

# Chapel Hill

Drive a little farther east and you'll come to the almost prototypical university town, Chapel Hill. Home to the University of North Carolina, the nation's first public university, Chapel Hill is one third of the Research Triangle, including Durham and state capital Raleigh.

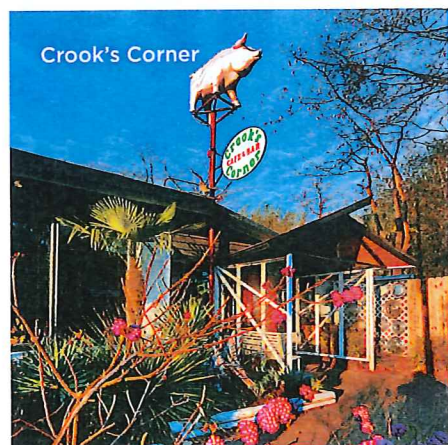
The town grew up around a small Anglican chapel, New Hope Chapel, built there in 1752. The university opened its doors in 1795.

Surrounded by gentle hills and towering trees, Chapel Hill and the neighboring town of Carrboro are laid-back, yet cosmopolitan. It's a great place to relax and explore for a day or two, while enjoying some of the hippest cuisine you'll find anywhere. And for basketball lovers, well, this is it: home of the Dean Dome, where legendary coach Dean Smith's Tar Heels, including the likes of Michael Jordan, have made a history all their own.

## Where to stay

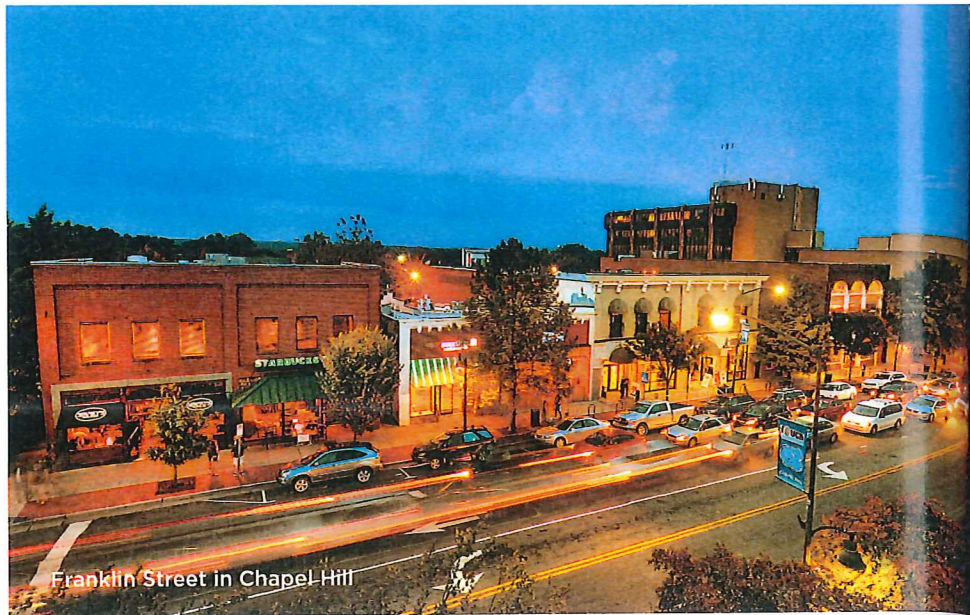
**The Carolina Inn** ([carolinainn.com](http://carolinainn.com); 211 Pittsboro St.; 800-962-8519) has occupied the site once held by New Hope Chapel since it was built in 1924. Today the inn is owned by the university; a portion of its profits support North Carolina collections held by UNC's library. The inn, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, offers 185 guestrooms and suites and has earned the AAA Four Diamond Award since 1997. The inn's Carolina Crossroads Restaurant and Bar is a regional fine-dining destination.

