

**For Immediate Release**  
**April 9, 2009**

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## **Sensory Overload in North Carolina's Capital City**

**RALEIGH, N.C. (March 2009)** – The Raleigh area gives you more than 150 reasons to celebrate this May with 20 festivals, 37 sporting events, 11 culinary experiences, more than 50 concerts, six shopping extravaganzas, four major museum exhibitions, 25 FREE attractions, Raleigh Fashion Week, Triangle Restaurant Week and a tour of urban chicken coops....just to name a few. So, get ready for a month of Sensory Overload.

Plan your visit over a weekend and enjoy many special hotel packages and offers including the ZSpot Card available at many Wake County Hotels. The card, purchased at check-in, gives visitors discounts and special offers at area restaurants, attractions and events. For more information on specific packages, a full schedule of all events taking place in the Raleigh area or to book tickets online, visit [www.visitRaleigh.com](http://www.visitRaleigh.com) or call (800) 849-8499.

Here's a sampling of some of the events taking place in the Raleigh area this May. For a full Sensory Overload schedule visit [www.visitRaleigh.com/may](http://www.visitRaleigh.com/may)

### **Major Exhibitions**

#### **Pirates of the Black Flag at the N.C. Museum of History** **March 6 – January 4, 2010**

Marauders. Plunderers. Bloodthirsty sea-thieves. Whatever their name, pirates have wreaked havoc on the high seas since waterway travel began. These seafaring scoundrels command attention in a major exhibit at the N.C. Museum of History. *Knights of the Black Flag* will explore the legacy of pirates, from ancient times to the present, through intriguing artifacts, legends, and history that bring their ruthless adventures to life. The interactive exhibit will be an exciting experience for all ages.

Showcasing many objects related to pirates, *Knights of the Black Flag* includes the largest collection of artifacts ever exhibited from the shipwreck believed to be Blackbeard's flagship, *Queen Anne's Revenge*. Legends surround another compelling artifact on loan from the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts: the alleged skull of Blackbeard. Admission: Free 18 and under; \$5 adults; \$4 senior citizens.

#### **Chocolate: The Exhibition at the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences** **May 9 – Sept. 7, 2009**

A gift from the gods. A symbol of wealth and luxury. An economic livelihood. Bonbons. Hot fudge. Candy bars. For thousands of years humans have been fascinated with the delicious phenomenon that we call chocolate. You'll begin in the rainforest with the unique cacao tree

whose seeds started it all. Visit the ancient Maya civilization of Central America and discover what chocolate meant nearly 1,500 years ago. Then travel forward in time and northward to the Aztec civilization of 16th-century Mexico, where cacao seeds were so valuable they were used as money. Discover chocolate's introduction into the upper classes of European society and its transformation into a mass-produced world commodity.

Chocolate will engage your senses and reveal facets of this sumptuous sweet that you've never thought about before. You'll explore the plant, the products and the culture of chocolate through the lenses of science, history and popular culture. Admission: TBD

### **Highlights of the American Collection at the N.C. Museum of Art**

#### **Ongoing**

*Highlights of the American Collection* showcases a selection of some of the finest paintings from the Museum's American collection. The 19 paintings are arranged thematically, allowing for interesting, often surprising, conversations among works by different artists from different generations. The show features many of the Museum's finest works by American artists including: John Singleton, Winslow Homer, Albert Bierstadt and Frederick Frieseke. Admission: Free

### **Power to Play at Marbles Kids Museum Through August 23, 2009**

Fuel your fun with Power2Play! Kids learn about healthy food choices while playing hard with full-body physical activities in our newest special exhibit. Kids pedal, skate, leap and climb through an obstacle course while learning about muscles, bones and heart rate too. And the energy continues as the popular Center Ice rink returns to Marbles in Power2Play. Admission: \$5

## **Special Events**

### **29<sup>th</sup> Annual Meet in the Street Festival in downtown Wake Forest May 2, 2009**

Nearly 70 vendors from all over the Southeast proudly show off their handiwork at Meet In The Street®. The entire family will be entertained by local dancers, singers and musicians on two different stages. Sometimes you can even meet up with some of the Triangle's favorite sports mascots! Admission: Free.

