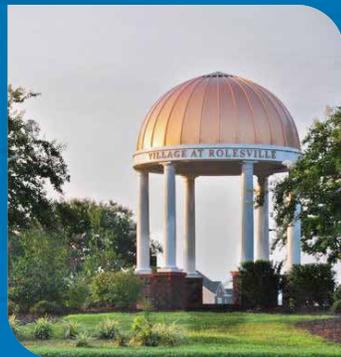




# Raleigh, N.C.

DESTINATION BRAND MANUAL

Provided by the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau / 2026



“Raleigh, N.C.” and “Raleigh” are used throughout this brand manual and brand strategy as an overarching destination brand name.

“Raleigh, N.C.” and “Raleigh” refer to all of Wake County, and this brand strategy encompasses all 12 cities and towns, including Apex, Cary, Fuquay-Varina, Garner, Holly Springs, Knightdale, Morrisville, Raleigh, Rolesville, Wake Forest, Wendell and Zebulon. “Raleigh, N.C.” and “Raleigh” serve as shorthand identifiers for destination awareness to leverage Raleigh’s status as the largest city in Wake County.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

**04**

Brand Voice

**10**

Brand Personality

**15**

Value Proposition

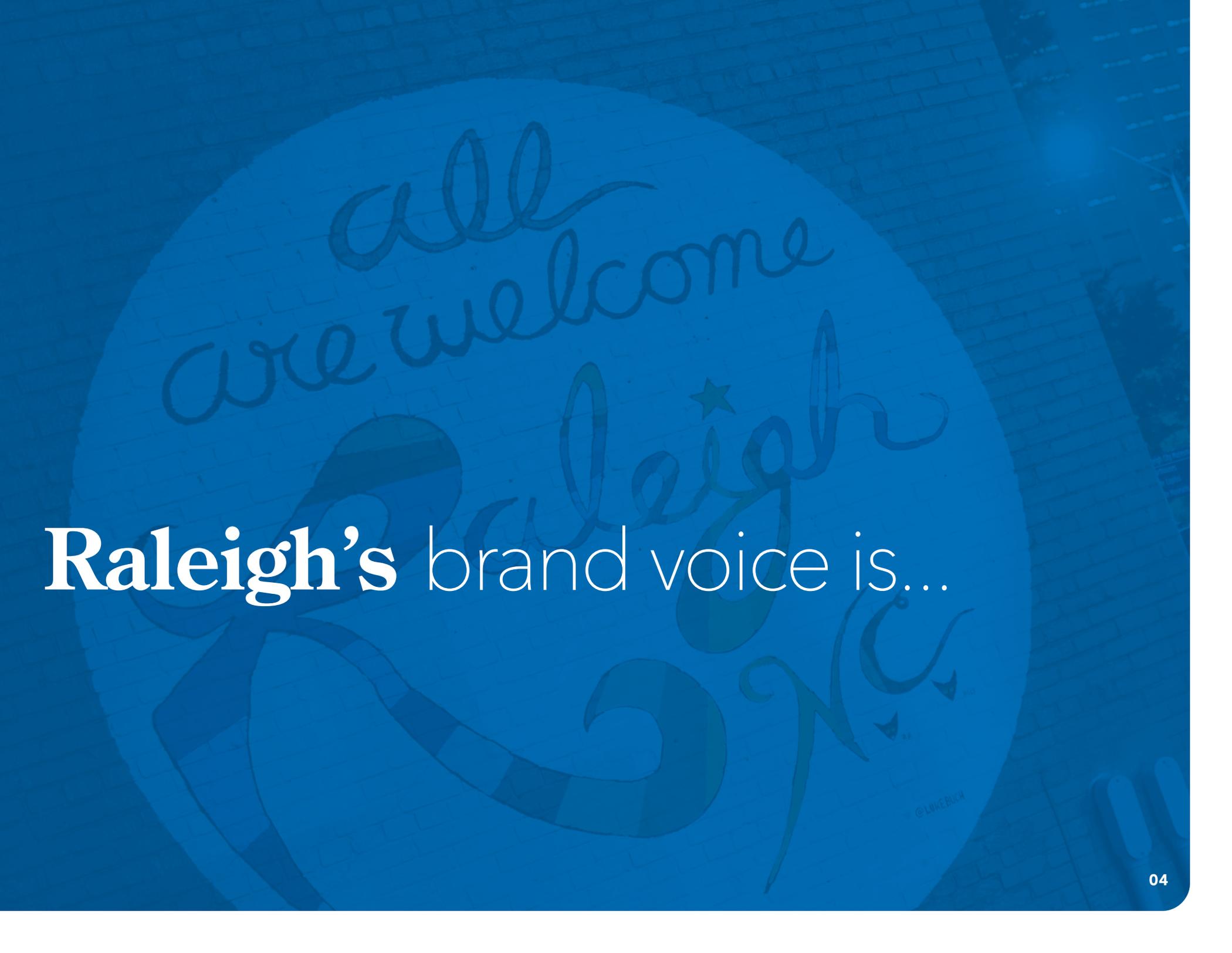
**17**

Brand Promise

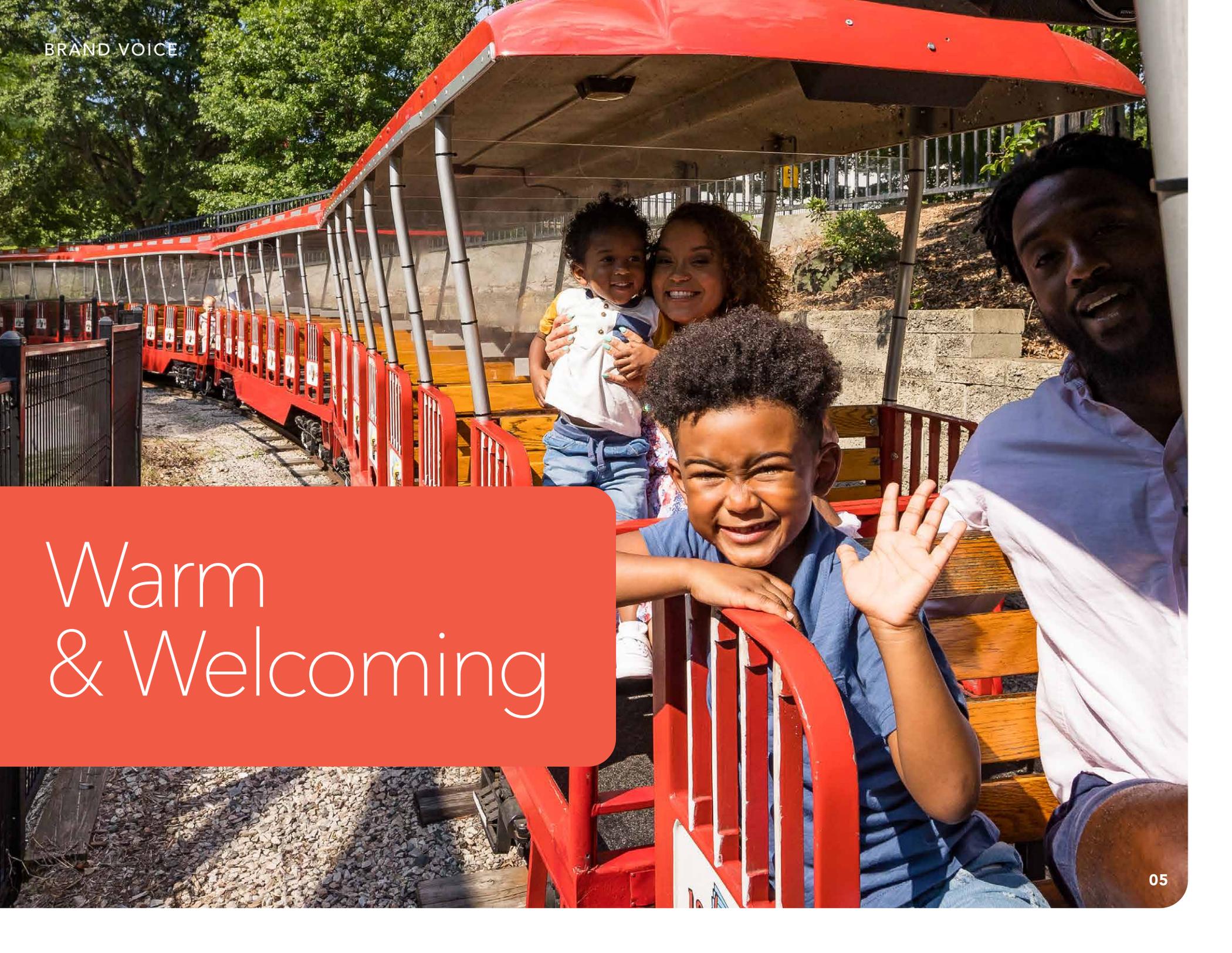
