



Design-Driven Lifestyle Brand AC Hotel by Marriott® Opens in Downtown Chapel Hill

Property plays pivotal role in revitalizing town's central business district

CHAPEL HILL NC (DECEMBER 18, 2017) — AC Hotels by Marriott® has announced the opening of **AC Hotel Chapel Hill Downtown**, a European-inspired, frictionless, elegant hotel for the modern traveler. Notable as the first Marriott-branded modular construction project on the East Coast, the property also plays a pivotal role in the revitalization of Chapel Hill's central business district.

The 4-story, 123-key hotel is nestled in the heart of Chapel Hill – adjacent to the town's social district and just around the corner from the University of North Carolina – adding distinctly Southern elements to the AC brand's European vibe. Its contemporary façade complements surrounding downtown structures, both commercial and residential, mixing modern architecture and local accents to capture the character of this historic college community.

"AC Hotel Chapel Hill melds modern sophistication with the traditional warmth of Southern hospitality," says Corry Oakes, President/CEO of OTO Development, the Spartanburg SC-based Johnson Management company that developed and operates the new property. "More than simply somewhere to stay, this hotel is an opportunity for guests to experience the essence of Chapel Hill, a place locals call 'the southern part of heaven.'"

Architectural details – expansive windows and an exterior corner den with an outdoor fireplace, for example – encourage visitors to intermingle with local residents, both inside the hotel's buzzing AC Lounge, which is designed as a neighborhood hangout, and outside amidst the community's vibrant street scene. A central location makes it easy for hotel guests to park in the onsite garage, then get everywhere else via sneakers or bikes; those who prefer a ride can access the AC's complimentary shuttle, which operates within a 3-mile radius of the hotel.

"Everything about this property – from walkability to local art to well-designed urban style, even the hyper-local signature cocktail – emphasizes 'A New Way to Hotel,'" Oakes says.

A subtle European sensibility defines AC Hotel Chapel Hill's 123 sleek, smart guestrooms, with a calming, neutral color palette, natural lighting and open sense of space. "The AC brand's philosophy is to focus on essentials – and only essentials," says General Manager Andrew Strickland. "So there's nothing unnecessary in the rooms, but what is there is better. There's extra focus on functionality, details like adjustable reading lamps, USB charging ports, free WiFi, individual climate controls and, of course, the best bed you'll sleep in besides your own."

Artwork in the common areas is all about community. In partnership with NC-headquartered Kalisher, OTO commissioned regional artist Lincoln Hancock to create a 96x72 mixed media work on canvas that celebrates the rich history of Chapel Hill's Northside neighborhood, which sits adjacent to the hotel. Hancock collected source materials (photos, newspaper clippings, stories) from residents and community organizations; he layered these into an abstracted timeline – a montage of images and text – that serves as the hotel's focal piece of art.

Ten other pieces of local and regional artwork commissioned by Kalisher and OTO include three sculptures by Matt McConnell (Raleigh NC) and an abstract wood installation outside by sculptor Robert Winkler (Asheville NC).

Hotel amenities include hydration stations on every floor; a 24/7 fitness center complete with cardio equipment, weight machines and dumbbells; an AC Library/business center; and 650 square feet of flexible meeting space with integrated technology and ergonomic seating.

The AC Kitchen offers a European-inspired breakfast featuring freshly baked croissants, sliced prosciutto and cheese, savory and sweet breakfast tarts, yogurts and fresh fruit.

“At AC Hotels by Marriott, we believe the details are what matter, and this is evident at the new AC Hotel Chapel Hill Downtown,” says Benoit Racle, Senior Global Brand Director, AC Hotels by Marriott. “From the modern architectural detailing to the carefully-curated artwork, to the nods to the brand’s European heritage that intermingle with local touches; every feature of the hotel has been purposefully selected to give travelers an elegant, frictionless and uncomplicated experience, whether they are traveling for business or leisure.”

The AC Lounge serves up the brand's signature Gin Tonic, local craft beer and wine along with tapas and Spanish-inspired small plates. Specialty cocktails are crafted with organic liquor distilled just around the corner at the town's iconic Top of the Hill (TOPO), thus creating a strong sense of place. Signature drinks include Gone to Carolina -- a mix of TOPO Organic Eight Oak Whiskey, Black Tea and Lemon-Lime Oleo Sacchrum, served smoked -- and Rose & Mary Go to Church, made with TOPO vodka, strawberry-rhubarb syrup, lemon juice, rosemary foam and bitters.

AC Hotel Chapel Hill – the first Marriott-branded hotel on the eastern seaboard built via modular construction -- was designed by Overcash Demmitt Architects, with interior work by DLR Group. Le Chase Construction Services served as general contractor and Champion Commercial Structures was the modular construction contractor. The hotel is on track to attain LEED Certification.

Located at an intersection where business activity gives way to residential, AC Hotel Chapel Hill is a key component in the revitalization of the community’s urban core. Designed to ease the transition between larger commercial buildings and homes in the Northside neighborhood, the hotel wings “step down” toward the houses, blending into the residential scale and allowing sunlight into the streetscape.

“We are pleased that our hotel plays a pivotal role in Chapel Hill’s Downtown Imagined Initiative to create – and retain – vibrancy on and around Rosemary Street,” Strickland says.

AC Hotel Chapel Hill Downtown is located at 214 W. Rosemary St. To learn more and/or make a reservation, call 919.969.2800 or visit ACHotelChapelHill.com. Follow the hotel on Facebook [@ACHotelChapelHill](https://www.facebook.com/ACHotelChapelHill), Instagram [@ACHotelChapelHill](https://www.instagram.com/ACHotelChapelHill) and Twitter [@ACChapelHill](https://twitter.com/ACChapelHill).

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About AC Hotels by Marriott

AC Hotels by Marriott®, a lifestyle brand that celebrates a new way to hotel complemented by a European soul and Spanish roots, boasts more than 100 design-led hotels in 14 countries and territories. Design-driven AC Hotels by Marriott® edit away the unnecessary to remove friction, providing thoughtfully designed moments of beauty, allowing guests to focus on what’s important to them. The properties modern design for modern business include buzzing AC Lounges, the perfect place for locals or visitors to get work done in style or to enjoy handcrafted cocktails and tapas. High-design guest rooms and public spaces with sleek furnishings and intuitive technology features such as the Media Salons and AC Libraries inspire and connect. AC Hotels by Marriott® is proud to participate in the industry’s award-winning loyalty program, Marriott Rewards® which includes The Ritz-Carlton Rewards®. Members can now link accounts with Starwood Preferred Guest® at members.marriott.com for instant elite status matching and unlimited points transfer. For more information, visit ac-hotels.com and follow us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ACHotels), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/ACHotels), and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/ACHotels).

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