



CHAPEL HILL
HILLSBOROUGH & CARRBORO
ORANGE COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU

Chapel Hill: A Cool
College Town with an
Entrepreneurial Spirit

Chapel Hill in central North Carolina, is home to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the nation's first state university. A great place to visit any time of the year, this quintessential college town has a creative spirit in its natural beauty, food, beer, art, literary scene, farms, music and more. You'll find the same in our neighbors, former mill and railroad town Carrboro, and Hillsborough, a small town getaway full of historic charm. **Entrepreneurial women** are part of what makes our area special. (Photo Franklin Street in downtown Chapel Hill)

Food & Beverage Entrepreneurs

In Chapel Hill, Mildred "Mama Dip" Council died in May 2018. But long before her death, her children and grandchildren had the entrepreneur bug. Granddaughter **Tonya Council** makes handmade crispy baked [Tonya's Cookies](#), Daughter **Annette Council** creates "[Sweet Neecy](#)" cake mixes from scratch that bake into chocolate, red velvet pound cake and spice cake. She also wrote a book about her family's history. Daughter **Anita "Spring" Council**, who runs [Mama Dip's Kitchen](#) restaurant with her sisters Annette and Sandra and her brothers Geary and Joe also sell the Mama Dip's product line—salad dressing, barbecue sauces and cornbread mix and her two cookbooks. Granddaughter **Erika Council** sells her Bomb Biscuits in Atlanta GA.



(From left) Tonya, Anita, Erika, and Annette Council by Peter Frank Edwards

Husband and wife team Kevin Mason and **Jennie McCray** own [The Accidental Baker](#) which makes handmade and small batch Artisan Flatbread Crackers in Hillsborough, NC using local with no additives, preservatives or animal products and from GMO's. There are six varieties including 2020 Good Food Award Winners Red Pepper Firecracker and Sea Salt, plus Black Pepper, Tuxedo Sesame, Rosemary & Roasted Garlic, the Everything cracker.

Sarah Boak is one of the owners of Chapel Hill's food hall, [Blue Dogwood Public Market](#). Julia Chiu (Ya Huei) is co-owner of [Cha House](#), a tea house on Franklin Street that she opened with her sister in 2018.

[Chapel Hill Toffee](#), Homemade toffee was always a special treat for Mark Graves growing up in his family home in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. In 2006, after years of perfecting her secret family recipe, Mark's mother, **Karen Graves**, decided to turn her favorite hobby into her own home-based business.

[Boro Beverage](#) produces various lines of probiotic libations including Kombucha, "wild" sodas, Switchel and shrubs. Produced in small batches, fermented 100% in glass and inspired by the agricultural bounty of the NC Piedmont. Owner and Brewer **Carly Erickson** (photo) has a degree in Sustainable Agriculture, nutritional and herbal studies. Carly is a mother of two and lives in Carrboro, NC. The storefront is in Chapel Hill.



[Botanist & Barrel Cidery & Winery](#) crafts real southern ciders, sours, and dry fruit wines leaning on whole-fruit fermentation, eschewing additives or forced carbonation. We are the South's only natural cidery focused on spontaneous and wild cultures. We support our local farmers using only locally, sustainably and organically sourced fruits, including blueberries, apples and more from our organic estate farm. Located on an organic blueberry farm in Cedar Grove, NC in northern Orange County, NC. Head cider maker/ brewer and partner is **Kether Smith**. Her husband Deric McGuffey, is special cidemaker and partner. Smith's brother Lyndon Smith is partner and hypeman and Smith's wife is **Aime Fields**, partner and sales director. Fields is also a certified level 1 sommelier through the Court of Master Sommeliers.

Chefs

Andrea Reusing opened her restaurant [Lantern](#) in Chapel Hill, NC in 2002. In 2011, she won the Best Chef Southeast award from the James Beard Foundation the same year she had her first cookbook published. She opened her second restaurant at the Durham Hotel in 2015. She founded, along with farmer Vera Fabian, of Ten Mothers Farm near Hillsborough, the non-profit organization *Kitchen Patrol*, providing classes on healthy eating to children.

Vimala Rajendran (photo) has been cooking in the south since 1985. She is the chef and founder of [Vimala's Curryblossom Café](#) in downtown Chapel Hill, NC. Her restaurant has been bringing home cooked Indian flavors from her home state of Kerala, her beloved Mumbai and other parts of India since 2010. A longtime activist for progressive causes Vimala believes that delicious, wholesome food is a human right. Operating under the principle "Vimala cooks, everybody eats," no one is ever turned away at her restaurant. Vimala's helps the [community](#) during the pandemic.



Down on the Farm

[Boxcarr Handmade Cheese](#) run by siblings and co-founders Austin & **Samantha Grenke** in Cedar Grove, NC. Cheesemaker Samantha oversees 13 artisan Italian cheeses using goats and or cow's milk including four Good Food winners since 2017.

[Jamie Dement](#) along with her husband Richard Holcomb, own [Coon Rock Farm](#) in Hillsborough, NC, which is a CSA Farm (Community supported Agriculture Farm). Jaime has written two books, is a guest lecturer at Triangle universities and teaches cooking classes around the country. Her farm has an Airbnb Cabin on the Eno River.

[Two Chicks Farm](#) in Hillsborough, NC is owned and operated by **Audrey Lin and Debbie Donald**. They use their vegetables and from local organic farmers to make their krauts, kimchi, pickles and pepper jellies. They are truly farm to jar. They have won three Good Food Awards for their Dill Pickles, Dill Kraut and Kimchi.

[Chapel Hill Creamery](#) is owned by **Portia McKnight & Flo Hawley**. In 2001, after acquiring a herd of 9 Jersey cows and beautiful pastures close to Chapel Hill, we were selling our very first batch of handcrafted artisan cheese at our local farmers' market! Today there are 30 jersey cows and they produce six cheeses.

More Women in Business & Tourism

[Cat Tales Cat Café](#) which opened in 2019 at 431 West Franklin Street in downtown Chapel Hill is owned and operated by **Katy Poitras** and **Ilene Speizer**.

Chapel Hill native **Sally Sockwell Smith** leads 90-minute [Walking Tours of Chapel Hill](#).

Sunny Fejfar along with her husband Jason in Hillsborough, NC are part owners of the [The Colonial Inn](#) (ca 1838 in the historic district of downtown Hillsborough NC) which is being restored and plans to welcome guests again this Fall. Sunny has dedicated innumerable hours into the design of the inn down to each room's unique features.

Chapel Hill's [Sally Stollmack](#), was 58 years old in 2014 when she decided to open SallyMack, a life furnishing store.

Jaime Sanchez & his wife **Miranda Sanchez**, (photo) who is a fiction writer, opened [Epilogue Books Chocolate Brews](#) in downtown Chapel Hill in 2019 after visiting in 2017. Epilogue stands out in that it pays homage to Jaime's Mexican roots with books, Spanish literary events and desserts in a region that does not have an overwhelmingly Latino population or many Latino-owned businesses. They have focused on promoting books issued by smaller presses and written by underrepresented authors.



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