**19**

Key Messages



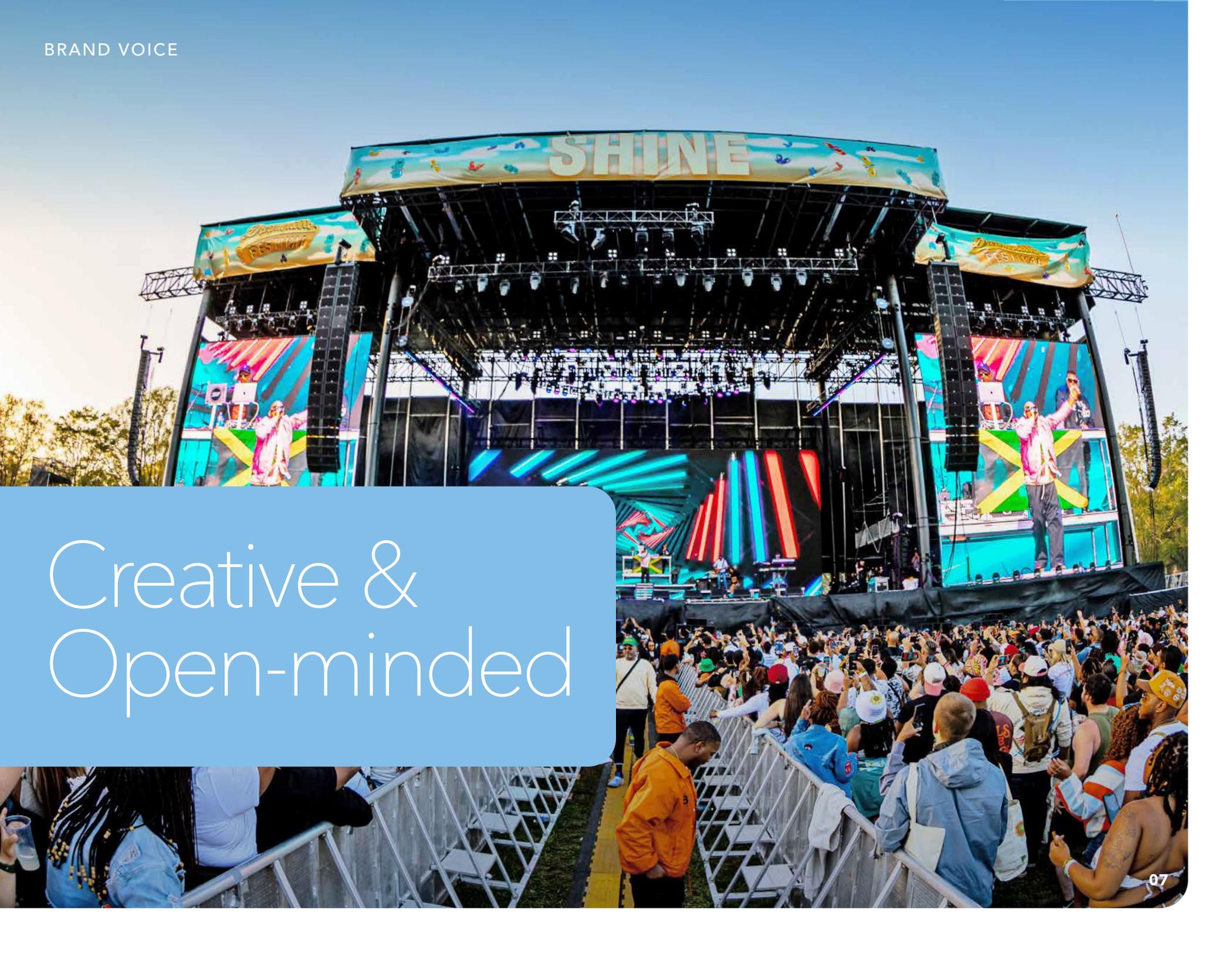


**Raleigh's** brand voice is...



# Warm & Welcoming

# Clever & Curious



# Creative & Open-minded



Approachable  
& Inviting

# Accessible & Inclusive





**Raleigh's** brand personality is...

# Naturally Curious

Whether at a bar or a museum, you're bound to have an elevated experience and learn something new. And don't worry, even though we're highly educated, we're seriously unpretentious.



