

# Our State<sup>®</sup>

CELEBRATING NORTH CAROLINA

November 2015 \$4.95

## THE RESTAURANT ISSUE

### *Chef & the Farmer*

#### **BLUEBERRY BBQ CHICKEN**

*The dish that created the breakthrough moment for a chef, a show, and the town of Kinston*

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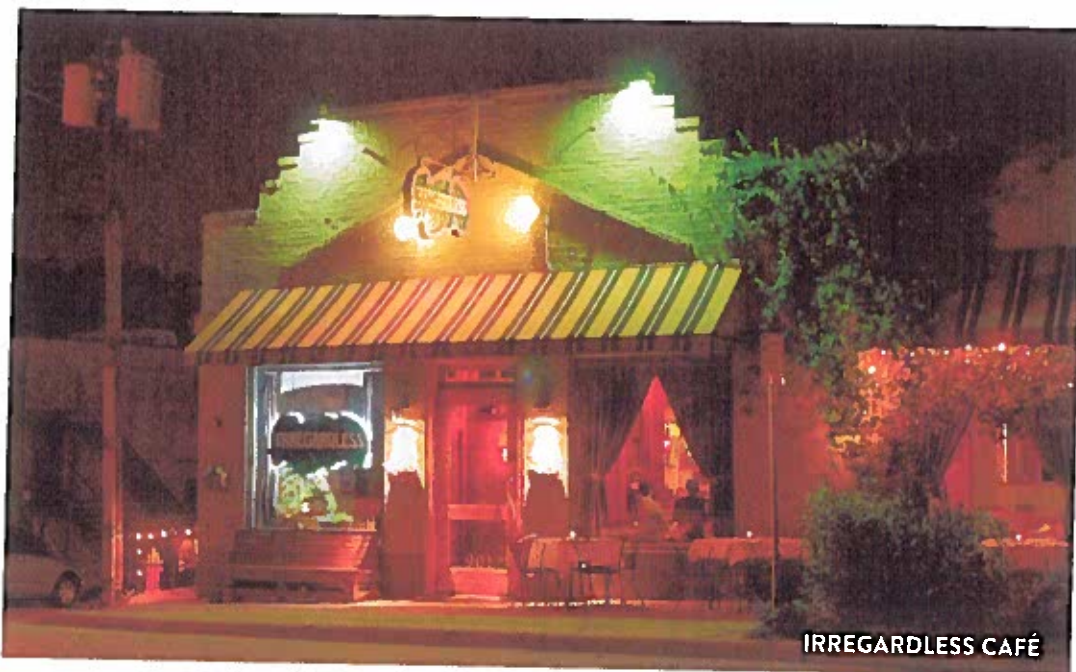
**EXCEPTIONAL PLACES TO EAT**

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# DESTINATION DINING | Triangle



## Irregardless Café **RALEIGH**

The Irregardless Café is known for a lot of things. In 1975, it opened smack in the middle of a state capital that ran on red meat and pork, but was strictly vegetarian and — a word rarely heard back then — vegan. It came back after a 1994 fire with reimagined menus (including meat and seafood), but with the same commitment to fresh, healthful cooking.

One thing on the menu inspires widespread obsession: lemon tahini salad dressing made with a creamy mixture of tamari, lemon juice, tahini (sesame paste), oil, and some vegetables, whirled in a blender. It has been on the menu since chef and owner Arthur Gordon opened the restaurant, and is by far the most popular dressing there. If you get hooked on it, like thousands of others, you can purchase bottles at the restaurant.

901 West Morgan Street  
Raleigh, NC 27603  
(919) 833-8898  
[irregardless.com](http://irregardless.com)

## Boylan Bridge Brewpub **RALEIGH**

The unforgettable part of Boylan Bridge Brewpub is the best view of the growing downtown Raleigh skyline that you can get while sipping a cold one legally in a public place. The attached small building — which few ever sit in — was built in 1949 as an office. The brewpub and its popular patio opened in 2009. If you get tired of admiring the view, turn around and watch the colorful crowd of beer drinkers, neighborhood families, and dogs that pack the place. And on a summer day, if you're lucky, you might see Kudzu Jesus, an arrangement of the pesky vines growing in the shape of a robed man with outstretched arms near the railroad tracks below.

201 South Boylan Avenue  
Raleigh, NC 27603  
(919) 803-8927  
[boylanbridge.com](http://boylanbridge.com)

## Players' Retreat **RALEIGH**

This 64-year-old hangout isn't like an average sports bar. There are 54 types of Scotch, and more than 100 wines, a list that has earned the vinyl-boothed, Formica-tabled restaurant and bar *Wine Spectator* awards four years in a row. You could have a \$100 bottle of red with your Wolfpack Burger (topped with slaw, mustard, and chili). On Friday and Saturday nights, the chef offers seasonal fine-dining entrees using local ingredients, such as honey Sriracha shrimp with black bean puree, corn cake, corn salsa, and cilantro crema. "We wanted people to see it's still the PR," says owner Gus Gusler, referring to the place's old nickname, "but you don't have to just eat fried food here."

