

South Carolina Culinary Offerings

Destinations

BY MONA L. HAYDEN ON MARCH 31, 2017



Platter at Hank's Seafood, Charleston

Eat, drink and meet in grand style

It's no secret that South Carolina has become a foodies' paradise, known for enhancing simple fare such as shrimp and grits, Frogmore stew, roasted oysters and boiled peanuts. Coconut cake or peach cobbler, with a tall glass of sweet tea, rounds out most meals there.

In **Charleston**, the dynamic culinary scene continues to captivate visitors who also savor the historical architecture, barrier islands and beaches. Tapping into local resources, the food is seasonal and fresh, stirring the indigenous culture into favorite recipes of past and present.

Columbia's college-town atmosphere translates to more casual dining options, but with the same commitment to quality and taste. From a converted auto garage to a 19th-century firehouse, dining options are unique and eclectic.

Myrtle Beach caters to a variety of palates by blending old with new. Old-school diners, artistic burgers, sushi and chemistry-lab libations can all be found there.

Taste the Lowcountry like a local on Hilton Head Island, where beachside meals are as enticing as upscale dining. The proximity to the ocean allows Hilton Head to offer an unsurpassed "bait-to-plate" experience.

New eateries and creative menus are surfacing all over Greenville. This food revolution has redefined the city as a culinary destination similar to Charleston, and foodies are raving. Zagat recently named Greenville one of 16 Under-the-Radar Southern Food Destinations.

In South Carolina, expect to be fed very well by chefs who plate up a heaping serving of colorful history, flavored with rich local traditions and served with a side of relaxed Southern charm.

Charleston



Charleston's downtown

Boasting two cooking schools and a plethora of restaurants, Charleston's cobblestone streets and antebellum homes provide a charming backdrop for world-class cuisine—hence, the best grits in the country.

In 2016, Le Farfalle Osteria began serving Italian fare such as Octopus Carpaccio and the Toscano Family Chorizo and Egg Platter by New York City chef Michael Toscano.

For casual dining, former Texas La Barbecue pit master John Lewis serves his style of perfectly smoked meats at Lewis Barbecue.

McCrary's Tavern offers an upscale menu with authentic Calf's Head Soup and Broiled Flounder Vin Blanc, prepared by James Beard Award-winning chef Sean Brock in an 18th-century pub with a rooftop garden.

Burning off those calories isn't a problem. "Charleston's many leisure accolades have also increased our visibility as a meeting destination," says Linn Lesesne, chairman of the Charleston Area Convention & Visitors Bureau board of governors. Eat, drink and meet in grand style.

Beneath the courtyard's majestic magnolia, 82 Queen honors its historic location with the likes of Buttermilk Fried Okra and an unfathomable amount of She-Crab Soup, served since 1982.

Irish chef Frank McMahon has mastered Lowcountry seafood favorites including Fried Oysters with Green Tomatoes and Sweet Corn at world-famous Hank's Seafood, tucked inside a late-19th-century cotton warehouse.

Taste a legendary Charleston Nasty Biscuit made with fried chicken breast, cheddar cheese and sausage gravy at Hominy Grill, a restaurant and courtyard where James Beard Award-winning chef Robert Stehling keeps the stove hot.

Columbia

Home to University of South Carolina, Columbia's high energy extends to the numerous restaurants, cafes and food trucks that dot the landscape.

"Columbia is an affordable, accessible destination that offers the exciting attractions, dining and entertainment of a big city with the ease and community of a small town," says Jason Outman, executive director of Columbia Metropolitan Convention & Visitors Bureau.

New places to dine include The War Mouth, a converted auto garage now serving catfish stew and craft cocktails with intriguing names, such as Backsliding Southern Baptist, Snake Juice and Bee's Knees.

For superior fast-casual, noted New York City chef Sarah Simmons exceeded expectations with Rise Gourmet Goods and Bakeshop, featuring delectable breakfast bowls, gourmet sandwiches and enticing bakery specials.

Drop in at Spotted Salamander for lunch, maybe on Fried Chicken Tuesday, although the Sweet Tea Vodka BBQ Meatball Sub is another winner.

Delight in small plates prepared by chef Russell Jones at the upscale Tallulah, serving classic French and modern American food such as Cornmeal Fried Oysters with Watermelon Radish and Fennel, or Chicken Liver Mousse Tart.

A Columbia institution for 26 years, Motor Supply Co. Bistro creates new lunch and dinner selections daily for contemporary American, French, Italian and Asian cuisine. Sample the house-cured charcuterie with a seasonal craft cocktail such as Rum Forest Rum, or Gin and Jam.

Columbia's oldest restaurant is Villa Tronco, where four generations have dished up authentic Italian recipes inside a 19th-century firehouse for 75 years. Villa Tronco won a 2016 Award of Excellence from Wine Spectator magazine.

Myrtle Beach

This coastal beauty attracts families and businesses, and includes an array of dining atmospheres serving Lowcountry cuisine with freshly caught seafood. Or simply bask in the Slow Food Movement that is perfectly suited to the relaxed surroundings.

"Myrtle Beach is a great place to visit year-round," says Keith Pierce, public relations strategist for Myrtle Beach Area Convention & Visitors Bureau. "With its moderate and often unseasonably warm climate, visitors can stroll 60 miles of sandy beaches or scenic outdoor parks, even in the fall and winter."

