

EPICUREAN

CHARLOTTE

Food & Wine Magazine



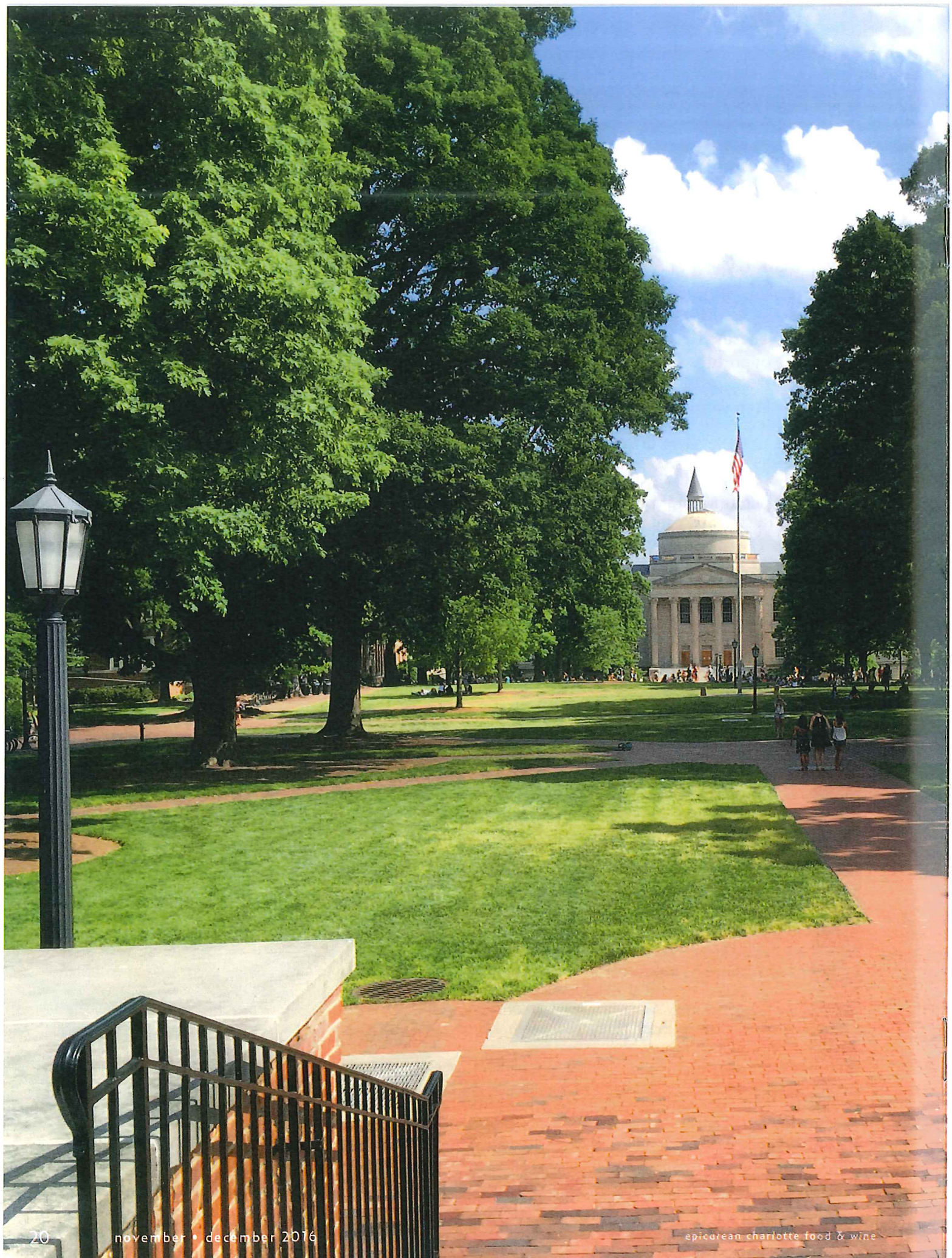
discover how to
create calm during
the holidays

