

We're continually on the hunt for experiences that add richness to our lives. In the spirit of the revival of road trips, we are proud to feature a monthly section featuring destinations within driving distance of Charleston. We feel that our smart and savvy readers will find these trips interesting and entertaining.



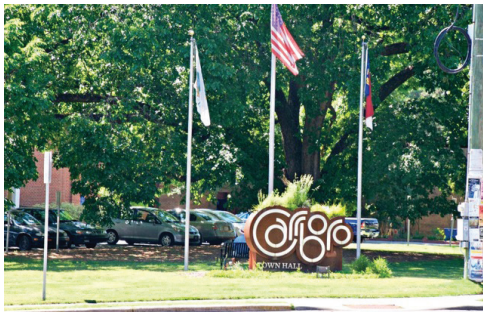
# CARRBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

It's

Carro

feel free

Driving 4 hours 45 minutes Southeast of Charleston brings you to Carrboro, North Carolina. This free-spirited town is only five to ten minutes from Chapel Hill, home to the University of North Carolina (UNC). Carrboro is a lovely little town with iconic shops and cathedrals that add to its allure. For me, this is one of the quintessential Southern small towns you should get to know.



Carrboro is one of the friendliest towns you'll encounter in North Carolina. Photo by Melody Pittman.

## WHERE TO STAY IN CARRBORO

There are plenty of chain hotels in the Carrboro/Chapel Hill area including the new Hampton Inn & Suites, Hyatt Place Chapel Hill, and the upscale Franklin Hotel (in the Curio Collection by Hilton). The latter two offer free Wi-Fi, a local shuttle service, and free parking. Carolina Inn is an iconic Chapel Hill hotel offering impeccable service, elegant decor, and luxurious accommodations, since 1924. Crossroads, their onsite restaurant, offers both indoor and outdoor dining. Take your afternoon tea in the lobby, dining room, or garden terrace as you enjoy this Southern tradition of tea sandwiches, sweets, scones, and of course, assorted teas. There are both indoor and outdoor pools.



Dining at Tandem is truly an experience for your mouth and senses. Photo by Melody Pittman.

## WHERE TO DINE IN CARRBORO

Carrboro is known for its independently owned restaurants and farm-to-table ingredients. Have an upscale dining experience at Tandem Restaurant, a beautiful spot with lovely decor and a most interesting Strawberry



# Weekend TRAVELER

Gazpacho. Tandem's tagine dishes really stand out, with short ribs, peas, artichokes, and turmeric.



Chicken Nachos from Mi Cocina de Amor Restaurant on Charleston's West Side. Photo by Melody Pittman.

A funky little dining spot, The Spotted Dog, focuses on vegan and vegetarian fare but offers something for everyone. If you are traveling with your pooch, they are welcome on the restaurant's patio.

Cross Ties Barbecue is where you can get your NC barbecue grub on, along with scratch-made sides (fried deviled eggs, pickled vegetables, hush puppies, smoked gouda mac and cheese... oh my!) and creative appetizers while dining in restored train cars. Steel String and Yester Years Breweries will satisfy your craft beer desires.



Kids will love that you dine in retro train cars at Cross Ties Barbecue, featuring North Carolina's favorite dish. Photo by Melody Pittman.

## WHAT TO DO ON YOUR WEEKEND TRIP TO CARRBORO

Get in touch with nature at the North Carolina Botanical Garden, one of the best collections of regional plants in the state. You won't want to miss the Pitcher Plants and Carolina Birds-in-a-Nest, two eye-catching plants that I was unfamiliar with. The botanical garden also has a large collection of Venus Fly Traps, which are grown right here in North Carolina.



The North Carolina Botanical Garden. Photo by Melody Pittman.



Who knew that Venus Fly Traps were native to North Carolina? Photo by Melody Pittman.

Drop by the Carrboro Farmers' Market for the freshest locally grown produce, prepared foods, flowers, and crafts, all from within a 50-mile radius. This is considered one of the top markets in the South. Art and craft lovers will appreciate the workmanship of local artisans at the North Carolina Crafts Gallery. Another place to see artwork, as well as typical shopping boutiques, is at the huge Carr Mill Mall. The mall is even listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Here you will find fashions, toys, outdoor apparel, jewelry, gifts, and home furnishings. It really is a great place to browse, plus a perfect rainy day option.



The Carrboro Farmers' Market has been selling local produce and foods since 1979. Photo by Melody Pittman.



The Carrboro Farmers' Market. Photo by Melody Pittman.



Eating and buying local are popular in Carrboro. Photo by Melody Pittman.

Carrboro's music scene is one you definitely need to check out. Cat's Cradle is the venue to do just that. In fact, it has been both Carrboro and Chapel Hill's premier music venue for over 40 years. Music giants such as John Mayer, Public Enemy, Joan Baez, and even Nirvana have graced their stage at some point. The intimate setting only holds 750 guests.



The Artscenter is Carrboro's #1 most-visited attraction. Photo by Melody Pittman.

The ever-popular Artscenter is Carrboro's venue for concerts, theater, and family programs that also offers classes and children's camps. Artscenter has been a member of the Carrboro community for over 35 years.

After hours, head to the Baxter Arcade for a beer or cocktail while enjoying pinball, arcade games, and darts in this "nerd-chic" and funky establishment. Favorites include Frogger, Pole Position, Centipede, Galaga, Donkey Kong, and Game of Thrones pinball.

## CARRBORO: A TOWN YOU'LL BE EXCITED TO SHARE

Carrboro is definitely a place you will be glad you visited and look forward to telling your friends about. I like to think this is an adult hipster town that loves its live music, farm-to-table dining options, and is on the cutting edge of all things new and hip. This is one of North Carolina's hidden gems, for sure.