New places to frequent include The Chemist, serving craft cocktails in lab flasks and a modern gourmet menu.

New York Prime plates up excellent steak and seafood with an extensive wine list in an elegant supper-club environment. Watch for the Radio Flyer wagon carting around Big Red, aka the largest lobster in the tank, to whet your appetite.

Don't miss Art Burger Sushi Bar, where art is reflected in gourmet burgers, sushi and the liquid nitrogen bar. Local art for sale adorns the walls of this very popular restaurant.

Other local favorites include Sea Captain's House, where for more than 50 years, superior food and service has rivaled the spectacular ocean view. Set in a 1930s cottage, the restaurant serves shrimp, scallops, fish, clams, mussels and more.

For 80 years, Peaches Corner has dazzled diners with incredible burgers and hot dogs. Step back to a slower time inside this charming diner on the corner.

Hilton Head Island



The Westin Hilton Head Island Resort & Spa

Greenville

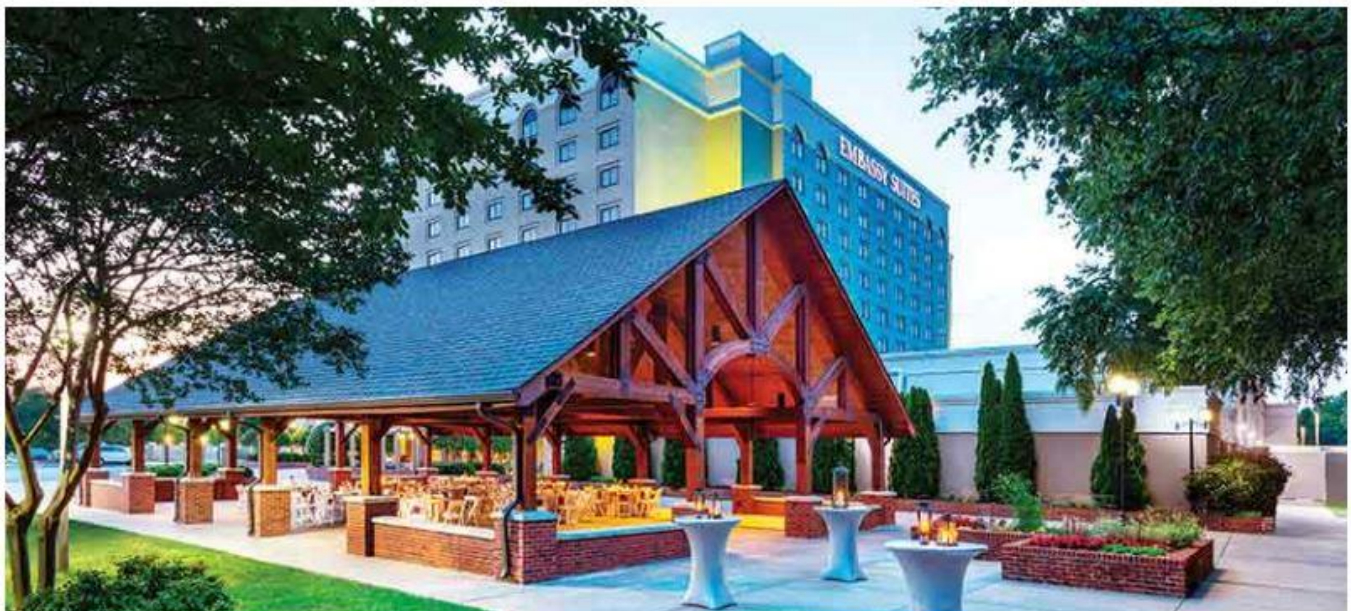


Ballroom at The Westin Poinsett, Greenville

Situated in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, Greenville is now being sought out for its culinary offerings. Some 600 restaurants fill the city, which is on the verge of becoming a gastronome's haven, with 30 more new restaurants opening in 2017.

"Greenville is quickly becoming known as a 'foodie paradise,' with an enticing and diverse collection of dining experiences and cuisines—from traditional to global to downright eclectic," says David Montgomery, vice president of sales for Visit Greenville SC.

At Up on the Roof, located in the new Embassy Suites by Hilton Greenville Golf Resort & Conference Center, awestruck guests enjoy panoramic city and Blue Ridge Mountain views while sipping handcrafted cocktails and grazing on local and seasonal small plate offerings. Spoonbread Restaurant at The Westin Poinsett, Greenville serves up its own spin on Southern-accented cuisine for breakfast, lunch and Sunday brunch.



Terrace and lawn at Embassy Suites by Hilton Greenville Golf Resort & Conference Center

Major Meeting Venues Greenville

Embassy Suites by Hilton Greenville Golf Resort & Conference Center



Newly renovated; located in foothills of Blue Ridge Mountains; 268 suites; more than 44,000 sq. ft. of event space; championship golf course.

Myrtle Beach

DoubleTree Resort by Hilton Myrtle Beach Oceanfront

Situated on 27 acres; private beaches; all 452 guest rooms renovated in 2016; 35,000 sq. ft. of event space.

Embassy Suites by Hilton Myrtle Beach Oceanfront Resort

255 guest rooms; 500 villas and condos; 70,000 sq. ft. of event space, including 14,520-square-foot ballroom; Royale Day Spa.