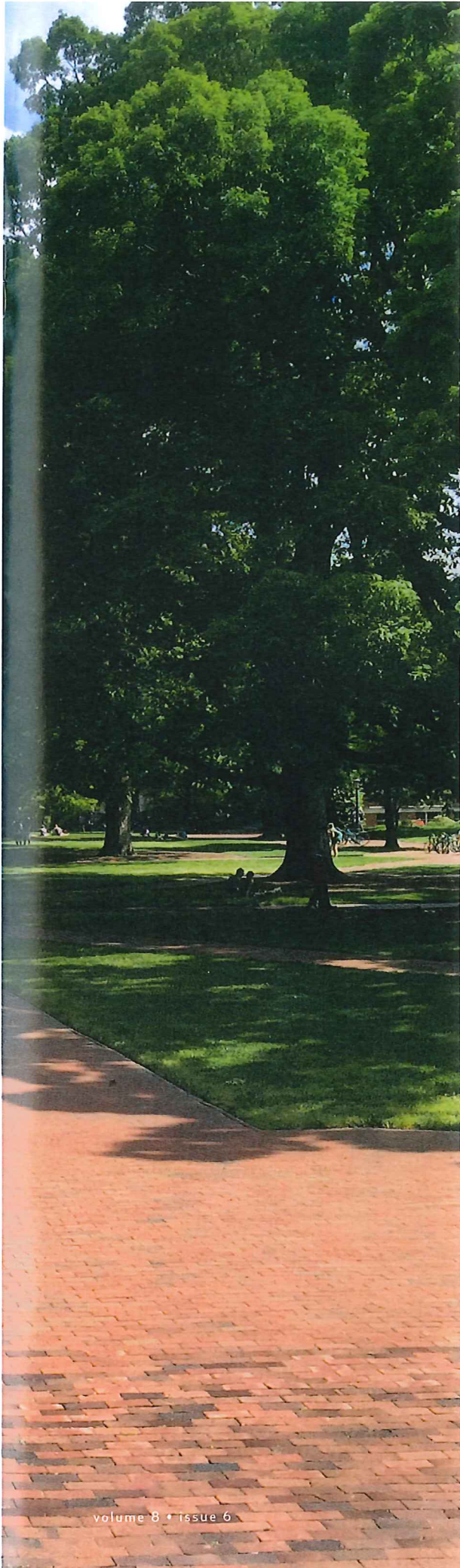
fa la la la la
your way through
chapel hill

unwrap the winter
wine passport

a treasure map to
yadkin valley wineries

november · december 2016





fa la la la la in chapel hill

by zenda douglas

images courtesy orange county visitors bureau

Chapel Hill, in any season, is a lovely town. It is especially so during the holidays, when shimmering lights, holiday ornaments, Christmas trees, holiday house tours and carolers are on display. With many of the town's 30,000 students returning to their family homes for the holidays, it's a little quieter, and visitors can take advantage of fewer crowds at restaurants and places of entertainment. Even so, Chapel Hill is vibrant and filled with youthful energy.

Over the years, Chapel Hill has evolved from a sleepy college town—home to the University of North Carolina—to a sophisticated hub of activity in the Triangle. Residents and visitors alike declare that the sky is a little bit bluer—Carolina Blue to be specific—than in other places. The summers may be a tad cooler and the winters a smidge warmer in this place that's been dubbed the "Southern bit of heaven."

Chapel Hill holds a special place in a lot of hearts across the country, and not just alumni of the University of North Carolina, but also lovers of history, beautiful small towns and the South in general. It's a town brimming with culture and the arts and one where people of all ages are active and visible on Franklin Street, the center of it all.

Start your visit to Chapel Hill by checking into [The Carolina Inn](#), a Destination Hotel featuring 185 charming and well-appointed guestrooms, including seven luxury suites. The Carolina Inn and its [Crossroads Chapel Hill](#) restaurant were awarded AAA's prestigious 2015 Four Diamond ratings, marking 18 consecutive hotel honors and 13 straight restaurant recognitions.

An institution on the University of North Carolina campus for close to 100 years, the Inn still carries on the Southern tradition of hospitality and dining. The Carolina Inn will be all dressed up for the holidays with elaborate decorations based on the traditional song, *The Twelve Days of Christmas*. A number of holiday activities are planned, including breakfast with Santa, cookie decorating, festive meals and holiday teas and a display of gingerbread houses. Horse drawn carriage rides will also be available.

Across the street from the Inn is the [Ackland Art Museum](#), which houses an encyclopedic collection of more than 17,000 objects, drawings and prints representing Asia, Africa, Europe and America, with works ranging from ancient times to the 21st century. Always free, the museum is renowned for its collection of Asian art. On exhibit now is Extended Remix: Contemporary Artists Meet the Japanese Print. Also, Politics As Usual—ways in which artists engage with the power structures of their times—is on display.

There's a special place for kids up to 10 years of age in Chapel Hill as well. [Kidzu Children's Museum](#) highlights arts, science, technology and literature, all while presenting fun and engaging hands-on exhibits. Favorites include The Maker, Gravitron and Farm to Fork. There's also a large-scale climbing wall and the immense Tarheel Treehouse.

Speaking of Tarheels, visitors can't fully experience Chapel Hill without a visit to the [Carolina Basketball Museum](#). Situated next to the [Dean E. Smith Center](#) basketball complex, this 8,000-square-foot interactive museum is a must for sports lovers.

