

FORT SUMTER TOUR BOAT SCRIPT

Revised 8/3/2018

[Narrative begins when the last person is on board and the boat is still tied to the dock after NPS ranger or volunteer's welcome aboard message]

1. INTRODUCTION

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome aboard the Spirit of the Lowcountry. During our tour we will be docking at Fort Sumter. For your own safety, please remain seated or maintain a firm handhold when we are approaching or tying up to any dock.

While underway, please feel free to move about, but always maintain a firm handhold, particularly when using the stairways. Keep your arms and hands inside the boat at all times. For your own safety, please be careful.

In case of an emergency, we have life jackets for adults and life jackets for children weighing less than 90 pounds. These life jackets are located on all three decks. On the 1st deck bow in a closet on the right hand side of the stairs. They can also be found under the bench seats forward on the 1st and 2nd decks. On the 3rd deck life jackets are located in the round stack behind the wheelhouse. All locations are clearly marked. To use a life jacket, first pull the jacket over your head. Then bring the strap around your waist, and fasten it much like the seat belt in your car. Tie the chest straps together just under your chin. In any emergency, always follow the instructions of the crew.

Accessible restrooms are located forward on the 2nd deck and to the rear on the lower deck. For your convenience a snack bar is located forward on the 2nd deck.

There are no accessible restrooms at the Fort so we encourage our visitors to use the restrooms before they depart the boat.

There is an elevator located at mid-ship on the starboard side. It offers access to all three decks of the vessel. Please feel free to use it.

The National Park Service and Fort Sumter Tours are committed to the preservation and conservation of Fort Sumter National Monument and the surrounding environment. To protect the sensitive ecosystem of the Charleston Harbor and to prevent its pollution, we ask you to please use the trash containers provided on the first and second decks. Remember that throwing any trash overboard is a violation of federal law. For your convenience we've also provided blue recycling containers on both decks. Please use these for all of your aluminum cans and plastic bottles. Help us reduce waste and protect our environment by recycling. For the convenience of all our guests, smoking is prohibited aboard all Fort Sumter Tours vessels.

While underway, we will point out and briefly explain many of the sites of interest that will be visible.

Looking for a more interactive learning experience today? Be sure to download for free the Fort Sumter App which is available through both Google Play & the App Store. Enjoy App features like the Charleston Harbor viewfinder, get historic notifications when walking the Fort or simply get social with your personalized Fort Sumter photo. Look for the red Fort Sumter App with boat logo when downloading for free.

2. CASTLE PINCKNEY

The small island coming into view is Shute's Folly Island. Castle Pinckney is the name of the brick fort on the island. It's named in honor of Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, an author and signer of the United States Constitution, and cousin of Charles Pinckney of Snee Farm, a local National Park Service site in Mount Pleasant. The current fortification on Shute's Folly Island was built in 1809 - 1810. However, it played no active role until 1860. In December of that year, it was virtually undefended. Union Major Robert Anderson moved his garrison from Fort Moultrie across the channel to Fort Sumter. This was viewed by many South Carolinians as an act of war. In retaliation the next day, December 27, 1860, approximately 150 South Carolina militia captured Castle Pinckney without incident. Maintained throughout the war, it played a minor role in the defenses of Charleston Harbor. It briefly served as a prison for Union soldiers captured at Manassas in 1861. Castle Pinckney is now owned by the local camp of the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

3. FORT JOHNSON

Ahead on James Island is the site of Fort Johnson. The British built the first fortification in 1708 and named it for Sir Nathaniel Johnson, governor of the Carolinas. Before the Revolutionary War the fort was improved and enlarged and then replaced with a new fort in 1793. But as a result of several severe storms, by 1827 little remained of the third fort. After South Carolina's secession in December 1860, South Carolina militia returned to the site and built a new Fort Johnson. The first shots of the Civil War were fired from here onto Fort Sumter at 4:30 AM April 12, 1861. Today there are modern structures on the site. Only a 19th century powder magazine and a few earthworks remain.

4. FORT SUMTER

In front of us is the entrance to Charleston Harbor and the Atlantic Ocean beyond. Ahead of us is Fort Sumter, a powerful symbol of one of the greatest challenges this country ever faced. One of many forts constructed along the Atlantic coast by the federal government, Fort Sumter's purpose was to defend Charleston from foreign invasion. In reality, the fort would be the flashpoint in a war between Americans where the nature of the Union and the meaning of freedom would be changed forever.

5. WELCOME BACK ABOARD/FORT MOULTRIE

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome back aboard. Across the channel from Fort Sumter is Sullivan's Island. The brick structure with the American flag flying above is historic Fort Moultrie.

In March of 1776, four months before the Declaration of Independence was issued on July 4th, South Carolinians declared their independence from England and formed their own government. With many of the colonies engaging in rebellious activities, South Carolina expected a British attack on Charleston. An unnamed fort made of palmetto logs and sand was built near the water's edge on

Sullivan's Island to protect the harbor from hostile ships. The fort was under the command of Colonel William Moultrie. On June 28, 1776, Moultrie's men successfully repelled a naval assault of nine British warships under the command of Admiral Sir Peter Parker. Shot from the British fleet harmlessly buried itself in the spongy palmetto logs and sand while Moultrie's men poured devastating fire into the attacking ships. The loss to the British fleet was heavy. Charleston was saved from British occupation for four more years, and the fort was named Fort Moultrie in honor of its commander.

When Colonel Moultrie needed a flag to represent his troops in battle, he designed one after his regiment's uniform: a blue flag with a white crescent in the upper left-hand corner. When South Carolina adopted the first state flag in 1861, Moultrie's flag design was used with the addition of a white palmetto tree in the center. Because of the significance of the palmetto during the Battle of Sullivan's Island, South Carolina is known as the "Palmetto State."

The current Fort Moultrie was built in 1809 and was active until 1947.

Today Fort Moultrie is part of Fort Sumter National Monument. It's open to the public year round and is accessible by car. Exhibits there interpret 171 years of American seacoast defenses.

6. DOCKING

[Approaching the dock]

Soon we'll be docking, and for your own safety, we again ask that you remain seated or maintain a firm handhold. We'll advise you when it is safe to leave. We hope you've enjoyed your visit to Fort Sumter.

-END OF NARRATION-