

BEST OF THE SOUTH | NORTH CAROLINA IN COLOR | SOUTHERN AFFAIRS

SOUTHERN

The Magazine for people who love the Spirit of The South

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SPOTLIGHT



NORTH CAROLINA IN COLOR

SPRING'S ULTIMATE JOURNEY THROUGH THE TAR-HEEL STATE

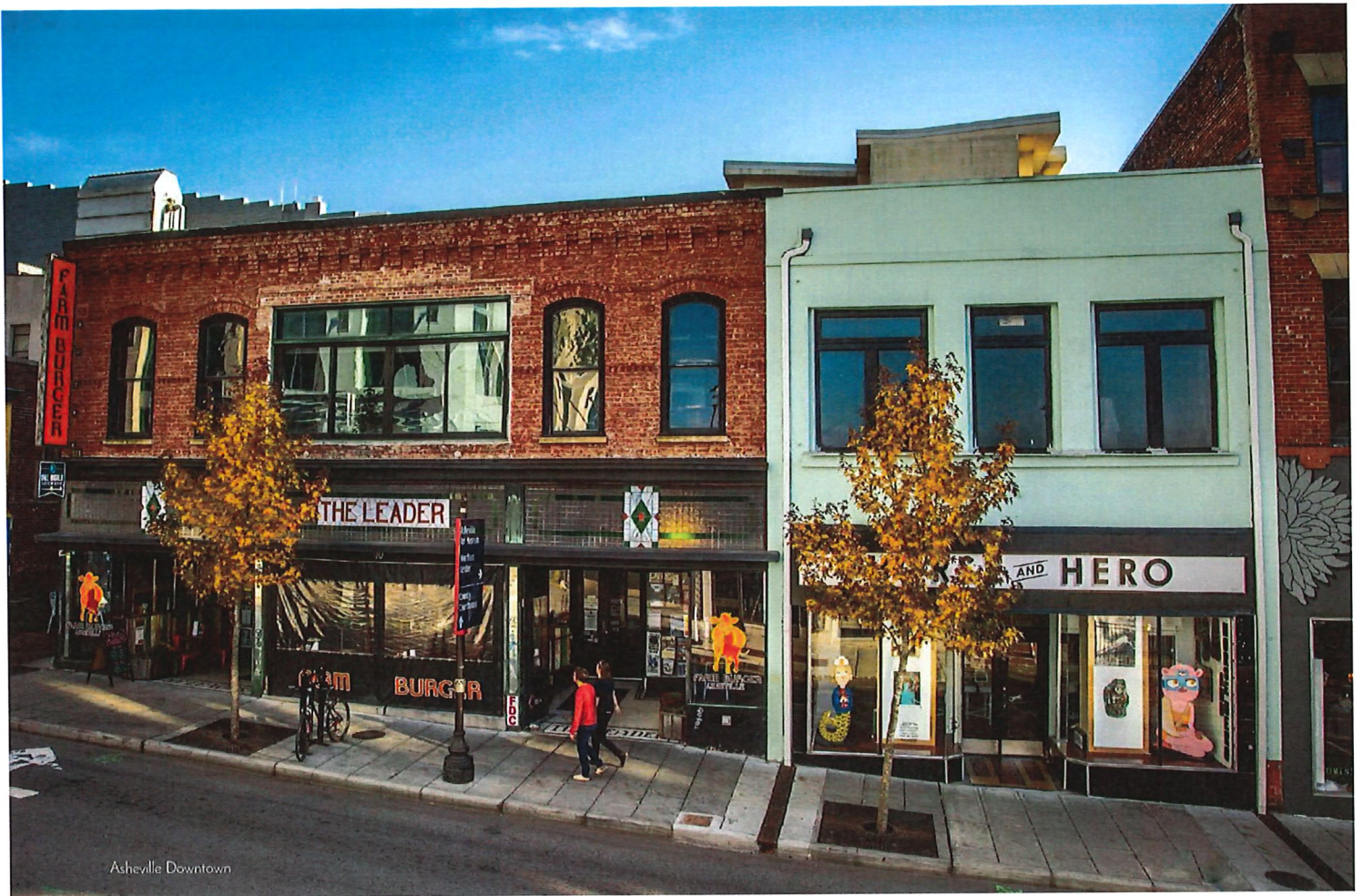
If there's one overarching takeaway from the state of North Carolina, it's that it's stunningly beautiful all year round. From warm, wave-crashing summers to snow-covered winters, there's no wrong time to visit the Tar Heel state. The same rings true for spring, as the landscape – from the massive Biltmore mansion to the (metaphorically) thawing oceans – roars to life with beautiful blooms and stunning scenery across the state.