Holiday shopping will be a breeze here. Some of the downtown features include T-shirt and memorabilia shops, gifts, collectibles and clothing stores. You can buy everything from unique gifts to custom jewelry or bike shorts to hip trendy fashions. [University Mall](#) remains a favorite for shopping. Also on the edges of town, you will find [A Southern Village](#) and [Meadowmont](#), two neighborhoods complete with sophisticated shopping. Plus, don't forget about neighboring Carrboro, known as 'Paris of the Piedmont,' an eclectic community that boasts [Carr Mill Mall](#). For cooks, hosts and foodies, there's no better place than [A Southern Season](#), one of the largest specialty-only gourmet markets in the United States. This 60,000-square-foot emporium is filled to the

brim with gourmet foods, a deli, chocolates, coffee, tea, wine and beer as well as kitchen gadgets, house and home items, gift baskets and fresh flowers.

Outdoor lovers will want to visit the [North Carolina Botanical Garden](#), a conservation garden and the largest botanical garden in the Southeast. This garden contains piedmont nature trails, mountain, coastal plains and sand hills habitat collections, ferns, carnivorous, aquatic and rare plant collections, an extensive herb

garden and plant family garden. A 29,000-square-foot "Green" Education Center welcomes you to the space. See the Sculpture in the Garden, the annual display of nearly 50 one-of-a-kind sculptures from North Carolina artists throughout the garden this year through December 11, and the Saving Our Birds exhibit is on display through December 16.

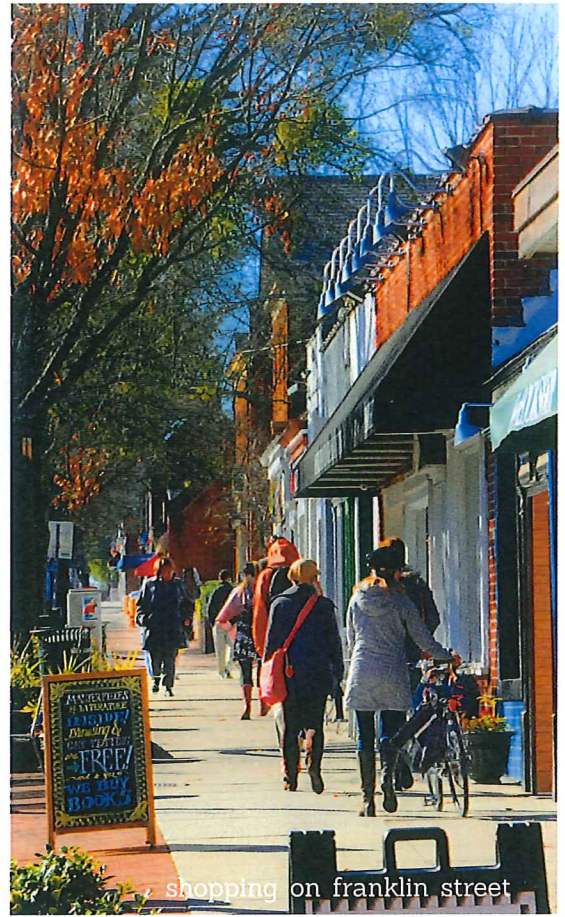
History buffs will enjoy the many walking tours, including [Historic Franklin Street](#), [Historic Northside](#) (African American Community) and the [Old Chapel Hill Cemetery](#). These tours are provided by the [Preservation Society of Chapel Hill](#) and are affordable at \$5. Tours are also available of the UNC campus, the oldest state university in the country.

Don't leave town without a new perspective on the stars provided by the [Morehead Planetarium & Science Center](#). The Planetarium once served as a NASA training center for astronauts and now presents exhilarating star shows.

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morehead planetarium & science center



