

50 REASONS TO LOVE ORANGE COUNTY NORTH CAROLINA

(Updated for 2022)

There is so much to do in the Chapel Hill/Orange County Area. Where will you start?

1 Amazing restaurants, like Lantern, 411 West, Iza Whiskey Eats, Tandem, Panciuto, Acme, Mama Dip's, Crossroads Chapel Hill, Il Palio, and more. Of course BBQ is a must. Try Hillsborough BBQ Company, Big Belly Que, Blues on Franklin, The Pig. Vegetarian? Try, The Spotted Dog.



2 Did you know James Taylor grew-up in Chapel Hill? For a welcome message from Taylor, an autographed album cover perfect for selfies, and a self-guided "James Taylor's Chapel Hill," stop by the Welcome Center at 308. W. Franklin Street and Go to Carolina In Your Mind.



3 Acclaimed area microbreweries include Carolina Brewery, Dingo Dog, Carrboro Brewing Depot, Steel String Craft Brewery, and Top of the Hill Restaurant and Brewery.

4 The area is home to a dazzling array of live music – legendary venues like the Cat's Cradle, Local 506, and Yonder Bar in Hillsborough, and many outdoor venues.

5 For a look at public murals: Greetings from Chapel Hill post card, Elizabeth Cotten, Honeybee mural in Carrboro, African American leaders' mural art on Merritt Mill Road and Billy Strayhorn in Hillsborough.



6 The team colors are Carolina Blue and so are the fire trucks, which provide visual representation of how much the school and the town form a close-knit community and helps make the town a unique place to visit.



7 Stunning agriculture all around us. Winding roads, country scenery, and...century farms, berry farms, and dairy farms. Additionally Orange County boasts three farmers' markets: all open year round with seasonal events. Download the NC Farm App for details.



8 Sports Illustrated has called Chapel Hill "The best college town in America," and Franklin Street—named after Benjamin Franklin—is a big reason. (Franklin was a proponent of practical education for youth.)

9 Leland Little Auctions in Hillsborough has specialized in the sale of fine high-end collectible objects for over 20 years, with sales achieving over \$14 million per year and growing. You'll need to visit their site to see a schedule of auctions, <https://lelandlittle.com>.



10 Memorial Hall on campus hosts internationally renowned recitalists and orchestras, dance and chamber ensembles, jazz, folk, and world music performers, opera and ballet.

11 PlayMakers Repertory Company is one of America's leading theatre companies according to American Theatre. Its artists are always at the top of their game.

12 Southern Village is an urban neighborhood located a few miles south of the UNC campus in Chapel Hill. The main road, Market Street, is within walking distance of the neighborhood and includes restaurants, shops, a movie theater and concerts on the lawn in the warm season.



13 Creativity is everywhere at Eno Arts Mill in Hillsborough, a 7,000 square foot space offering small and large classrooms, a gallery and events space.

14 The Chapel Hill area loves thrift stores. Call them second hand, we call them fabulous. Shops include Rumors Chapel Hill in downtown, Clothes Mentor on Elliott Road, Goodwill in Timberlyne and near Walmart Hillsborough, The Community Worx Thrift Shop in Carrboro. Across the county line find, the Stock Exchange, Habitat Home stores and Durham Rescue Mission. Many stores offer great products at a steep discount.



15 If you are hungry, visit Sutton's Drug Store on Franklin Street, a living museum in all the best ways. If your photo appears on the wall, you have made it!



16 Kidzu Children's Museum is an inspiring space located at University Place (formerly University Mall).

17 Yes, grocery stores are fun to visit in new cities. A few you'll want to check-out on your visit are Weaver Street Market (with stores in Hillsborough, Carrboro and Chapel Hill, plus Wegmans, Whole Foods, Trader Joes, Fresh Market and traditional shops such as Harris Teeter and Food Lion.