### **Peak Fest in downtown Apex May 2, 2009**

The annual Peak Fest that celebrates the "Peak of Good Living" is held on the first Saturday in May each year. This festival has grown from a small community day in a school parking lot to an event which draws hundreds of vendors and over 25,000 people to the streets of downtown Apex. Admission: Free.

**Triangle Restaurant Week**  
**May 11-17, 2009**

More than 30 of the top Raleigh area restaurants participate in Restaurant Week with special menus and offers. Get out and explore some of the area's favorite restaurants with a three-course meal for \$15 at lunch and \$30 at dinner. [www.trirestaurantweek.com](http://www.trirestaurantweek.com)

**Raleigh Fashion Week and Strut '09**  
**May 14-16, 2009**

Raleigh Fashion Week will foray into fashion by featuring an exposé of the area's emerging talent. Beauty, talent and health seminars as well as trunk shows, vendor displays, and nightly runway shows will serve to highlight the trends and offerings of local boutiques and shops. The week's festivities will all come to a culminating grand finale with *Strut '09*, a red-carpet runway event. Event is held at the Raleigh Convention Center, tickets prices vary per event.

**4<sup>th</sup> Annual Henside the Beltline Tour d'Coop**  
**May 16, 2009**

Raleigh's city chicken owners invite you into their backyards for a first-hand look at keeping chickens in an urban environment. Discover the variety of breeds that might be nesting in your neighborhood, learn about raising chickens, and see how families integrate chickens into their gardening practices. In addition, you'll be impressed by the ingenious coops that can be devised to shelter these feathered pets. Downtown Raleigh's Five Points District. Admission: Free, donations encouraged.

**Artspllosure, The Raleigh Arts Festival Celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup>**  
**May 16-17, 2009**

Artspllosure has established itself as an institution within the Raleigh community. The annual festival unites artists and admirers of art to appreciate the visual and performing arts of national, regional and local excellence. The festival is an art bazaar and expo that mixes street fair activities such as bubble wand-making and life size chess games to encourage family fun. Event is held in downtown Raleigh's Moore's Square Park. Admission: Free.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Got to Be NC Festival**  
**May 29-31, 2009**

This home-style trade show and festival will entice visitors by its feature of carnival rides and livestock, antique tractor expo and tractor-pulls, lawn-mower races and other pastimes of true North Carolinian culture. The taste of our traditions will be served up for sample and sale at the Food Expo. Aligning with ag culture, these products are sustainably produced within the communities of North Carolina. Also debuting, for sample and sale, will be selections from North Carolina's young, thriving wine industry. The festival will host demonstrations such as soap-making, churned ice cream station, and storytelling to showcase the agricultural and rural traditions of the Tar Heel State. Exposition Center., N.C. State Fairgrounds. Admission: Free.

## Performing Arts

### **Coppelia – Carolina Ballet April 30-May 3, 2009**

This beloved story ballet is one-half of our two-part family series. With music by Delibes, this comedy will delight your auditory and visual senses, and it will tickle your funny bone! Children and adults alike enjoy the escapades of Dr. Coppelius, and the humorous misunderstandings between Swanhilda and Franz. Progress Energy Center for the Performing Arts. Admission \$18-\$58.

### **Wizard of Oz – Broadway Series South May 5-May 10, 2009**

There truly is no place like home as the greatest family musical of all time, the wonderful WIZARD OF OZ, twists its way into Raleigh! The entire family will be captivated as they travel down the Yellow Brick Road and beyond with Dorothy, Toto and their friends the Cowardly Lion, Tin Man and Scarecrow in this lavish production, featuring breathtaking special effects, dazzling choreography and classic songs. Progress Energy Center for the Performing Arts. Admission: \$16 - \$60.

### **Carolina Bluegrass Festival at Koka Booth Amphitheatre May 17, 2009**

Bluegrass favorites The Del McCoury Band, Tony Rice Unit, Rhonda Vincent and the Rage among others take the stage at Cary's Koka booth Amphitheatre for a day of good music, great friends in one of the area's best outdoor music venues. Admission: \$25 - \$50.

The Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau as the official destination marketing organization of Raleigh and Wake County, accelerates sustainable growth and development by increasing visitor and convention business. Through its website, [visitRaleigh.com](http://visitRaleigh.com) and other tools, the GRCVB assists local visitors in a variety of ways.

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