Whether you prefer to stroll through botanical gardens, catch some sun on the sand, or shake off the cold days with a glass of vino, North Carolina has you covered.

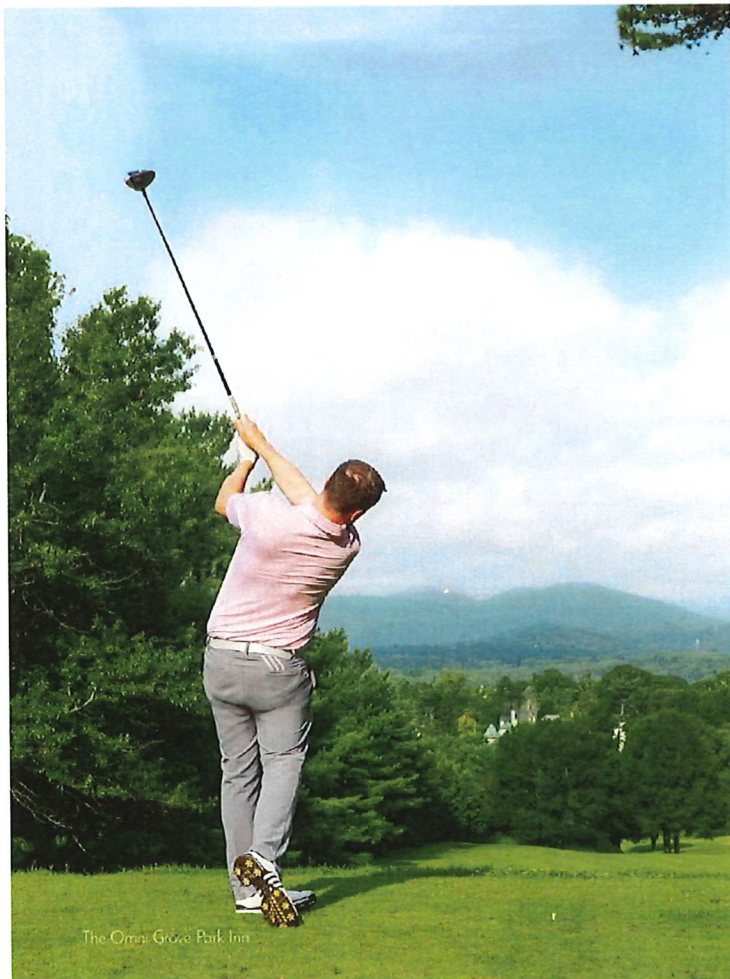
ASHEVILLE

This mountain-adjacent town has long been a destination for outdoor adventurers, luxury travelers, and craft beer enthusiasts alike, and springtime has no shortage of attractions sprinkled throughout town. One of the city's top attractions is the Biltmore, a massive 250-room home sitting on a sprawling 8,000 acres. With all of that acreage, it's no wonder the grounds come to life each spring. Biltmore in Bloom offers an immersive experience through thousands of colorful blooms that pop up across the grounds.

While a visit to the Biltmore is always a must, don't miss Asheville's other top activities to enjoy each spring. Grab your favorite road trip snacks and head out for a drive on the Blue Ridge Parkway that winds through mountains, stopping at all the trails and viewpoints that catch your eye. What was just recently barren during winter is brought back to life with green trees towering as far as the eye can see. Afterward, visit one (or more) of the city's breweries, there are more than 50 across town. Many of the city's farmers' markets return each spring, bringing with them a bevy of local produce and artisan goods. Check the schedule and pay a visit to the Asheville City Market



Asheville Downtown



The Omni Grove Park Inn



on Market Street or the River Arts District Farmers Market on Riverside Drive for a locally-loved experience.
exploreasheville.com

UPTOWN SHELBY

Uptown Shelby, nestled in the heart of North Carolina, offers a blend of charming Southern hospitality and vibrant cultural experiences. At the center of this lively district stands the gorgeous Opal and West House, a Modern Historic Inn, just a stone's throw from the newly inaugurated Carolina Harmony Trail, inviting guests to explore the scenic beauty on foot. The Foothills Farmers' Market is a treasure trove of local produce and artisan goods, providing a taste of the region's bountiful harvest. Surrounding the tree-lined streets of Uptown Shelby, unique shops and galleries offer an array of one-of-a-kind finds, from handmade crafts to fine art.

