

Charlotte



Skyscrapers glisten against a twilight blue sky, their towering majesty offering evidence of a dazzling vigor. Home to powerful banks, Charlotte's vibrant economic center, an area known as Uptown, impresses. From its center, the Queen City's grace extends through a myriad of neighborhoods that evoke a multi-layered history. Former enclaves of industrial activity that flourished in the early 20th century have been transformed into inviting regions where art and culture abound. Historic brick buildings house restaurants, shops, and art galleries, testifying to the city's commitment to preserving its heritage. An enchanting destination that combines the metropolitan excitement with small town charm, Charlotte is a true Southern gem.

Memorable Experiences

Sweet Times

Stroll quaint neighborhood streets with a cone from Elizabeth Creamery.

Saturday Specials

Taste freshly baked cherry pies at Charlotte's farmer's market.

Field Walks

Encounter native North Carolina plants in wooded Van Landingham Glen.

Native Runs

Embark on an early morning jog around the lake at Freedom Park.

Distinctive Details

The scent of sweet potatoes mingles with black eyed peas and cornbread, which form an alluring feast around a splendid pork. Charlotte's legendary southern hospitality is most apparent at the dinner table.

Starwood Preferred Guest Recommends

Racing

The engines roar and the stock cars are off, zipping around the track as they have for nearly half a century. In Charlotte, racing is part of the culture, and there is no better place to witness a race than at the legendary Lowe's Motor Speedway.

Destination Information

Country United States
State North Carolina
Elevation 751 feet
Population 671,588 (2008)
Language English



Area Code: 704
Country Code: 1



Charlotte Douglas Airport (CLT)



Transportation:
Car, Taxi, Train, Bus



US Dollar

Nearby Luxury Collection Hotels and Resorts



The Ballantyne Hotel

10000 Ballantyne Commons Parkway
Charlotte, North Carolina 28277
Phone: (704)248-4000



Culture

Devotees of both art and nature will be enthralled by this distinctive southern city.

Adventure



US National Whitewater Center

Rapids rush passed boulders, winding through dips and curves, buoying bright yellow and blue boats along the largest man-made whitewater rafting course in the world. Surrounded by miles of biking and hiking trails, this 307-acre adventure-sport facility is an outdoor paradise of climbing walls and kayaking routes on the banks of Charlotte's Catawba River. The training ground for US Olympic athletes, the center offers myriad courses for all ages and levels, as well as a thrilling GPS-aided, high-tech treasure hunt that focuses on environmental education.

Address: 820 Hawfield Road
Phone: (704) 391-3900

Family



Daniel Stowe Botanical Gardens

An artist sits among a grove of magenta azaleas, mixing paints upon a wooden palette. Nearby, the laughter of children drifts through the pink leaves of dappled willows. The sun shines often on the 450 acres of fragrant meadows and cool woodlands that comprise these splendid botanical gardens. Among native trees like the Big Leaf Maple, plants from around the world thrive, winding around planks of romantic pergolas, and clinging to the bases of refined sculptures.

Address: 6500 South New Hope Road, Belmont
Phone: (704) 825-4490

Highly Recommended



Mint Museum

A pastel sky wraps a cloak of serenity around the rugged American wilderness in Thomas Cole's untitled painting. A brilliant sapphire pendant hangs from a delicate "Totem Necklace" by Elsa Bates Freund. Nearly thirty thousand treasures from the art, craft, and design worlds comprise the permanent collection of the Mint Museum. North Carolina's first art museum, it is housed in the nation's former mint, and features an ongoing schedule of exciting exhibitions and enriching events such as painting workshops, live jazz concerts and family fun Saturdays.

Address: 2730 Randolph Road
Phone: (704) 337-2000



Levine Museum of the New South

Simple wooden chairs sit upon the grey painted planks of a one-room farmhouse's front porch. Arranged exactly as it would have been in the era after the American Civil War, the exhibit provides an exemplary glimpse back into our nation's history. Through interactive displays that range from churning cotton mills to vibrant Victorian main streets, this unprecedented museum offers an enchanting journey through the last two hundred and fifty years, a period known as "The New South." Special exhibits offer a deeper look into themes like music and industry.

Address: 200 E. Seventh Street
Phone: (704) 333-1887



Shopping

Welcoming stores transform the act of shopping by offering utterly modern experiences.

Neighborhoods



No Da Arts District

In industrial spaces where the whirl of sewing machines once filled the air, the scent of fresh oils, acrylics, and watercolors lingers. Historic mills, boarding houses, movie theaters, and the state's first pharmacy are now filled with artist's studios, galleries, restaurants, and shops in this authentic North Charlotte neighborhood. Alluring boutiques like Lark & Key and Canvas Monkey offer handmade jewelry and whimsical handbags. Every first and third Friday, shops and galleries fling open their doors for a vibrant, biweekly Gallery Crawl.

Address: North Davidson Street and 36th Street and the surrounding blocks; 2 miles north of uptown Charlotte

Shops & Boutiques



Urbana Cityspa and Teabar

Downtempo music wafts through a spacious loft filled with plush curved seats. Names like "Pomegranate," "Nirvana," and "Fire Ginseng" grace an extraordinary menu of over three thousand premium loose-leaf teas from lands like, China, India, and Sri Lanka. A warm glow emanating from an undulating light on the ceiling caresses slate color tones, setting a scene of utter relaxation. Cast iron teapots based on designs from 18th century Japan, and Bodum cups are available, as is a selection of transporting spa therapies such as a "Hawaiian Hot Stone" massage.

