

Taste Carolina Gourmet Food Tours

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tours now available

Durham, N.C. - This month Taste Carolina Gourmet Food Tours introduced the Triangle's first foodie-focused tour company, with tours now underway. Business partners Joe Philipose, a corporate lawyer, and Lesley Stracks-Mullem, an MBA graduate from UNC, have long been passionate about the vibrant food scene in NC's Triangle region and believe it rivals the best in the nation. After shopping area farmers markets and dining around at 'cheap eats' and five-star restaurants, Philipose and Stracks-Mullem fell in love with the area's food culture and became determined to share it with residents and visitors. After all, "What better way to get to know a place and its people than to eat its food," explained Philipose. "Our tours will be as compelling for residents as for visitors; they'll give locals a unique opportunity to be face-to-face with the chefs and artisans they've only read about."

Taste Carolina Gourmet Food Tours takes participants behind-the-scenes while introducing them to the food community's best - from legendary restaurants, farms, farmers markets, bakeries and specialty stores, to the chefs, artisans and farmers themselves. Tour guides will give an historical, architectural and culinary account of the area with an emphasis on its food history and renaissance. Those attending will feast on local flavors; tastes will be offered at almost every stop on the tour. Partner Stracks-Mullem, who admits to minoring in barbecue while attending UNC's MBA program, will guide many tours herself, "I've always been on a mission to find the best off-the-beaten path restaurants, ingredients, and even deals that make a food scene so special. Now, through Taste Carolina, I'll be able to share my favorites, from the young chefs at Piedmont and their house-made charcuterie to Locopops and their internationally-inspired popsicles."

Taste Carolina Gourmet Food Tours will begin offering three walking tours beginning this month. On Saturday afternoons there will be a downtown Durham tour, and on Saturday mornings and Friday afternoons, a Chapel Hill/Carrboro tour (listed below). Soon, Taste Carolina will add a walking tour of downtown Raleigh's food scene, as well as Barbecue Bus Tours and customized 'farm-to-table' and other uniquely-themed tours for individuals and corporate groups. Ultimately, the possibilities are endless; in fact, Philipose and Stracks-Mullem are already becoming acquainted with downtown Charlotte and plan to extend Taste Carolina Gourmet Food Tours to other foodie-obsessed markets in North Carolina, and beyond.

Current Weekly Tours

Reservations may be made by contacting 919-237-2254 or info@tastecarolina.net or through the web site www.tastecarolina.net

Saturdays: **Durham: American Tobacco to Downtown to Brightleaf**; 2:00-5:00; \$37 per person

This town is about Duke University, Tobacco Warehouses and the Durham Bulls; it's also about cutting edge culture - the Durham Performing Arts Center, American Dance Festival, Full Frame Documentary Film Festival - and an incredible food scene. Whether you're a visitor or a local resident, you'll enjoy this vibrant city in the midst of its revitalization and the restaurants, shops and people that are making Durham one of the nation's cultural and dining hotspots. From crostini topped with local ingredients and house-smoked meats to gourmet popsicles to renowned pimento cheese to organic wine and local beer, you will discover all of Durham's flavors.

Fridays: **Franklin to Weaver**; 2:00-5:00; \$37 per person

Saturdays: **Culinary Carrboro**, 10:00-1:00

Whether you're a local resident or visitor, you'll enjoy going behind the scenes of Chapel Hill and Carrboro restaurants where traditional and modern 'farm-to-table' cuisine comes to life. This tour is an exploration of flavors, from innovative and upscale southern dishes to house-made chocolates to real New York pastrami to organic wine and local beer. Known for being at the forefront of the Slow Food movement and for eclectic and nationally renowned restaurants that have redefined Southern cooking, Chapel Hill/ Carrboro is one of the best places in the country to live and eat.

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