

Story Ideas & Reasons to Profile Chapel Hill and Orange County, NC



What's New in HOTELS

Brand New 123-room AC Hotel by Marriott is opened in downtown Chapel Hill and features fire pit, tapas bar and outdoor patio. Opened December 2017. <http://achotels.marriott.com/> **JANUARY 2018 ROUNDUP: THE HOTTEST NEW HOTELS INCLUDES AC HOTEL DOWNTOWN CHAPEL HILL (USA TODAY)**

Carrboro, NC to get second Hotel. Five-story, 147-room **Hilton Garden Inn** expects to break ground in Spring 2018. This addition to the 300 Main East Main Street development, features meeting space, terrace, fitness center, indoor pool, and restaurant.

What's New in the ARTS

Franklin Street in downtown Chapel Hill is the home to a new performance venue. **CURRENT in Carolina Square**. Is an ArtSpace + Studio. This venue houses both an adaptable black box-style theater and a multi-purpose studio space, together totaling about 7,000 square feet. It is designed to break down barriers and innovate art through interactive installations, immersive experiences and pushing performance past the stage and into the audience. Opened February 2018.



Celebrate **Ackland Art Museum's 60 anniversary in 2018**. The Ackland Art Museum presents *The Outwin: American Portraiture Today*, featuring the first-prize-winning painting *Miss Everything (Unsuppressed Deliverance)* by Amy Sherald, portraitist of First Lady Michelle Obama. This is part of the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery prestigious portrait contest : the juried Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition, for the first time ever, is on tour. The Ackland Art Museum is honored to be the tour's final stop. **Exhibition is June 1 – August 26, 2018**. Also see its first major site-specific, outdoor art installation in nearly 20 years: a "stickwork" by Chapel Hill-based artist Patrick Dougherty entitled *Step Right Up*. The large-scale piece—comprised of five individual stickwork sculptures—was constructed entirely of tree saplings and is on view in front of UNC's Ackland Art Museum **through August 2018**. www.ackland.org



What's New is Science

Morehead Planetarium & Science Center on the UNC Chapel Hill campus in a \$5.2 million expansion, "[#TakeUpSpace](https://www.moreheadplanetarium.org/#TakeUpSpace)", building project to reimagine this North Carolina icon as a modern-day, technology-advanced science hub. This will be the first expansion since opening in 1949. They include moving the main entrance to the building's west end facing McCorkle Place; a modern, reconfigured lobby space; a more extensive exhibit hall that will pay tribute to UNC's history as a pioneer of science exploration; an interactive "maker space" that's part exhibit, part program; an updated science demonstration stage and expanded exhibit galleries showcasing the advances researchers are making in science, health and technology. More than early 60 astronauts between 1959 and 1975 trained in celestial navigation at the Planetarium - including 11 of the 12 men who walked on the Moon! **Morehead Planetarium celebrates 70th anniversary in 2019**. www.moreheadplanetarium.org

What's New in Sports

Visit the newly renovated Carolina Basketball Museum on the UNC campus. www.goheels.com

What's New on UNC-Chapel Hill Campus

University celebrates 225th anniversary in 2018. Noting the laying of the cornerstone of first building, Old East in 1793. www.unc.edu

What's New in Food, Brews & Farms

Blue Dogwood Public Market <http://www.bluedogwood.com/>

This indoor market will feature 12 fresh food vendors, prepared food to go, retail vendors, and pop-up vendors. Featured items include local beer and a butcher. Browse through our diverse market, and dine on choices including empanadas, vegan wraps, Italian baked goods, charcuterie, tea, coffee, fresh juices, chocolate and more. On site chocolate demonstrations. Phase 2 includes an outdoor beer garden and Blue Dogwood Beer. **Downtown Chapel Hill, 306 West Franklin Street. Opening Spring 2018 (tentative March).**

Orange County has 8 breweries, with number 9 breaking ground in 2018

Dingo Dog Brewing Company (2016), is North Carolina's first "non-profit" brewery. Located in an up-fitted horse barn on PlowGirl Farm, Dingo Dog strives to craft locally-conscious beers in its "zero waste" facility that features Orange County, NC produce, much of which is grown right outside our doors on the farm. Dingo Dog will funnel all of its profits into providing capital and operational grants to independent, "no-kill" animal sanctuaries and rescue organizations in North Carolina. **Taproom** in Carrboro, NC opening in 2018.