BRAND PERSONALITY

## Genuinely Kind

We don't hesitate to look you in the eye, say a warm hello and ensure your time in Raleigh is packed with all the best things to see and do. Consider us your friendly concierge.



# Truly Homegrown

Our award-winning restaurant scene is fueled by our agricultural roots, our community's innovative spirit and our creative chefs and restaurateurs. Raleigh also boasts a vibrant live music scene, and we wholeheartedly support everything local.





## BRAND PERSONALITY

# Southern, with a Modern Flair

Kindness and charm are in our DNA, and we'll go above and beyond to be a good host. Whether it's BBQ or chana masala, good food is a staple. We're smart, forward-thinking and welcoming to every kind of person. Call it Southern hospitality with a modern flair.



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WELCOME TO  
RALEIGH **Y'all**

# Value Proposition

Raleigh welcomes you, no matter who you are.

*Learn more at [comeoutandshowthem.com](http://comeoutandshowthem.com).*



Embark on a journey across a mosaic of 12 vibrant cities and towns in **Raleigh**, North Carolina. From mouthwatering food to soul-stirring music, to scenic parks and captivating culture, Raleigh caters to both the seeker of the extraordinary and the connoisseur of the unconventional. Thanks to our modern take on Southern hospitality, every moment in Raleigh is an invitation to be wowed.

# Brand Promise



**Raleigh** stands as the intellectual, cultural, culinary and innovation hub of North Carolina. It's a cool capital city with diverse offerings spanning food, live music, sports, arts and the scenic outdoors. Visitors will be met with Raleigh's kindness, charm and local flair—a unique take on Southern hospitality that promises elevated experiences.

# Key Messages

# Homegrown Southern Hospitality

Raleigh, N.C., is a foodie mecca, a museum lover's dream, a live music hotspot and an outdoor oasis. Located between the mountains and beaches in central North Carolina's Research Triangle Region, Raleigh offers visitors an approachable and laid-back vibe with a range of family-friendly experiences that won't break the bank.

The area encompasses 12 cities and towns, including Apex, Cary, Fuquay-Varina, Garner, Holly Springs, Knightdale, Morrisville, Raleigh, Rolesville, Wake Forest, Wendell and Zebulon.

Traveling through RDU International Airport is a breeze, with nonstop flights from more than 80 cities around the globe.

Amtrak also offers several routes with direct access to downtown Raleigh's Union Station. We make an ideal Southern road-trip destination, conveniently located off I-440, I-540 and I-40.

We're known as the "Smithsonian of the South," thanks to an array of world-class museums (most of which are free!). Our food scene is crave-worthy—we're the most award-winning food city in North Carolina, and we boast over a dozen James Beard Foundation Award finalists and winners. An eclectic mix of live music and vibrant festivals keeps the area lively year-round. Not to mention, Raleigh is one of the most affordable cities to visit.



## A Culinary Hot Spot

From food halls to fine dining, Raleigh's tables are overflowing with farm-fresh, flavorful global eats. Yes, we have great barbecue (this is North Carolina, after all!), but trust us, our culinary excellence doesn't stop there!

The area boasts homegrown, chef-driven restaurants, including over a dozen James Beard Foundation Award finalists and winners. Our dining scene is booming thanks to our local chefs and restaurateurs who lean into creativity and innovation to craft delectable dishes.

Savor the famous macaroni au gratin from decorated chef Ashley Christensen at Poole's Diner and sample farm-to-table fare at five-time James Beard semifinalist Scott Crawford's Crawford and Son eatery.

Embark on a journey around the world with tandoori mushrooms at Tamasha Modern Indian Kitchen in North Hills or dine on the patio at Ajja in the Five Points neighborhood, offering flavors from the Mediterranean and the Middle

East. Save room for a plate full of top-notch, Eastern-style barbecue from Clyde Cooper's BBQ, The Pit and Ole Time Barbecue or head out to Prime Barbecue in Knightdale, incorporating the best of all great BBQ techniques to create something uniquely its own.

Tour Zebulon's Olde Raleigh Distillery and explore our ever-expanding craft brewery trail with 40+ breweries and counting. And when your sweet tooth kicks in, grab a scoop of premium Howling Cow ice cream, made on campus at North Carolina State University.

