



## In Virginia, falling for horse country

BY ANN COCHRAN

A recent beautification project has bestowed Middleburg's village of 670 residents with fresh landscaping and newly level brick sidewalks.

Work in the town, formally established in 1787, was completed this summer despite a damaging hailstorm and a thunderstorm that produced flooding.

Fall is an ideal time to make the hour-long drive to horse country, with its horse farms and wineries. The town, made up of a few blocks, has more than 160 buildings on the National Register of Historic Places.

Fall events include a film festival, the Gold Cup, fox hunts and steeplechases. On the first Saturday in December, a Christmas parade and the Middleburg Hunt and Hounds Review bring out red-coated riders, floats and, of course, Santa.

**1 SALAMANDER RESORT EQUESTRIAN CENTER** From the center of town it's a quick half-mile to the resort. Guests and the public can saddle up for a one-hour group ride through the countryside (\$135); private rides are available (\$235). Two unmounted classes, on essential horsemanship and equine communication, are each an hour at \$135. Ponies are available for children. *500 N. Pendleton St.*



**From top:** A horse and rider at Salamander Resort Equestrian Center; the Side Saddle Cafe and farm shop at Fields of Athenry Farm sells broths, honey, soap and more; Diane Rigden designs tweed fabrics for the suits at her Country Classics shop.



**2 SIDE SADDLE CAFE AND FARM SHOP** "We believe in healthy eating as the first and foremost preventative to many illnesses," says Elaine Boland of Fields of Athenry Farm and Middleburg's new Side Saddle Cafe. What's available: Athenry's pasture-raised, non-GMO, no-soy, no-corn beef, lamb, poultry and waterfowl, as well as bone broths, honey and tallow creams and soaps. Tuesday through Sunday there's a full lunch menu from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. From 3 to 7 p.m., homemade meals are chef's choice, or customers can choose something to be whipped up from the cold case. *7 W. Washington St.*

**3 COUNTRY CLASSICS** If you want to dress the part, there's often a style twist or colorful punch to traditional men's and women's clothing and accessories here. Diane and Colin Rigden design the tweeds and silks used for the English-cut jackets and ties. Everything is tailored and manufactured in the British Isles and Europe. *21 E. Washington St.*