A visit to Uptown Shelby wouldn't be complete without exploring the Earl Scruggs Center: Music & Stories from the American South or enjoying a live performance at The Don Gibson Theatre. Culinary delights await at Newgrass Brewing, where craft

beer enthusiasts can savor local brews, or at the century-old Shelby Cafe, known for its traditional Southern fare and the regional delicacy, liver mush. Each October, Uptown Shelby celebrates its culinary heritage with the Mush, Music & Mutts: NC Liver Mush Festival, an event that has been a staple since 1985, showcasing the community's rich traditions and vibrant spirit.

Just a short drive from the bustling Uptown area, Baker Buffalo Creek Vineyard and Winery offers a tranquil escape into the rolling landscapes of North Carolina's wine country. This family-owned vineyard welcomes visitors to sip on award-winning wines while enjoying the picturesque views of the surrounding countryside. Whether you're a connoisseur or simply looking to relax with a glass in hand, Baker Buffalo Creek provides the perfect ending to your Uptown Shelby adventure, blending the area's agricultural heritage with the modern allure of local viticulture.
uptownshelby.com

CHARLOTTE

There are an abundance of parks and gardens that spring to life when the weather

warms, which makes Charlotte a top North Carolina destination in the spring. Visit the Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden just outside the city center, spanning 30 acres of stunning flower-filled gardens including one just for children, the Dry Piedmont Prairie, a conservatory dedicated to tropical plants and orchids, fountains, walking trails, and more. Make plans to also visit Freedom Park with a large lake at its center for even more springtime fun.

Sports are a primary draw to Charlotte with plenty of competition happening all year long. In spring, though, catch a Charlotte Knights baseball game, the triple-A affiliate of the Chicago White Sox.
charlottesgotalot.com

PIEDMONT TRIAD

There's nothing like sipping a crisp glass of wine surrounded by nature. And, no, you don't have to trek out west or abroad to find stunning family-owned vineyards. North Carolina's Piedmont Triad is their primary wine region, and it comes to life beautifully each spring. Pay a visit to Adagio Vineyards and Winery, an elegant experience where flavors aren't the only "notes" you'll find

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KERR LAKE ... Beauty on a Grand Scale

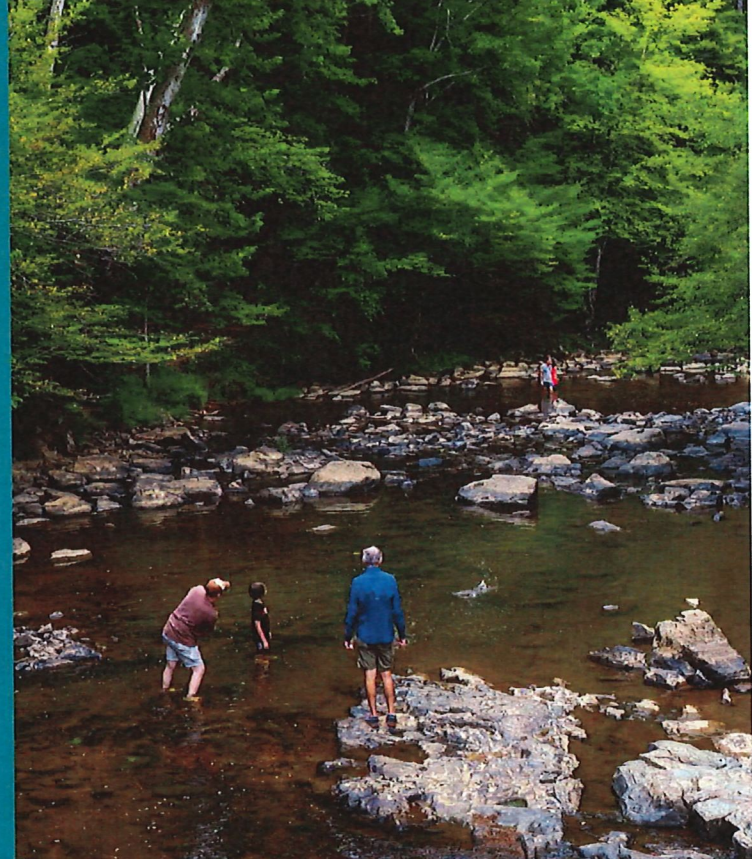
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The outdoors is meant to be shared.

