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## **An Insider's Travel Guide to Charleston**

A new crop of restaurants, hotels, and shops adds to the city's charming vibe.



By Brooke Porter Katz  
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This old South Carolina city sparkles with history and natural beauty, but a new generation of hotels, restaurants, and shops has infused it with fresh energy. Hit our favorite spots to get your fill of culture and style.

## **Where to Stay**

**Book an Inn**

**86 Cannon:** Choose from a handful of light-filled rooms; sip tea in the salon or on one of two porches. *From \$325 per night, 86cannon.com.*

## Go Luxe

**The Spectator Hotel:** This place boasts butler service -- they'll unpack bags, shine shoes, and bring morning coffee -- and hand-painted wallpaper in the lobby. *From \$278 per night, thespectatorhotel.com.*

## Embrace Art

**The Vendue:** Seven historic warehouses now house elegant rooms and public spaces filled with contemporary art. *From \$192 per night, thevendue.com.*

## Make the Scene

**The Dewberry:** This newcomer has handmade furniture, marble bathrooms, and a chic bar. *From \$345 per night, thedewberrycharleston.com.*

## Feel at Home

**The Restoration:** Settle into apartment-style accommodations at this all-suite hotel, which also has a cozy library, rooftop terrace, and cafe serving Toby's Estate. *From \$299 per night, therestorationhotel.com.*



Photography by: Chris Hackett / Getty Images  
St. Michael's Church, completed in 1761.

## Best Ride in Town

**Palmetto Carriage Works:** Clippety-clop around downtown as a guide shares local lore. [palmettocarriage.com](http://palmettocarriage.com)



Photography by: Andrew Cebulka

## Where to Eat

### Feast on Ribs

**Lewis Barbecue:** Texas 'cue is new to town, courtesy of top pit master John Lewis, an Austin transport. [lewisbarbecue.com](http://lewisbarbecue.com)

### Taste the Lowcountry

**Hominy Grill:** This down-home spot is known for classics like fried green tomatoes and shrimp and grits. [hominygrill.com](http://hominygrill.com)

### Wine and Dine

**Chez Nous:** Duck into a hidden gem with a daily-changing menu of Spanish, Italian, and French foods. [cheznouschs.com](http://cheznouschs.com)

### Go Big at Brunch

**Cannon Green:** On Sundays, a DJ sets the stage for eggs with pork shoulder and fried-chicken sandwiches. [cannongreencharleston.com](http://cannongreencharleston.com)

## Restaurateur Brooks Reitz's Picks

The owner of Leon's Oyster Shop and the new Little Jack's Tavern shares his go-to joints.

### Xiao Bao Biscuit

“This high-energy spot ushered in a funkier type of dining here. It serves dishes from all over Asia, and there's always something new on the menu.” [xiaobaobiscuit.com](http://xiaobaobiscuit.com)

### Minero

“At Sean Brock's casual restaurant, try the catfish tacos and grilled chicken wings, tossed tableside with hot sauce in a paper bag.” [minerorestaurant.com](http://minerorestaurant.com)

### Leyla

“Head here for fresh and lovely Lebanese food. It has an amazing lentil salad with pomegranate, almonds, and avocado.” [leyla-charleston.com](http://leyla-charleston.com)



Photography by: Courtesy of the Charleston Area CVB, [ExploreCharleston.com](http://ExploreCharleston.com)  
Pineapple Fountain in Waterfront Park.

## Save the Date

May 26 to June 11 marks Spoleto Festival USA ([spoletousa.org](http://spoletousa.org)), a celebration of top-notch classical, jazz, dance, and theater performances.

## Take It Home

Get a handmade sweetgrass basket from Charleston City Market ([thecharlestoncitymarket.com](http://thecharlestoncitymarket.com)).



Photography by: Wendy Elliott / Getty Images

## What to Do

### Cross the Cooper

For breathtaking views of downtown and beyond, walk or bike over the **Ravenel Bridge**. [cooperriverbridge.org](http://cooperriverbridge.org)

### Time Travel

**Magnolia Plantation and Gardens:** See the pre-Revolutionary War main house, slave dwellings, and the country's oldest public gardens. [magnoliaplantation.com](http://magnoliaplantation.com)

### Learn As You Go

Area native **Alphonso Brown** sheds light on the language, customs, and sites of the Lowcountry's early black residents. [gullahtours.com](http://gullahtours.com)



Photography by: Julia Lynn

## Where to Shop

### Fulfill Decor Dreams

**Fritz Porter:** Antique dealers and a design showroom sell fabric, furniture, and lighting in a revamped cigar factory. (Stop by The-Commons for locally made small-batch home goods.) [fritzporter.com](http://fritzporter.com)

### Spoil Your Guy

**Indigo & Cotton:** This stylish menswear boutique sells Billykirk belts and jeans from Raleigh Denim and Imogene + Willie. [indigoandcotton.com](http://indigoandcotton.com)

### Go Global

**IBU:** Pick up an indigo poncho, embroidered clutch, or earrings made by female artisans in 34 countries, including Ghana and Peru. [ibumovement.com](http://ibumovement.com)

## **A Local Says...**

“There is so much to love about Charleston -- its history, its mutant magnolia and oak trees, the sweet smell of tea olive and gardenias, and the diversity of the people.” —*Carol Perkins, founder and president of Harry Barker, an eco-friendly pet-product company*

## **Before You Go...**

### **Read**

"South of Broad," by Pat Conroy, a story of friendship set in the Holy City.

### **Listen To**

Eartha Kitt, James Brown, and Dizzy Gillespie, who all hail from the state.

### **Watch**

"The Notebook" -- shot at the Calhoun Mansion and Boone Hall Plantation.