

Smithfield Exit 95, I-95



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



Rural Food Movement

The First Food Hall on a Major Interstate

Though there was a momentary halt, remodeling continues on the old JR Outlet building in Selma (Exit 97 off I-95) converting it into the Old North State Food Hall, slated to open this November. Additional plans have been added to utilize technology to make the food hall as safe as possible for customers when it opens, including pick-up options and touchless transactions. The food hall will include a full bar called the NC Craft House run by local brewery Double Barley, and will feature NC craft beer, cider, wine, and spirits! The food hall has already announced its first few vendors - local coffee house Boulevard West and a regional burger restaurant called Barley & Burger. The food hall will be announcing more vendors over the course of the next few months. The Old North State will be the nation's first roadside food hall, professionally curated and designed by two of the restaurant industry's best food hall consultants and designers, Phil Colicchio of Colicchio Consulting Group and Ed Eimer of Eimer Designs. Find more information at oldnorthstatefoodhall.com.

A Centennial to Celebrate

Ava Gardner Turns 100 in 2022

The Ava Gardner Museum in Downtown Smithfield, NC is already planning for Ava's Centennial year in 2022. This southern starlet will be celebrating her 100th birthday on Christmas Eve of 2022 and the museum dedicated to preserving her legacy plans to make the entire year all about marking the occasion. There are many long-term plans in place that will culminate in 2022 including new exhibits, new collection items, and even Ava products that the museum can't wait to announce. The Ava Gardner Museum is home to an incredible collection including original scripts, photos, costumes, and personal effects of screen legend Ava Gardner—a true Hollywood "Cinderella" story. Experience her rise to fame from a local country girl to one of Hollywood's film goddesses. Born near Smithfield, Ava's husbands included Mickey Rooney, Artie Shaw, and Frank Sinatra. She starred in movies with several film icons, such as Clark Gable, Grace Kelly and Gregory Peck. The museum features her relationships with other stars with artifacts from Sinatra, Kelly, Peck, John Huston and others. More information will be made available at avagardner.org.





155th Battle Reenactment Postponed Bentonville Event to Take Place 2021

On March 20-21, 2021 at Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site in Four Oaks, NC more than 2,500 re-enactors are expected from around the country to participate in the reenactment of the Battle of Bentonville. This spectacle only happens ever 5 years due to the immense amount of planning and logistics that go into the event, which was scheduled to take place in 2020 but had to be postponed. The public is invited to watch history in action over 2 days on the original spot where the last major battle, and the largest land battle fought on North Carolina soil, took place. During the 2015 reenactment 64,000 people traveled to experience this historical and educational event. In addition to the daily battles, the weekend will feature free lectures on the history of the land and families of Bentonville, as well as 19th century medical displays, period music, and dozens of sutlers selling Civil War related items. More details pertaining to media, as well as visitor and ticket information, will be made available on bentonvillereenactment.com.

3 Can't-Miss JoCo Trails

Ava Gardner Heritage Trail - See where this local star and Hollywood legend was born, where she grew up, attended dances, and key landmarks associated with her family in JoCo. And don't miss the museum dedicated to her life and career in Downtown Smithfield.

Clayton Sculpture Trail - Sculptures are showcased annually in this free, self-guided trail, aimed at enhancing the downtown. It's like a large outdoor art museum and many of the sculptures are centralized in the downtown area, within a half a mile radius, which makes the trail very walk-able.

Rural Bike Routes - These four routes span the four corners of the county and connect cyclists to several key visitor attractions as well as the Mountains to the Sea Trail in both Clayton and Smithfield. View JoCo's rural, back-road beauty from a bike seat.



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