

Charlottesville Area Nominated for Top Culinary Town in the South

The Charlottesville area is one of ten Southern towns competing for the title as voted on by readers of the Local Palate

June 6, 2024

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CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA – The **Charlottesville Albemarle Convention & Visitors Bureau** (CACVB) is excited to announce that the Charlottesville area has been nominated for Top Culinary Town in the South.

The nomination comes from The Local Palate, a magazine that covers the food culture of the South. **The Best Culinary Town in the South** will be announced in a new issue from The Local Palate in late October.

“We have welcomed visitors from all over the world here to pair our local wine with our delicious cuisine, especially during the past couple of years in which our budget has been bolstered with one-time American Rescue Plan Act funding,” said Courtney Cacatian, Executive Director of the CACVB. “We’re uniquely positioned as a college town surrounded by farms with locally sourced food, multiple farmers markets and a wide variety of restaurants and food trucks far beyond most cities our size. This recognition puts Charlottesville and Albemarle County on the culinary map in a big way.”

Through a **Readers’ Poll**, open June 5th to June 16th, the public is encouraged to vote from a list of the Top Ten Culinary Towns in the South. The selection will be narrowed to the Top Three towns, which will go head-to-head in a social media poll open from June 17th to June 21st to determine the winner which will be announced in The Local Palate issue on October 29, 2024.

Voters may vote only once in the first round for the Top Culinary Town of their choosing. Other towns in the running include: **Alpharetta**, Georgia; **Auburn**, Alabama; **Chattanooga**, Tennessee; **Columbia**, South Carolina; **Lafayette**, Louisiana; **Lexington**, Kentucky; **Oxford**, Mississippi; **St. Augustine**, Florida; and **Wilmington**, North Carolina.

To determine the Top Ten, the editors of *The Local Palate* researched more than 40 small towns across the South—from Washington, DC down to Florida and over to Texas with populations under 450K—looking at everything from the restaurant, bar, and café scene to the towns’ farmers markets, educational classes, coffee shops, kitchen and home goods retailers, wine shops, and more to determine which towns would make the Top Ten.

Charlottesville and Albemarle County are known for having a large and diverse restaurant scene. Home to historic restaurants such as Michie Tavern (est. 1784) and the Virginian (est. 1923), restaurant concepts such as Duner’s and C&O Restaurant helped put Charlottesville on the map in the 1970s and 80s.

The Charlottesville area boasts many international and immigrant-owned restaurants – from Thai to Caribbean to Turkish – as well as an impressive array of bakeries, cafés, and **wine shops**. It’s also home to a thriving community of **farmers markets** as well as **local orchards** with farm stores that offer opportunities to pick your own produce.

Since 2020, Charlottesville welcomed the opening of two new exciting restaurant concepts: the Dairy Market, Central Virginia’s first food hall featuring 18 different food and retail merchants, and the Wool Factory, a food and beverage destination situated in a historic textile factory on the Rivanna River.

In the past, Charlottesville has been listed among the top 25 food cities in the United States for its number of restaurants per capita. It has also been recognized as a top **Small City with a Big Food Scene** by *Food and Wine Magazine*. In November 2023, the Charlottesville area was named **Wine Region of the Year** by *Wine Enthusiast*.

For more information about Charlottesville & Albemarle County’s culinary scene, visit:

<https://www.visitcharlottesville.org/food-drink/>.

[Click here](#) for a selection of high-resolution images from the Charlottesville area dining scene. Photo credit is outlined in each image's title.

About the Charlottesville Albemarle Convention & Visitors Bureau

The Charlottesville Albemarle Convention & Visitors Bureau (CACVB) welcomes hundreds of thousands of visitors to the region each year from all over the world who are seeking a variety of unique experiences in history, food, wine, spirits, and adventure. The CACVB serves as the global resource for marketing the tourism assets of the City of Charlottesville and County of Albemarle, and assists tour operators, meeting planners, and other groups in planning visits to the destination. The CACVB's mission is to enhance the economic prosperity of the people of the City and County by promoting, selling, and marketing the area as a destination, in pursuit of the meetings and tourism markets.

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