

# Welcome!

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND  
THE UPSIDE OF DOWNTOWN

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## TOUR OPERATORS MARVEL AT DESTINATIONS IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

*Rockville, MD* – The Conference and Visitors Bureau (CVB) of Montgomery County, Maryland, Inc. hosted a familiarization (FAM) tour September 16-17, 2010 in conjunction with Capital Region U.S.A. (CRUSA). The tour was designed to showcase Montgomery County as a destination for international travelers including hotels, attractions, arts and entertainment, shopping and dining. “Overseas tour operators rely on the contacts and expertise of U.S. based receptive tour operators,” said Matt Gaffney, President and CEO of Capital Region USA, “hence their importance in determining which hotels, destinations and attractions are sold to the overseas travel market.”

“Our visit to Montgomery County, MD was eye opening,” said Tour Coordinator Brian Lincoln of Reis Tour & Travel. “Our hotel in Chevy Chase was within walking distance of a wonderful variety of shopping that would suit any taste. This is a great alternative to downtown DC, especially for international visitors who are always eager to shop during their stay.”

The tour began at The Collection at Chevy Chase, a single city block of high-end designer boutiques and stores such as Ralph Lauren, Louis Vuitton, Gucci, Tiffany & Co., Cartier, Barneys New York, Jimmy Choo and Hela Spa. Attendees enjoyed dessert at the M Café and took a stroll through the center guided by Toni Nolan, the marketing manager of The Collection at Chevy Chase. The host hotel, The Courtyard by Marriott Chevy Chase, is the first LEED Gold certified hotel in Montgomery County and has completed a \$35 million dollar renovation. Stephanie Coppula with Bethesda Urban Partnership provided a walking tour of Downtown Bethesda, featuring an art gallery highlighting The Trawick. The day’s tour ended at the Hyatt Regency in Bethesda with refreshing cocktails.

The next morning, attendees enjoyed a lavish breakfast hosted by the Courtyard by Marriott Chevy Chase. Peggy Erickson, Director of Heritage Montgomery, joined the group and guided the bus tour across Montgomery County. She explained the county’s role in the Civil War, which is especially important since we will soon celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> Commemoration of the Civil War in 2012.

Kevin Brandt, Superintendent of the C&O Canal gave a special guided tour of the C&O Canal and Great Falls. Attendees relived life on the canal aboard the park’s reproduction canal boats and rode along the historic C&O Canal in a boat pulled by mules. Park rangers in period clothing described what life was like for the families that lived and worked on the canal in the 1800s. The receptive operators were in awe of the 70 foot waterfall at Great Falls and plan to include Montgomery County in recommendations to international travelers.

About the Conference and Visitors Bureau:

The mission of the Conference and Visitors Bureau (CVB) of Montgomery County, MD, Inc. is to enthusiastically promote, market and sell Montgomery County, Maryland as a destination for meetings, conventions and individual travelers, fostering economic development and benefiting and supporting members and the overall business community. It is the CVB’s goal to show leadership and be regarded as a quality organization of experts and advocates of its members, partnering with local, county and state organizations and government officials in an effort to further these goals.

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