



**We invite you to discover and explore our destinations
along the I-95 and I-40 corridors in Johnston County, North Carolina.**



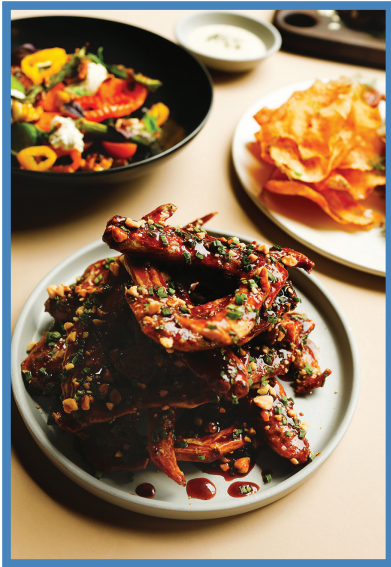
Mountains to the Sea Trail Connects History to Recreation

This year North Carolina is celebrating the Year of the Trail, a campaign inviting residents and visitors to get outside onto trails, greenways, and blueways that stretch across the state. Johnston County has tons of physical trails for biking and hiking, as well as themed, self-guided trails for food and craft beverage enthusiasts (coffee, BBQ, red hot dogs, beer, golf, and more). Outdoor enthusiasts can spend time nearly all year round in our scenic outdoor parks and trails, kayaking the Neuse River, biking on one of several greenways, or exploring wooded trails while bird watching at Howell Woods Environmental Learning Center, Clemmons Educational State Forest, or now on trails at Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site. The Friends of the Mountains to the Sea Trail have completed miles of new trail at the state historic site, Bentonville Battlefield located near Four Oaks. Around half of Bentonville's 5-mile trail system is a designated Mountains to Sea Trail segment. Bentonville has 8 themed trails varying in length from 2.4 miles to a tenth of a mile, showcasing the beautiful natural area as well as the history of the land. In addition, Bentonville has an 11-stop, 10-mile driving pulloff tour with roadside signage and an accompanying audio tour available via your mobile phone.

Broadslab Distillery Releases Flue-Cured Bourbon

Benson-based Broadslab Distillery has been offering 'shine products, tours, and tastings since 2015. Master Distiller Jeremy Norris is what you'd call the "real deal", with moonshining in his roots and a recipe that goes back five generations. But, he'll soon be debuting his first new product in many years: flue-cured bourbon. The product has been in pre-production since 2021 with the bourbon release date October 7th at the distillery with ABC store availability to follow. Jeremy currently has a patent pending on a one-of-a-kind process for aging whiskey. He fills and stores the whiskey in new American white oak barrels that are stored in the rickhouse on the farm. He then moves the barrels to a neighboring tobacco farm during the tobacco harvest and curing season, July through September. The whiskey barrels are rested in the tobacco barn with the tobacco during the leaf drying stage of the curing process. The intense heat and presence of tobacco during the curing process creates a distinct aging process that makes the whiskeys truly unique, like no other. Jeremy also now offers AirBnB stay options at Broadslab Happy's House, which has 4 bedrooms and 2.5 baths, and the Baccar Barn (an actual, historic, restored tobacco barn), with 1 bedroom and 1 bath, can be booked via AirBnB's website. Jeremy's distillery, tasting room, accommodations, and wedding venue (The Barn at Broadslab) are all located on his farm just outside Benson, NC. It's also conveniently located, just a few miles from I-95, Exit 79.





Crawford Cookshop and Clayton's Food Scene

From chef-driven restaurants to casual cafes serving unique regional food items - Clayton's food scene is for the adventurous and refined foodie! Dine at Scott Crawford's new casual concept, Crawford Cookshop. A five-time James Beard nominee and NCRLA's 2023 Restaurateur of the Year, Crawford has brought his signature "superstar" style to an approachable menu right on Main Street in Downtown Clayton. With simple and delicious dishes that change as ingredients are in season, the Cookshop is a dining experience you can enjoy over and over again. Make it a day trip to Clayton, or spend the weekend in this beautiful town in Johnston County, just 15-minutes east of Raleigh. Get to the Clayton Community Farmer's Market early on Saturdays for delicious locally baked foods, honey, and fresh produce. Stay at the local Bed & Breakfast, McWade's Inn, and stroll through the downtown along the Sculpture Trail, and shop at several unique boutiques. Locals love a flat-top hamburger, fries, and a hot-dog with homemade chili at Jones Cafe. You will too. After a day shopping and exploring, visitors to Clayton will find an emerging nightlife. Start your Clayton crawl with two stops on the Beer, Wine, and Shine Trail at Deep River Brewing and InStill Distillery. If you are game continue on at Revival 1869, a vintage, jazz cocktail lounge. Additional cool options include First Street Tavern, The Cardinal Bar, and LaDiDa Wine Bar for live music, games, and libations.

JoCo Trails

Mural Art Trail - The many downtowns throughout Johnston County have an impressive and growing collection of mural art by local and regional artists. Some simply gorgeous to look at and some interactive in a way that invites you to be a part of the work.

BBQ Trail - Locals all have their favorite BBQ spot and they are happy to debate you! To find your favorite, explore the JoCo BBQ Trail where you will find many styles of BBQ (like chopped pork, ribs, brisket, and chicken), and just as many options for tasty southern sides. The most popular BBQ in our part of the state is called "Eastern Style", chopped pulled pork with a vinegar-based sauce made with red pepper flakes!

Ava Gardner Heritage Trail - Includes several points of interest related to Hollywood legend and NC native Ava Gardner. See where she was born, where she grew up, attended dances, and key landmarks associated with her family here. Learn more about this self-guided, driving trail by visiting the Ava Gardner Museum.



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