105 Oberlin Road  
Raleigh, NC 27605  
(919) 755-9589  
[playersretreat.net](http://playersretreat.net)

## Chatham Square **CARY**

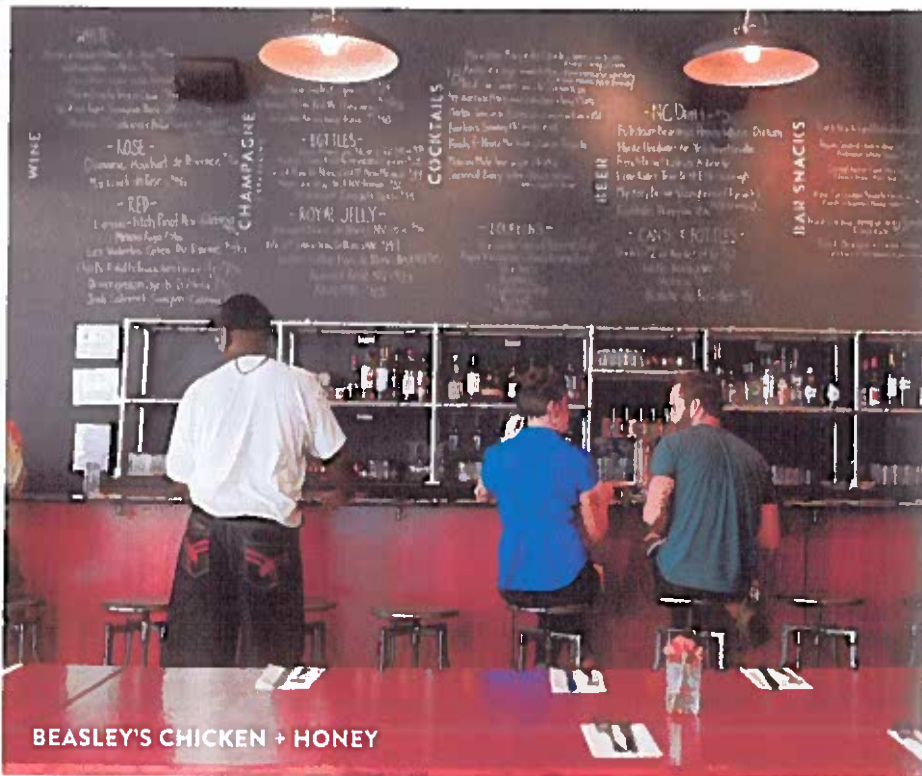
Chatham Square doesn't look like much as you drive by. The beige brick strip of buildings is lower than the road, with brown sheet metal signs and few windows. But it's a good place to fill your stomach. Start with empanadas stuffed with spicy chicken at a taqueria, then move on to smoky Korean barbecue, and pick up an electric blue soft drink at a Japanese market. Try butter tea at a Tibetan restaurant, which is different from the Nepalese restaurant next door.

There are three biryani restaurants within walking distance, including one that offers a goat version of the Indian rice dish. An African market is a few doors away from a spot that offers halal meats. Just step around the corner if you're looking for a sushi place. Don't forget to try the sautéed pea tips with garlic at Super Wok, which is packed with Chinese families and cordially welcomes all.

East Chatham Street  
Cory, NC 27511

—Debbie Moose

Ashley Christensen, whose culinary ideas just keep on coming.



BEASLEY'S CHICKEN + HONEY

## Chuck's/Beasley's Chicken + Honey • RALEIGH

Chef Ashley Christensen, who in 2014 was named the best chef in the Southeast by the James Beard Foundation, keeps branching out. Chuck's serves burgers, Beasley's Chicken + Honey slings chicken Southern and fried, and Fox Liquor Bar is in the basement. If you're not sure which one to choose, at least you won't have to drive around; all three are in the same building at the corner of East Martin and South Wilmington streets.

— Jeremy Markovich

### Poole's Downtown Diner/Death & Taxes RALEIGH

First it was a pie shop, in 1945. Then it was a 1950s luncheonette. When Christensen opened her first restaurant at Poole's Downtown Diner, she knew its history would inspire everything — and that the S-shaped vintage bar that snakes throughout the space would remain the same. When naming her latest project, Death & Taxes, she was equally inspired by the building, once home to a funeral home and a bank. The food, however, is inspired by far warmer tones: her ode to cooking with wood and flame.

— Elizabeth Shestak

*Chuck's/Beasley's Chicken + Honey*  
237 South Wilmington Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601  
Chuck's: (919) 322-0126  
Beasley's: (919) 322-0127  
ac-restaurants.com

*Poole's Downtown Diner*  
426 South McDowell Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601  
(919) 832-4477

*Death & Taxes*  
105 West Hargett Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601  
(984) 242-0218