Can't agree on what to eat? We've got two standout food halls in downtown Raleigh to save the day: Morgan Street Food Hall, one of *USA TODAY*'s top food halls in the U.S., and Transfer Co. Food Hall, one of the city's hippest hangout spots from morning to night. Immerse yourself in our enticing culinary landscape and brace yourself for an unparalleled gastronomic adventure. Oh, and it's easy on the wallet, too. So go ahead and order dessert!



## Rich in Art, Culture, Creativity and History

Known as the “Smithsonian of the South,” Raleigh is the state’s cultural and intellectual epicenter. The area features an array of world-class museums, most of which include free admission for the whole family. Take in the global collection (including the Southeast’s most extensive collection of works by Rodin) at the North Carolina Museum of Art, explore the ever-changing exhibits at CAM Raleigh and let the kiddos exercise their bodies and brains at Marbles Kids Museum. At the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, take a front-row seat to witness researchers in action in the DinoLab as they meticulously assemble the most complete skeletons of a *Nanotyrannus* and a *Triceratops* ever discovered in North America (the *Dueling Dinosaurs* exhibit).

For performing arts enthusiasts, revel in the North Carolina Symphony and be captivated by the North Carolina Opera and Carolina Ballet. History buffs will love exploring this capital city, founded in 1792. Dive into the city’s cultural narrative at the City of Raleigh Museum (COR Museum) and see the state’s past come alive at the North Carolina Museum of History.

There are also more than 50 African American heritage attractions that celebrate vital moments and accomplishments in art, education, business, medicine, religion and more, including the North Carolina Freedom Park, the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Gardens and the African American Cultural Center on the campus of North Carolina State University.



## A Lively Mosaic: Music and Festivals

Raleigh is a community of homegrown creatives, artists, musicians and makers, so it shouldn't surprise you that festivals and events are what we do best. We go big around here, elevating our unique take on Southern hospitality through thousands of events year-round.

The free, two-day Raleigh Wide Open Music Festival takes over downtown every October, as 155,000+ attendees come to hear the best of bluegrass, Americana, folk and other traditional music; it's programmed locally by PineCone, Piedmont Council of Traditional Music, which organizes many more concerts here throughout each year.

Top-name acts also perform regularly at major venues including Lenovo Center, Red Hat Amphitheater, Coastal Credit Union Music Park at Walnut Creek, Joseph M. Bryan Jr. Theater in the Museum Park (N.C. Museum of Art), Martin Marietta Center for the Performing Arts and Cary's Koka Booth Amphitheatre. On

the smaller stage, Raleigh offers independently owned music venues like The Pour House Music Hall & Record Shop, Lincoln Theatre, Slim's Downtown and Kings. And the list goes on. There's a good chance you can catch live music every night of the week at venues throughout our 12 cities and towns.

Beyond music, Raleigh hosts a wide variety of festivals that showcase the area's dynamic spirit and vibrant culture. Marvel at the enchanting North Carolina Chinese Lantern Festival in Cary, savor the diverse brews at Brewgaloo, the state's largest craft beer festival, and celebrate all things art at the two-day Artspllosure, Raleigh's longest-running arts festival.

The N.C. State Fair takes place in Raleigh over 11 days every October, drawing more than one million visitors for food, carnival rides, games, agriculture and live music.



# An Outdoor Masterpiece

Experience a harmonious blend of urban sophistication, natural splendor and temperate weather year-round as you walk or bike throughout Raleigh and its neighboring towns. Raleigh's greenway system spans more than 200 miles, providing walking, jogging, biking and hiking trails that connect hundreds of parks throughout the area.