COMING SOON: New small batch nano-brewery and bottle shop, **Craftboro Brewing Depot** is breaking ground in 2018. This onsite craft brewery will also carry a select assortment of craft beer from NC and beyond. It is coming to the new 40,000 square foot multi-building, retail center in Carrboro, South Green that will be located just off Highway 54, serving as the "gateway" to the southern entry of Carrboro. <http://southgreencarrboro.com/>

ORANGE COUNTY'S FIRST WINERY - Botanist and Barrel Winery in Cedar Grove, NC in northern Orange County, Dry Fruit Wines, Farmhouse Ciders & Spirituous Barrels. Botanist and Barrel and the B&B tasting room are beautifully situated on Cedar Grove Blueberry Farm just north of Hillsborough, NC. They craft a variety of barrel aged and stainless steel dry wines, ciders and sours, using only the finest fruits, blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, peaches and apples. They believe in light-handed winemaking using centuries old European techniques, allowing the fruits, yeast and barrels we have carefully selected to be vivid and expressive. Visitors can spend the day picking blueberries (season runs July-August), purchase and taste our wines, local craft beers and prepared foods, all in a scenic farm setting. Open on **Saturdays and Sundays from 2pm to 6pm.** If you would like to visit us during another time, you can arrange a private tour and tasting for groups of 4 or more. <https://www.botanistandbarrel.com/>

Chapel Hill's Award-winning TOPO Organic Spirits was the first organic distillery in the deep south. Recognized by the NC Department of Agriculture for helping create the local organic wheat market in NC, the base of all of their spirits—except the Rum—comes from locally grown (within 100 miles) organic soft red winter wheat. The rum comes from organic cane from the only organic cane field in the US near West Palm Beach, FL. NEW ADDITION in late 2017 – Spiced Rum – NEW FOR 2018: TOPO RESERVE CAROLINA STRAIGHT WHEAT WHISKEY. Ongoing products organic vodka, Moonshine Carolina Whiskey, Piedmont Gin and Eight Oak Carolina Whiskey. NEW - Monday-Friday 9am-5pm hours for walk-ins. Walk-in abbreviated tours are \$5 pp. Previous available scheduled tours with one of the owners or distillers are \$20 pp and last around an hour. Visit our [Tours Page](http://www.topodistillery.com/) for sign-ups. <http://www.topodistillery.com/>

Food Accolades

Chapel Hill is home to two 2011 James Beard Award Winners **Andrea Reusing** (Best Southeast Chef) of Lantern and the restaurant **Crook's Corner**, An American Classic. Lantern was a semi-finalist for 2013 Outstanding Restaurant in the James Beard Competition and In 2017 Reusing was a semi-finalist for Outstanding Chef in the Country. **Aaron Vandemark, a six-time James Beard Best Southeast Chef nominee (2011-2016) and chef of Panciuto in Hillsborough** (pop 6,600). IN 2018 - **Gabe Barker, of the Pizzeria Mercato** in Carrboro, for the second year in a row is a semi-finalist for Rising Star Chef. Bon Appetit named Pizzeria Mercato one of their three best new pizza joints in America in Fall 2016.

[CHAPEL HILL IS AMONG 15 SOUTHERN CITIES ALL FOOD LOVERS SHOULD VISIT NOW \(SOUTHERN LIVING\) - August 1, 2017](#)

Check out Hillsborough, NC

Historic Hillsborough in 2015 was a top three Coolest Small Town in America. Home to Mystery Brewery Company and the **ultra popular Riverwalk in downtown Hillsborough** is an accessible, asphalt, wooden bridges, urban greenway that stretches about 1.8 miles along the Eno River corridor between Gold Park in western Hillsborough and trails east of town. This trail for walking, jogging and cycling and provides a comprehensive pedestrian network for recreation and commuting in town and is part of the N.C. Mountains-to-Sea Trail. See the reconstruction of the **Occaneechi Indian Village** along with Eno River in downtown Hillsborough. The Burwell School's Elizabeth Keckly Bicentennial Events beginning in February 2018. Keckly was a slave at the Burwell School in Hillsborough and later went on to become Mary Todd Lincoln's dressmaker. <http://www.burwellschool.org>.

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