shopping on franklin street

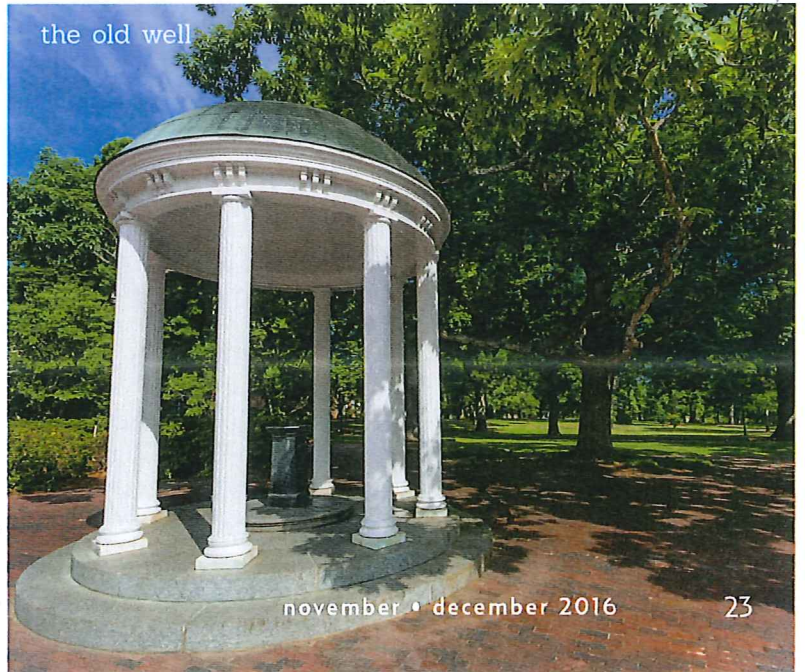


franklin street at night



carolina basketball museum

epicurean charlotte food & wine



the old well

a chapel hill feast for every palate

Restaurants and food are plentiful in Chapel Hill and Carrboro, with everything from Asian and Mexican cuisine to deli counters, brewpubs, coffee shops and ice cream parlors. Following are a few of our favorites.

Dine in the upscale expansive indoor space or outdoors on the front porch or by the fire pit at [Crossroads Chapel Hill](#). Either way, you're in for a special meal. Situated in the historic setting of The Carolina Inn, the restaurant strives to build on its already stellar reputation and become a gathering place for residents and visitors alike. The menu focuses on regionally-sourced ingredients that are grown, caught and raised locally. Get started with a sharing plate of crispy NC oysters served with a country ham leek reduction and artichoke relish, or fried green tomatoes with horseradish dressing and crumbled Bleu cheese. Next, choose from among a goodly number of small and large plates, including SunBurst trout served with fresh black-eyed peas, roasted peppers, Swiss chard and corn milk butter. Wrap your palate around the spring pea and fresh linguine with grated Grana Padano cheese and shaved black truffle. By all means, save room for dessert, like the local fruit or berry cobbler or the salted caramel and pretzel milkshake. An impressive wine list provides excellent choices to accompany every course.

Bring back childhood memories with a visit to [Sutton's Drug Store](#), featuring an old fashioned soda fountain, you-name-it milkshakes and terrific cheeseburgers. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner, make a day of it by indulging in pancakes for breakfast, a specialty hot dog for lunch and a turkey on focaccia sandwich for dinner. Go big and try a triple-decker sandwich.

When only Southern home-cooking will do, Chapel Hill has the place that beats out all rivals. [Mama Dip's](#) has been serving up fried chicken, smothered pork chops, chicken and dumplings, collard greens, fried okra and all the rest for years now, becoming a downtown tradition. If you're around for New Year's Day, enjoy a special meal of collard greens for lots of money, black-eye peas for good luck, pork for good health and

yams to sweeten things up. Don't leave without trying the sweet potato biscuits, and take home a few sauces from the general store.

Get the best view of downtown with a visit to [Top of the Hill Restaurant, Brewery & Distillery](#). A landmark in downtown, TOPO, as it's known, brews all of its beers right on the premises. You'll find daily drink specials to accompany a creative and upscale menu, which often includes ingredients from TOPO's own award-winning beers and spirits. Try the TOPO Carolina Whiskey and Coke slow-braised boneless beef short rib with roasted vegetables and mashed potatoes, or the Arizona Chicken served with gemelli pasta, black beans, roasted corn and chipotle cream sauce with scallions, tomatoes and white cheddar cheese. For a satisfying lunch or light supper, enjoy the avocado and cheese flatbread.

All the weathervanes posted in A Southern Season's restaurant, [Weathervane](#), point south as a tribute to Southern service and hospitality. Weathervane's lovely outdoor patio serves as a fine retreat and a perfect place to enjoy a scrumptious meal on a fall day. Open for breakfast, lunch, dinner and Sunday brunch, you can't go wrong with their contemporary cuisine with a Southern flair. Enjoy their sweet tea glazed salmon along with a small plate of fried green tomatoes and okra.

New on the scene is [Tandem](#) in Carrboro's Carr Mill Mall, where the cuisine reflects influences from Morocco, France, indeed, the world. Inspire your palate with lamb shank served with Freekeh grain, baby turnips, apricot, pistachio, mint and Harissa jus, or the Moroccan vegetarian Tajine with seasonal vegetables, olive oil, saffron, turmeric and paprika.

There's something sure to satisfy every appetite and please every taste in Chapel Hill. 🍷



mama dip's



top of the hill



tandem



weathervane restaurant



sutton's drug store