But maybe you'd rather stay off campus. **The Franklin** ([franklinhotel.com](http://franklinhotel.com); 311 W. Franklin St.; 919-442-9000) is an elegant boutique hotel located at the epicenter of Chapel Hill's main thoroughfare, Franklin Street. Walk out the door and you're immediately in the thick of things.



There's live jazz in the lounge, and some guest rooms include balconies.

**The Inn at Bingham School** ([chapel-hill-inn.com](http://chapel-hill-inn.com); 6720 Mebane Oaks Road, Mebane; 919-563-5583) is something else entirely. Located in the countryside, 11 miles outside Chapel Hill,



it combines Southern hospitality with southern French atmosphere. There are four guest rooms furnished with antiques and fine rugs. Stroll the 10-acre grounds and learn to play petanque, a French version of bocce, or boules.

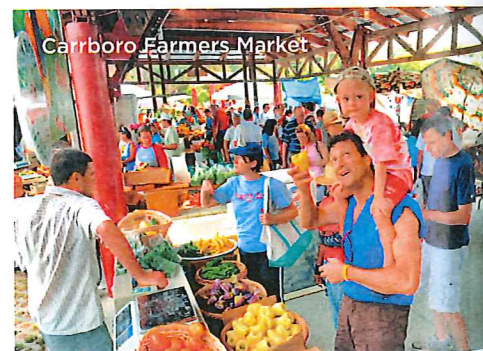
## Dining

Bon Appetit has named Chapel Hill "one of America's Foodiest Small Towns." If anything, this is an understatement, since Chapel Hill is home to the James Beard Award-winning **Crook's Corner** ([crookscorner.com](http://crookscorner.com); 610 W. Franklin St.; 919-929-7643), where some folks say modern Southern cuisine got its start. But there's nothing high falutin' about this place; it's housed in an old service station. The exterior is still adorned with hubcaps. It feels like (and is) a neighborhood gathering place. That said, the food is superb. Go for whatever is seasonal, like Bill Smith's soft shell crabs or the pan-seared tuna.

**Lantern** ([lanternrestaurant.com](http://lanternrestaurant.com); 423 W. Franklin St.; 919-969-8846) is just down Franklin Street. Its chef/owner, Andrea Reusing, is a James Beard Best Chef honoree who does an ingenious job of combining Asian flavors with North Carolina ingredients. How about braised red poll beef shank and brisket in broth, rare sirloin, oxtail dumplings, local vegetables, fresh wasabi and sea salt in something called Japanese Pot On Fire? Or a crispy whole North Carolina flounder with garlic, chilies, tamarind, fresh lime leaf, carrot salad and jasmine juice?

But if you're looking for something more primal, try **The Pig** ([thepigrestaurant.com](http://thepigrestaurant.com); 630 Weaver Dairy Road; 919-942-1133). North

Carolina is barbecue country, and The Pig will slay you with its antibiotic- and hormone-free, pasture-raised pork. This is the place for topnotch, downhome barbecue, but you can also order fried chicken and catfish, Po-Boys, even homemade hot dogs. Vegetarians are more than welcome. Try the country-fried tofu or the barbecue tempeh.



## Out and About

**The Carolina Basketball Museum** ([goheels.com](http://goheels.com); 450 Skipper Bowles Drive; 919-962-2211), on the UNC campus, is a must for hoops fans, as well as anyone interested in better understanding the local culture. There are artifacts, videos, photos and interactive presentations about UNC's 18 Final Four appearances.

On Saturdays, the **Carrboro Farmers Market** ([carrborofarmersmarket.com](http://carrborofarmersmarket.com); 301 W. Main St.) is a must. Featuring fresh food from within a 50-mile radius, this is a great place to munch, browse and take in the scene in what has been called one of the 100 Best Art Towns in America.

And since Carrboro basically blends into Chapel Hill at **Franklin Street**, you can easily turn your Carrboro visit into a Franklin Street shopping stroll, checking out used and new books, CDs and vinyl, and vintage clothing in various shops. There's also high-end men's wear at Alexander Julian and a nifty museum shop associated with the university's **Ackland Art Museum**, just off the corner of Franklin and Columbia streets.

