

# The Charlotte Observer

## These are the best small towns in North Carolina and South Carolina to visit in 2025



Hickory's downtown shopping area includes retail shops, restaurants, offices and entertainment venues.  
Jared Kay [VisitNC.com](http://VisitNC.com)

### Beaufort, NC

Location: [320 miles from Charlotte](#)

What to do:

- Visit the [Beaufort Historic Site](#) to see historic buildings in a tour led by guides in period costume.
- Stop at the [Olde Beaufort Farmers' Market](#) for fresh produce, artisan foods and handmade items. While you're shopping, snack on peanuts from the Ann Street Peanut Sales booth.
- Enjoy a beer at [Fishetown Brew House](#), then grab a waterfront dinner at [Moonrakers](#), which offers rooftop seating.

## Morehead City

Location: [283 miles from Charlotte](#)

What to do:

- Located on North Carolina's Crystal Coast and part of the accredited Main Street America program, the [small town near Atlantic Beach](#) includes plenty of water-themed places to [play](#), [dine](#) and [shop](#).
- Pick your favorite [downtown walking tour](#) — we've got our eyes on the 16-home walking tour, which shows off the area's historic houses. You can also take the fish sculpture tour or art walk tour, which includes 12 local businesses.
- Plan for dinner at [Floyd's 1921](#), where you can order Buffalo Oysters, flash fried and served over blue cheese grits and covered with Buffalo sauce, or Sticky Icky Style Ribs, dry rubbed and slow-cooked and basted with barbecue sauce.