18 There are three welcome centers to help answer questions, give you maps and guides and provide a restroom break. The Chapel Hill/Orange County Welcome Center located at 308 W. Franklin Street, Chapel Hill. The University North Carolina Chapel Hill Visitors Center is at 134 E. Franklin Street, near campus. While in Hillsborough, stop by the Hillsborough Visitors Center in the Alexander Dickson House at 150 E. King Street.

19 Bakeries? You bet. From Weaver Street Market's fresh baked goods created in Hillsborough and delivered to three stores daily, to Wegman's Bakery, The Bakery Shop in Hillsborough, and Guglhupf where everything is made fresh.

20 An historic landmark since 1929, Merritt's Store and Grill is touted as the "Home of the World-Famous BLTs" and chicken fried humor.

21 The North Carolina Botanical Garden – the largest in the Southeast – is known for its nature trails, carnivorous plant collections, aquatics, herb gardens, and revolving exhibits of artwork.

22 UNC-Chapel Hill is the oldest public university in the U.S. (chartered in 1789) and the only public university in the U.S. that awarded degrees in the 18th century. The iconic Old Well was the primary source of campus water for more than a century.



23 Two first class Libraries are open, one in Chapel Hill and the other in downtown Hillsborough.

24 Shoot for the stars at the Morehead Planetarium & Science Center. The first planetarium in the South and one of the largest in the U.S., Morehead was a NASA training facility for 15 years.

25 The Carolina Inn, an iconic hotel on the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill campus, has been hosting visitors, UNC families, and special events since 1924!



26 Johnston Mill Nature Preserve. Triangle Land Conservancy has preserved numerous walking trails and greenways here. <https://www.triangleland.org/explore/nature-preserves/johnston-mill-nature-preserve>

27 Relive the early days of Michael Jordan, the late Dean Smith and more legends at the Carolina Basketball Museum.



28 UNC's Finley Golf Course was redesigned by Tom Fazio and continues to be recognized as one of the nation's top collegiate layouts. Open to the public.

29 A walk through the Ackland Art Museum on South Columbia Street in Chapel Hill can be an introduction to Peter Paul Rubens, Eugene Delacroix, and Andy Warhol.

30 The Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History is a must see—one of the preeminent centers in the nation for the critical examination of African and African American diaspora cultures.



31 The Horace Williams House is the only historic house in Chapel Hill open to the public—and is where Preservation Chapel Hill offers tours of historic importance.

32 Coker Arboretum offers serene walking paths taking you past wildflowers and trees in this 5-acre gem on the UNC campus. Rest on one of several open lawns or take a seat on a shady bench. Coker Arboretum changes with the seasons. From spring blooms to summer greenery, fall color to winter grace, there is always something to see.

33 Carrboro's Main Street for boutique shops, restaurants, and lodging, including This and That Gallery, Hampton Inn, Muse shop, Gray Squirrel coffee, Vecino Brewery featuring house brews, food and pub.

34 Botanist and Barrel in Cedar Grove is a place where its owners and operators experiment with various types of fermentation, all while keeping the flavor integrity of the fruit they use to make their ciders and wines. Each month they host live music, cider making events and food trucks.

35 Carr Mill Mall was rehabilitated under the Tax Reform Act of 1976. Much of the original architecture remains in its restaurants and upscale boutique shops.



36 Open Eye Café, a coffee shop affectionately known as "Carrboro's living room" serving beans from Colombia, Nicaragua, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Honduras, Guatemala, and Peru.

37 The ArtsCenter in Carrboro offers classes in visual, literary, and performing arts, music concerts, theater productions, children's programs, and an art gallery.

38 The Carrboro Music Festival, held every September all over town, is colorful, creative and features local and regional musical talent.

39 The Horace Williams Tract, now known as Carolina North, comprises more than nine hundred acres that are yet largely undeveloped and the site is popular with walkers, runners, and outdoor enthusiasts. Horace Williams gave this property to UNC in 1940.



40 The Old Orange County Courthouse in Hillsborough, with its town clock in the cupola, has been cited by the Library of Congress as one of the finest examples of Greek-Revival architecture in the U.S.

