

Story Ideas & Reasons to Profile Chapel Hill and Orange County, NC



What's New in HOTELS

Coming - 97-room, four-story **TRU Hotel by Hilton**, plus potential for 100 more rooms in a second building coming to east side of Chapel Hill. 2020 timeframe. A two-story, 136-space parking deck would be built behind the hotel.

What's New in Attractions

The first planetarium in the South is getting a facelift. Celebrating its 70th anniversary in 2019, the upcoming **Morehead Planetarium and Science Center's** \$5.2 Million Building project will re-imagine the North Carolina icon as a modern-day, technology, and science hub. www.moreheadplanetarium.org . **Morehead renovation plans include:** 1-Moving the main entrance to the building's west end facing McCorkle Place. 2-An exhibit hall that will pay tribute to UNC's history as a pioneer of science exploration. More than early 60 astronauts between 1959 and 1975 trained in celestial navigation at the Planetarium, including 11 of the 12 men who walked on the Moon! 3-An interactive "maker space" that is part exhibit, part program 4-An updated science demonstration stage and 5-Expanded exhibit galleries showcasing the advances researchers are making in science, health and technology and more.

Ackland Art Museum continues its yearlong 60th anniversary through September 2019. See the outdoor art installation a "stickwork" by Chapel Hill-based artist Patrick Dougherty entitled **Step Right Up** on view in front the Ackland Art Museum through August 2019. Also featured are 17th-century Dutch and Flemish master drawings, including Rembrandt. Finally, the Ackland's permanent collection galleries have been re-imagined, re-designed, and re-installed. www.ackland.org

What's New in Food – New Food Market Comes to Downtown Chapel Hill

Blue Dogwood Public Market (new public Food Market/Hall) <http://www.bluedogwood.com/>

The Triangle's first food market continues to expand with 8 permanent food vendors (with more added all the time) providing prepared food to go, retail vendors, and pop-up vendors. Browse through the diverse market, and dine on choices including Persian dishes, empanadas, vegan wraps, Italian baked goods, vegan soul food, organic produce, butcher with charcuterie, tea, coffee, fresh juices, beer chocolate and more. On site chocolate demonstrations and new cooking classes. Outdoor beer garden to come. **Downtown Chapel Hill, 306 West Franklin Street. Open Wed – Sun.**

Top Chefs, New Restaurants in Chapel Hill and Carrboro

Chef Brandon Sharp the North Carolina native, Michelin star winner, and former chef at Crossroads at the Carolina Inn, left the flagship hotel last year to build a restaurant that's all his own. His first restaurant, Hawthorne & Wood, will open in Chapel Hill's East 54 development later this spring. The name comes from the northern and southern California neighborhoods where his in-laws are from. The menu will draw much of its inspiration from California, Sharp said, where the chef has spent the majority of his career. He collected seven prestigious Michelin stars along the way, which are awarded annually to restaurants considered exceptional dining experiences.

Chef **Teddy Diggs**, formally of Il Palio Restaurant at The Siena is set to open in late spring, Coronato, a Roman-style pizza concept in the Triangle. **Coronato** is being built in the South Green shopping center in Carrboro, at 501 S. Greensboro St. Another must try item will be the CACIO E PEPE FRIES. Enjoy cold craft beers, prosecco on tap and select Italian wines by the glass, alongside affordable bottles of wine and bubbles that pair perfectly for pizza-loving wine enthusiasts.

Justin Burdett, recently took over for the iconic Bill Smith, upon Smith's retirement in January 2019 at the James Beard-winning restaurant Crook's Corner in downtown Chapel Hill. 35-year old Burdett is only the third chef at Crook's since it opened in 1982. In 2015, Burdett opened Local Provisions in Asheville, North Carolina, and later took the helm at

Admiral. During his career he has worked for Hugh Acheson at **5 & 10** in Athens, Georgia. Burdett was recognized from Food & Wine and [StarChefs](#) as one of the [up and coming chefs](#) in the South and won an episode of the Food Network's "Chopped." Crook's Corner is now owned by small group that includes Gary Crunkleton of The Crunkleton cocktail bar in Chapel Hill and Charlotte and former Crook's general manager Shannon Healy, who owns Alley Twenty Six in Durham.