Address: 7510 Pineville-Matthews Road, Suite 5B
Phone: (704) 543-1700



Wine Store

Regal bottles of wine, with cherry red and mustard yellow labels brush against glossy walls of pristine white lacquer. Touch screen kiosks offer an advanced approach to wine buying, providing details about each bottle and recommending perfect food pairing, while master sommelier and master of wine Doug Frost offers his personal advice. Over one hundred and fifty hand-selected wines, many sourced directly from the growers, are available at this concept shop. Extraordinary tasting machines allow customers to sample each product before purchase.

Address: 720 Governor Morrison Street, Suite 150
Phone: (704) 442-4024



Step by Sloan

Silver Sigerson Morrison flats glisten with a metallic sheen; Cole Haan snakeskin pumps allure with subtle sophistication; and with their ebony satin gleam, a pair of Christian Dior platform heels seduces. A magnificent selection of premiere designer shoes lines the shelves at this enticing boutique in the heart of Charlotte's historic Dilworth neighborhood. Located on the floor above its sister store Sloan, a fashionable women's clothing boutique where Theory shares the racks with Nicole Miller, Step by Sloan is devoted exclusively to shoes and handbags.

Address: 1419 East Boulevard, Suite M
Phone: (704) 376-1275



Cuisine

Epicurean delights venture from nearby farms to distinguished dining rooms.

Acclaimed



Ratcliffe on the Green

Evening light filters in through the green leaves of Tiffany stained glass windows as the aroma of baked sweet potatoes and roasted baby carrots permeates a former flower shop. Housed within a 1929 building, this unparalleled restaurant is committed to preserving the heritage of food. Chef Mark Hibbs procures pasture-raised beef, heirloom tomatoes, and farmstead cheeses from family-owned Carolina farms such as Grateful Growers Farm, Baucom's Best, Fisher Farms, and Apple Orchard Farms. Their quality menu evolves based on the season's freshest bounty.

Address: 435 South Tryon Street, Suite 100

Phone: (704) 358-9898



Gallery Restaurant

Elegant mahogany armchairs, upholstered in vivid plaid, surround well-set tables, while enchanting paintings hang on pale yellow walls. A princely demeanor creates a comfortable atmosphere in which to enjoy the chef's specialty: aged, prime steaks. The Gallery's sophisticated bar boasts one of the state's most prestigious collections of single malt scotches, which in addition to the celebrated McCallan and Glenfiddich brands, includes Scotland's small distilleries.

Address: The Ballantyne Resort

Phone: (704) 248-4100



Bonterra Dining and Wine Room

Tall arched windows reveal leafy views of blossoming lilac bushes. Their rosy petals contrast with the pure cream tones of this 19th century church in Charlotte's historic second district. Beneath lofty ceilings from which antique, 1920s light fixtures hang, a distinguished menu of gastronomic gems such as slow braised lamb shank and ahi tuna are served. Charcuterie plates and an extensive selection of fine cheeses from around the globe enhance Sonoma County pinot noirs, Argentine malbecs, and other fine wines that grace the restaurant's long list.

Address: 1829 Cleveland Avenue, at East Worthington Avenue

Phone: (704) 333-9463

Local Specialty



Lulu Dine and Wine

A cone of crisp thin French fries, wrapped in a sheet of white paper, pairs excellently with a plate of steamed mussels and a glass of Burgundy wine. With sunflower yellow walls, warm oak floors and an elegant brick mantelpiece, this 1920s bungalow has been transformed into a French country house. A charming bistro, in the Plaza-Midwood district, Lulu Dine and Wine creates exquisite dishes based around simple basics such as lamb, duck, salmon, and shrimp partnered with alluring sides like pumpkin risotto and cranberry chutney.

Address: 1911 Central Avenue

Phone: (704) 376-2242



Noteworthy

Charlotte honors the past and looks to the future with exciting, educational pursuits.

Day Excursions



Waxhaw

Beyond picket fences, saddlers, tack shops, and clock makers reside in clapboard houses with tin roofs. Stopwatches and silverware fill wide window displays in distinctive brick buildings that line Main Street in Waxhaw's historic downtown. An antiquing destination since 1960, this small town, just a short drive from Charlotte, is filled with emblematic plaques that point out interesting details such as the place of Andrew Jackson's birth and an important colonial trade route. Paved paths meander along railways, beneath the shade of towering oaks.

Address: 30 miles south of Charlotte off Route 16

Family



Imaginon

In Studio One, a teenager creates an animated film, while nearby In the playhouse, a delighted audience watches Peter Pan fly through the air. The Imaginon, Charlotte's unique and stimulating complex of books, exhibits and theaters is devoted to the exploration and implementation of the narrative. Young minds are challenged and inspired by hands-on activities that take them beyond the role of casual observer, guiding them through the creation process so that they can bring their own stories to life.

Address: 300 East Seventh St.

Phone: (704) 973-2780



Historic Latta Plantation

A chocolate brown Morgan horse trots across a meadow while a cackling hen scurries into a pen for feeding time. Daily life on this authentic southern homestead is steeped in the customs and activities of a 19th century plantation. Tours through a white farmhouse with colonial blue shutters reveal Federal style rooms with four-poster beds, Windsor chairs, and simple wooden cupboards. In this fascinating environment, a momentous era in American history takes shape through Civil War reenactments and workshops on knitting and open hearth cooking.

Address: 300 East Seventh St.

Phone: (704) 973-2780

Highly Recommended



Historic South End

Vintage trolley cars rumble along the tracks beside light rail trains in this authentic Charlotte neighborhood where old and new converge. In this once industrial, newly revitalized region, brand new brick buildings with tall windows stand alongside historic factories, retaining the essence of an early 20th century mill town. Where textile plants once thrived, dozens of shops, restaurants, and art galleries now reside. Once a month, a festive atmosphere pervades as galleries host the Historic South End First Friday Gallery Crawl.

Address: Just south of Uptown, in the region around Camden Road and South Boulevard