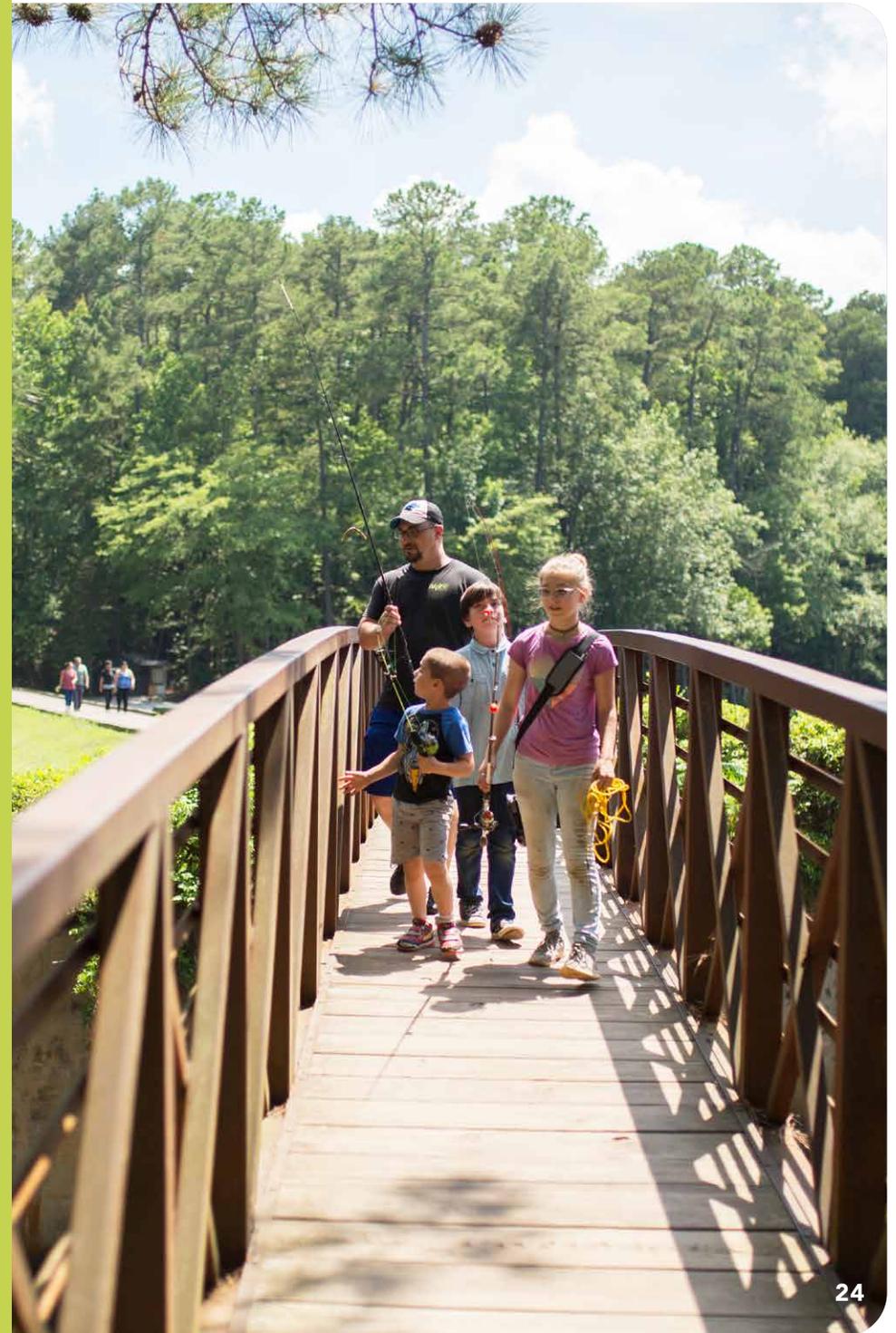
Revel in the permanent galleries inside the North Carolina Museum of Art (one of the state's most visited attractions). Then, take an outside stroll through the Anne and Jim Goodnight Museum Park, which has monumental public art installations, an outdoor amphitheater and miles of multi-use trails. The Art to Heart Corridor trail enables you to bike from the North Carolina Museum of Art to downtown Raleigh.

Dorothea Dix Park stands out as an urban gem in the heart of Raleigh, offering 308 acres of sprawling fields and meadows (including a gorgeous sunflower bloom in July) and panoramic

views of the city skyline.

Downtown Cary Park spans seven acres and includes a dog park, grab-and-go market, a skywalk, a children's play area and ample programming, performances and concerts. Check out the JC Raulston Arboretum at North Carolina State University to stroll 10 acres and admire more than 5,000 plants from around the world. If you're traveling with the little ones, be sure to take in a slice of history at Pullen Park, among the oldest operating amusement parks in the U.S., offering family fun with a carousel and pedal boats.

William B. Umstead State Park offers 5,000 peaceful acres of forest, trails and lakes ideal for hiking, biking, horseback riding and canoeing. Finally, dig into our agricultural roots by stopping at a you-pick farm like Phillips Farms of Cary or south Raleigh's Porter Farms for blackberry or strawberry picking.