Recent Food Accolades

TripAdvisor says Chapel Hill's **Al's Burgershack** serves the best burger in America, noting his *Bobo Chili Cheeseburger*. **Gabe Barker, of the Pizzeria Mercato** in Carrboro, a two-time semi-finalist for the James Beard Rising Star Chef Award, was named by **Eater** as a Young Gun 2018 - recognizing talented up-and-comers in the restaurant industry.

Brew, Spirits and Wine Scene

Orange County has 7 breweries, with number 8 coming in 2019. New small batch nano-brewery and bottle shop, **Craftboro Brewing Depot** is opening in summer 2019. This onsite craft brewery will also have a beer garden and wine beer and spirits store. It is coming to the new 40,000 square foot multi-building, retail center in Carrboro, South Green that will be located just off Highway 54, serving as the "gateway" to the southern entry of Carrboro. <http://southgreencarrboro.com/>

Orange County is home to Dingo Dog Brewing Company (2016), North Carolina's first "non-profit" brewery. Located in an up-fitted horse barn on PlowGirl Farm, Dingo Dog strives to craft locally-conscious beers in its "zero waste" facility that features Orange County, NC produce, much of which is grown right outside our doors on the farm. Dingo Dog will funnel all of its profits into providing capital and operational grants to independent, "no-kill" animal sanctuaries and rescue organizations in North Carolina. **Taproom** in Carrboro, NC opening in 2020. – Ongoing project.

ORANGE COUNTY'S FIRST WINERY & CIDERY- Botanist and Barrel in Cedar Grove, NC in northern Orange County, Dry Fruit Wines, Farmhouse Ciders & Spirituous Barrels. They are beautifully situated on Cedar Grove Blueberry Farm just north of Hillsborough, NC which features organic blueberries. The farm is certified organic and dry farms for the best estate grown fruit on earth. They craft a variety of barrel aged and stainless steel dry wines, ciders and sours, using only the finest fruits, blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, peaches and apples. Tasting room open Friday – Sunday. Tours available for groups at other times. <https://www.botanistandbarrel.com/>

More tours offered at Chapel Hill's Award-winning TOPO Organic Spirits, the first organic distillery in the deep south. The base of all of their spirits—except the Rum—comes from locally grown (within 100 miles) organic soft red winter wheat. Products organic vodka, Moonshine Carolina Whiskey, Piedmont Gin, Eight Oak Carolina Whiskey, Reserve Carolina Straight Whiskey and Spiced Rum. NEW - Monday-Friday 9am-5pm hours for Walk-in abbreviated tours are \$5 pp. Standard tours with one of the owners or distillers are \$20 pp and last around an hour. Visit <http://www.topodistillery.com/>

Food Events

The Popular 10th annual **TerraVita Food & Drink Festival** returns Oct 16-19, 2019 <http://www.terravitafest.com/index.php> This multi-day event was named one of the "[10 Southern Food Festivals You Need to Taste](#)" by *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* and "[4 Can't Miss Southern Food Festivals](#)" by [PeterGreenberg.com](#). Far more than a chance to indulge, TerraVita has earned its reputation as a premier culinary event in the Southeast because of its commitment to **spreading the gospel of sustainable food and drink**. This event brings together top chefs, food artisans, sommeliers, baristas, brewers, educators, distillers, farmers, cookbook authors and industry luminaries. Dinners, tastings, educational classes, and more.

Check out Hillsborough, NC www.visithillsboroughnc.com

Historic Hillsborough in 2015 was a top three Coolest Small Town in America. Home to the **ultra popular Riverwalk in downtown Hillsborough**, an accessible, asphalt, wooden bridges, urban greenway that stretches about 1.8 miles along the Eno River corridor between Gold Park in western Hillsborough and trails east of town. This trail for walking, jogging and cycling is part of the N.C. Mountains-to-Sea Trail. See the reconstruction of the **Occaneechi Indian Village** along with Eno River in downtown Hillsborough. Other attractions include the antebellum **Burwell School** and **Ayr Mount Historic Site**.

Media Contact: Patty Griffin, Communications Director, Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau, 501 W. Franklin Street, Chapel Hill, NC 27516; 919.245.4321

pgriffin@visit Chapel Hill.org, @PattyGriffinNC, www.visit Chapel Hill.org [@visit Chapel Hill](https://www.facebook.com/visit Chapel Hill)

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