



Courtesy New Orleans CVB



By Patrick Shanahan, courtesy Visit Raleigh

CHERRY BOUNCE RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

Those with a penchant for tart, fruit-based drinks are sure to enjoy the cherry bounce, the official cocktail of Raleigh, the capital of North Carolina.

“If you ask any bartender in town what the signature cocktail is, they’ll say it’s the cherry bounce,” said Scott Peacock, director of public relations at the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The cocktail gained prevalence during the mid-1700s when a tavern owner named Isaac Hunter began serving the infused cherry-and-brandy blend at his establishment along a popular travel route between Fayetteville, North Carolina, and Petersburg, Virginia. The bar became such a popular spot among state legislators that when the North Carolina General Assembly met in 1788 to determine the location of the state capital, they decreed: “The General Assembly shall fix the unalterable seat of government within 10 miles of Isaac Hunter’s Tavern.”

Though the original Isaac Hunter’s Tavern no longer exists, a new bar of the same name recently opened in downtown Raleigh. Another great spot to stop for cocktails is Watts and Ward, a speakeasy basement bar with leather tufted couches, bookshelves and exposed brick walls. The name Watts and Ward is a nod to the two pieces of legislation that initially introduced Prohibition to the state: the Watts Act of 1903 and the Ward Law of 1905. A few other excellent drink venues for groups to check out are Dram and Draught, Whiskey Kitchen and Vidrio.

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MEMPHIS TODDY MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

Tennessee whiskey, whether a trademark brand like Jack Daniels or a regional favorite like Memphis Toddy, can serve as a great base for creative cocktails. The historic recipe for Memphis Toddy can be traced back to the Old Dominick Distillery in Memphis, a new distillery with a 100-year-old heritage.

The company was founded during the 1870s by an Italian immigrant named Domenico Canale who partnered with a Kentucky distillery to develop a complex, high-rye bourbon whiskey with cinnamon and citrus undertones, a distinct blend he later dubbed the Memphis Toddy. The business closed following Canale’s death in 1919 but reopened in 2017 in a beautifully renovated warehouse with expansive tasting rooms and a rooftop patio.

“Whatever you get at Old Dominick’s is going to be original and unique to Memphis,” said Caroline Parks, public relations and communications manager at Memphis Travel. “It’s distilled right here in the city.”

There are several cocktail variations that groups can try when they visit the distillery for a tour and tasting. The Trolley Stop is a sweet blend of Memphis Toddy, Dolin Vermouth Dry, Dolin Vermouth Sweet and cherry bitters, served in a chilled toddy glass with dried cherries to garnish.

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