# All Are Welcome in Raleigh

Y'all means "all" here in Raleigh. We continue to cultivate a welcoming environment that embraces diverse groups, ensuring everyone feels valued and represented. Our priority is to maintain the safety, accessibility and diversity of our community.

Small businesses throughout Raleigh embody inclusion. Grab a bite at A Place At The Table, Raleigh's first pay-what-you-can nonprofit café, which makes good, healthy food available to everyone.

Our LGBTQ-Welcoming Hotels Program adds a layer of ease when booking travel for folks looking for LGBTQ-friendly accommodations, especially for our legendary month-long celebration of Pride in June.

As you seek physically accessible spaces to explore, check out the Sassafras All Children's Playground at Laurel Hills Park, Marla Dorrel Park in Cary or Family Fun Nights at Marbles Kids Museum, which are exclusively for kids with varying abilities and their families. Witness the spirit of inclusivity in our community, where businesses like 321 Coffee and Esteamed Coffee proudly employ individuals of all physical and mental abilities. In Raleigh, whether it's through food, people, art or music, our local culture warmly embraces everyone.



# Raleigh: A Premier Sports Destination

Raleigh, North Carolina, takes sports seriously. From professional teams—including the NHL Carolina Hurricanes and the North Carolina Courage women's soccer team—to college teams to youth and amateur sports, the city offers a winning combination of superb venues, accommodations and access.

The quality and quantity of world-class venues are a sports planner's dream. A case in point is the 122-acre WRAL Soccer Park, one of the country's largest youth soccer complexes with 22 soccer fields, eight full-size turf fields and an indoor fitness center. In Cary alone, the 150-acre WakeMed Soccer Park hosts the aforementioned professional soccer teams and has hosted major collegiate tournaments; the Cary Tennis Park boasts 32 championship courts; the Triangle Aquatics Center has three competition-sized pools; and the USA Baseball National Training Complex has four fields that meet MLB standards and a brand-new indoor training facility. Plus, a new indoor sports facility is being developed in Cary to host new

youth, collegiate and amateur sporting events. The Raleigh Convention Center and Lenovo Center regularly host tournaments.

Raleigh has also emerged as a hotbed for the world of esports, attracting players, teams and spectators from around the globe for major tournaments like the Fortnite Championship Series Invitational (which makes sense given the game's publisher, Epic Games, is headquartered here).

More than 160 area hotels and other accommodations are available to sports groups to meet any preference and budget. Known for its mild weather and Southern hospitality, the area is naturally beautiful, centrally located, easily accessible via air or interstate and affordable.

With its dedicated focus on elevating Raleigh's status in the sports world, the Greater Raleigh Sports Alliance (GRSA) provides unwavering support to sports planners every step of the way.



# Redefining Conventions: Raleigh's Dynamic Growth in Meeting Spaces

Raleigh, North Carolina, is about to catapult to a new level for meetings and conventions, with nearly \$500 million of public investment to create a state-of-the-art complex for meetings, events and entertainment covering several downtown blocks.

The comprehensive plan involves significantly expanding the capacity of the 500,000-square-foot Raleigh Convention Center, the construction of a new Omni Hotel (which will sit between the convention center and the Martin Marietta Center for the Performing Arts) and the strategic relocation of the Red Hat Amphitheater within the complex.

New meeting space inside the convention center expansion (across from the original convention center building) is expected to include 13 additional meeting rooms and welcoming pre-function spaces, a 50,000-square-foot divisible flex space and an 18,000-square-foot ballroom, dedicated to hosting larger events and breakout groups.

Complementing the existing array of major meeting hotels downtown, the much-anticipated Omni Hotels & Resorts property is scheduled to open its doors in 2028. Boasting 600 guest rooms and 55,000 square feet of meeting space, the full-service hotel is poised to elevate the city's already diverse hospitality offerings.

In downtown Raleigh, major meeting venues and hotels sit just steps away from James Beard Award-winning restaurants, rooftop bars and underground cocktail spots, live music and performing arts productions and local shops. The Raleigh Convention Center stands as a testament to excellence and is renowned for its exceptional food and service.

These groundbreaking developments, coupled with continuous expansions and renovations in hotels throughout the county, herald a promising era of diverse and dynamic offerings for the evolving meetings and conventions market.





*visit***Raleigh**<sup>®</sup>