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***Raleigh Makes the List of Top 10 'Tastiest Towns in the South'
Southern Living Readers Choose Winning Town - Voting Begins December 23***

Raleigh, NC – The Raleigh area is consistently ranked as one of the nation’s best places to live, work, start a business and raise a family, but now the editors of *Southern Living* have selected Raleigh as one of the 10 cities in the running to be named “Tastiest Town in the South” by an online reader poll.

Help Raleigh win this honorable distinction. Voice your opinion and cast your vote for Raleigh as the “Tastiest Town in the South” by visiting www.southernliving.com/tasty. Voting opens December 23, 2011 and runs through January 31, 2012.

“We hope the entire community will get behind this reader contest and cast a vote for Raleigh,” said Denny Edwards, president and CEO of the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau. “Residents and visitors have known all along about the unique and progressive culinary scene in Raleigh, but now it’s time for the secret to be shared.”

Raleigh restaurants are consistently praised as some of the best in the country for their creative dishes, commitment to fresh ingredients and unique and innovative takes on the traditional, and *Southern Living* is ready to bestow the honor once again, with the help of their readers.

Southern Living editors chose the **Top 10 “Tastiest Towns in the South”** based on the following criteria:

- **Food as a cultural identity:** The unique food or ethnicity that defines a particular Southern region
- **Growth of a culinary-minded community:** The influence that the culinary industry has on the local community and tourism
- **Diverse cuisine at a variety of price points:** Accessibility to hearty, flavorful meals at any budget
- **Local, sustainable food practices:** The focus on sourcing products from local purveyors to geographically define where each meal comes from
- **Hot chefs on the rise:** The influence of the area’s culinary talent in the media and pop culture
- **Abundance of buzz-worthy food events:** The number of festivals in the area that celebrate all things food and drink



“At Southern Living, we know there’s no taste like home,” says Editor Lindsay Bierman. “Particular foods and flavors define a city and region, starting right in your own mama’s kitchen, and sometimes the most humble dish like a plate of grits will make its way onto a gourmet menu and become an outright tourist attraction...The forward-thinking cooks, chefs, artisans, and tastemakers in each of these established and emerging food scenes honor, preserve, and enrich our region’s distinct culinary traditions at every meal.”

Raleigh was the only North Carolina city to be designated and according to *Southern Living* the ‘10 Tastiest Town in the South’ nominees are Baltimore, MD; Birmingham, AL; Charleston, SC; Charlottesville, VA; Decatur, GA; Houston, TX; Lafayette, LA; Louisville, KY and New Orleans, LA.

Southern Living will profile each of the towns and reveal the **“Tastiest Town in the South”** in the April 2012 issue, on newsstands March 23rd, and online.

The Greater Raleigh Convention & Visitors Bureau, as the official destination marketing organization of Raleigh and Wake County, accelerates sustainable economic growth and development by increasing visitor and convention business.

Southern Living, published by the Time Inc. Lifestyle Group, reaches 15 million readers each month. The brand offers today’s busy Southerners achievable ideas for cultivating their own Southern style. Each month in the magazine and on southernliving.com, readers find ideas for cooking, gardening, gracious entertaining, decorating, regional travel and locally made products. Southern Living is now available on all tablets. Visit southernliving.com/allaccess for more details.

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