
\$41.95

Gloucester Supper

Southern-Fried Chicken, Herb Roasted Baby Fingerling, Tavern Hot Sauce
\$35.95

York Supper

Low Country Stew of Clams, Mussels, Shrimp and Local Fish
Fingerling Potatoes, Surry Sausage, Pancetta
\$38.95

Chincoteague Supper

Local Caught Catch, Chef's Seasonal Accompaniments
\$37.95

James Supper*

Char-Grilled Beef Tenderloin, Herb Roasted Baby Fingerling
Red Wine Demi-Glace, Rosemary Roasted Garlic Butter
\$49.95

Tavern Garden Supper

Salt Roasted Celery Root, Vegan Wild Mushroom Ragout
Roasted Heirloom Carrot, Carrot Top Pistou
\$28.95

*Add one of Mrs. Campbell's renowned Crab Cakes to your Supper for an additional tariff of \$13.95
From the sideboard come Spoon Bread Sweet Potato Loaf*

**Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, beef, pork, lamb, seafood, shellfish or eggs increases your risk of food-borne illness, especially if you have certain medical conditions.*