It's prime season for planning a getaway to Chapel Hill, Carrboro, and Hillsborough. From riverside hiking trails to paved greenways to exciting events, opportunities to enjoy the outdoors abound in Orange County, North Carolina. Book a stay and let curiosity lead you here. Just don't stay in the room.

CHAPEL HILL
HILLSBOROUGH & CARRBORO



[visitchapelhill.org/
things-to-do/itineraries/
outdoorsy](https://visitchapelhill.org/things-to-do/itineraries/outdoorsy)

here. As its name suggests, Adagio likens their wines to the passionate sounds of a violin. Enjoy tastings Thursday through Monday, with kids and pets welcome.

visitnc.com/wine

LAKE NORMAN

While it may not be cold enough in North Carolina to warrant a literal defrost, a trip to the lake once the chilly weather subsides is just what the doctor ordered. Head to Lake Norman, the state's largest man-made lake, to immerse yourself in beautiful nature. The trees and flowers begin to bloom along the shores of the lake, dotting it with reflecting color. Launch a boat for a leisurely day in the sun, or opt to fish off the shore, kayak, or paddleboard. If you're traveling there, you can rent equipment from marinas onsite.

If you prefer to stay off the water, Lake Norman also boasts a number of hiking trails, picnic areas, and beaches for lounging. The town also offers off-lake activities like golf courses, pickleball courts, and plenty of decadent dining options and noteworthy watering holes.

visitolakenorman.org

THE OUTER BANKS

Head to the North Carolina coast once spring rears its head: you'll get all the tropical fun without the crowds that accompany summer. Outer Banks is an excellent option, riddled with shells for collecting and stunning scenery that intensifies in the spring. Wildlife enthusiasts will enjoy seeing the various bird species that call the town home, along with wild horses that roam the land.

If it's still a bit chilly outside, there are a handful of indoor and ocean-less activities in Outer Banks to keep you entertained. Visit the Elizabethan Gardens, designed by Queen Elizabeth I during her reign. The blooms are breathtaking in the spring. History buffs will also enjoy visiting significant sites around town, like the Wright Brothers National Memorial or the Roanoke Island festival Park. A trip to OBX wouldn't be complete without a visit to the stunning Cape Hatteras Lighthouse or Bodie Island Lighthouse, where you can enjoy panoramic views of the coast and snap perfectly nautical photos.

visitobx.com



Springer's Point Reserve

NEW BERN

Step into a Nicholas Sparks novel in New Bern, a charming North Carolina town lining two river banks. Take advantage of the warmer weather with a number of activities, from historic trolley tours through Civil War sites, or by sightseeing on your own with a stroll through the historic downtown district. Fancy flowers? Visit the Tryon Palace Gardens, which encompasses more than 16 acres of nature. In addition to the flowering gardens, you can visit the Tyron Palace itself, the New Bern Academy Museum, and other historic homes housed on the property.

Since the city is situated on the river banks, be sure to take a walk along the waterfront promenade to take in the beautiful views. Boat tours are also available from a multitude of vendors like Cruise the Neuse Boat Tours and AquaventuresNC, if you prefer to see the sights from the river itself. New Bern houses a unique museum dedicated to all things firefighting: the New Bern Firemen's Museum. The town's fire department has an interesting history rooted in rivalry, which is unpacked throughout the museum.

visitnewbern.com

CHAPEL HILL

Chapel Hill may be a bustling college town, home to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, but it's a worthwhile destination for all. The campus itself exudes history, so embark on a self-guided tour to see highlights like the Old Well, the Morehead-Patterson Bell Tower, and the beautiful Coker Arboretum. Located on campus, the North Carolina Botanical Garden explodes with color each spring and is a must-visit when in the town. It's easy to immerse yourself in the arts while in Chapel Hill. Visit the Ackland Art Museum (also on campus) to see a collection of paintings, sculptures, and other pieces of curated art, or attend a performance at the Paul Green Theatre, home to the PlayMakers Repertory company.

Beyond the campus, Chapel Hill's Franklin Street is a one-stop for shopping and dining, riddled with boutiques, cafes, and restaurants. If you find yourself in town over the weekend, be sure to stop by the Meadowmont Village Farmers' Market to find local produce and other goods.

visitchapelhill.org