41 Among the late 18th and early 19th century structures still standing today in Hillsborough, you will also find a wine store, art galleries, a yarn shop, vintage jewelry stores, and much more on Churton Street in downtown Hillsborough.



42 Hillsborough's Ayr Mount Historic Site, built around 1815, is one of North Carolina's finest Federal-era plantation homes. Meander through woodlands and pastures on the Poet's Walk, a one-mile walking trail surrounding the historic site along the banks of the Eno River.

43 The Alexander Dickson House was the last headquarters of the commander of the largest armies to surrender to Union forces, larger than Lee's army at Appomattox.

44 The Burwell School was one of North Carolina's leading Presbyterian schools for "young ladies" from 1837-1857. Just two blocks down, find over 2,000 artifacts at the Orange County Historical Museum, including what is believed to be the only complete set of colonial weights and measures within the U.S.

45 Feel the need for speed at the fastest three-eighths-mile racing oval in America, better known as the Orange County Speedway, offering grassroots racing at its best.



46 Orange County Sportsplex has indoor courts, outdoor athletic fields, fitness center, ice-skating rink (NHL-size, open year-round) and an aquatic center with three pools.

47 Historic Occoneechee Speedway Trail has a 4-mile trail for hiking and a 1-mile oval track where the original NASCAR racers evaluated their driving skills from 1948-1968.

48 Stroll Hillsborough's Riverwalk, a 1.8-mile greenway with loop trails, bridges, and boardwalk, accessible to trails, parks, and the Eno River.



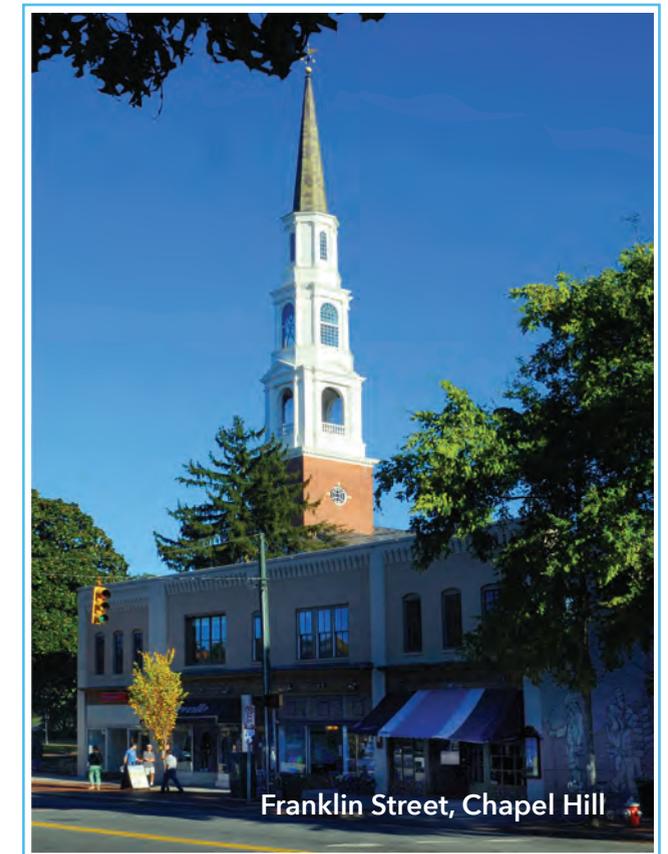
49 The Sheraton Chapel Hill Hotel reopened in September following an all-encompassing renovation. It now boasts 172 redesigned guest rooms, a contemporary bar, a 7,000-square-foot rooftop deck, full outdoor patio, and much more.

50 Enjoy Maple View Farm's Simply Natural Creamery to-die-for ice cream. Seasonal flavors include candied bacon, banana pudding and eggnog.



For more information, contact us at: info@visit Chapel Hill.org, (888) 968-2060 or www.visit Chapel Hill.org

This was first published in summer 2014.



Franklin Street, Chapel Hill