

## OUR FINDS

Travel

**Broad Street**

Walk this historic street for a crash course in southern architecture.

**FIG**

This locals' favorite pays homage to the regional bounty of fresh seafood and produce.

**Bowens Island Restaurant**

The only utensil you'll need at this family-owned seafood shack: an oyster knife.

# Charleston, South Carolina

Long known for its rich history, antebellum architecture, and genteel residents, this Low Country capital is quickly gaining a reputation as a culinary hot spot.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY  
PETER FRANK EDWARDS

**In downtown** Charleston, a hundred-year-old house is considered relatively new construction. But while the 343-year-old coastal town has maintained its old-world charm—complete with ornate homes, carriages, narrow alleyways, and plenty of y'all—it has also found its modern footing with young artisans and a food culture that's among the most exciting in the country. Nestled between two rivers and the Atlantic, this southern city allows its chefs easy access to fresh seafood. And the climate (highs in the upper 50s during the coldest month of the year, January) yields year-round farm-fresh produce. Along King Street—more than a mile of boutiques, galleries, antiques stores, and home-and-design shops—you can find the perfect suitcase stuffer, be it a salvaged mirror or a small-batch tonic for your bar cart. After a couple of hours, you'll have worked up an appetite—something you'll definitely need in this town.

—Jenny Everett

**EAT****► Breakfast****WildFlour Pastry**

Tucked away off the main King Street drag, this café is a great place to start your day. On Sundays, don't miss pastry chef Lauren Mitterer's sinful sticky buns, crustied with pecans and served warm. 73 Spring Street, [wildflourpastrycharleston.com](http://wildflourpastrycharleston.com).

**Hominy Grill**

The legendary shrimp and grits shares menu space with gluten-free pancakes at this intimate neighborhood restaurant. 207 Rutledge Avenue, [hominygrill.com](http://hominygrill.com).

**Black Tap Coffee**

Grab a dirty chai latte (a shot of espresso is added) or a pour-over coffee in this modern space, located in the heart of the Harleston Village neighborhood. 70½ Beaufain Street, [blacktapcoffee.com](http://blacktapcoffee.com).

**► Lunch****Martha Lou's Kitchen**

Martha Lou Gadsden has been serving up soul food for nearly 30 years. Don't miss her juicy-on-the-inside, crunchy-on-the-outside fried chicken, and wash it down with plenty of sweet tea. 1068 Morrison Drive, 843-577-9583.

**Xiao Bao Biscuit**

Housed in a beautifully revamped gas station, this bustling spot offers pan-Asian comfort food, creating traditional dishes from regional ingredients. 224 Rutledge Avenue, [xiaobaobiscuit.com](http://xiaobaobiscuit.com).

**Two Boroughs Larder**

The laid-back dining room in this restaurant-market double threat is full of exposed brick and reclaimed wood; the modern menu focuses on local meats and vegetables. After lunch, peruse specialty pantry items like locally roasted King Bean coffee. 186 Coming Street, [twoboroughslarder.com](http://twoboroughslarder.com).



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**South of Broad Street**  
Landmarked homes and buildings abound in this distinguished neighborhood.



**Two Boroughs Larder**  
Artisanal pantry items, tableware, and provisions from nearby farms line the shelves.



**Husk**  
Much of the produce that chef Sean Brock serves is grown in the restaurant's own garden.

## ► Dinner &amp; Drinks

**Husk**

At Sean Brock's newest place, sip a handcrafted cocktail and order from the seasonal menu, which changes based on what farmers and fishermen deliver that day. What's not used is pickled, preserved, or smoked for later.

76 Queen Street, [huskrestaurant.com](http://huskrestaurant.com).

**Bowens Island Restaurant**

Located on its own island, an easy 10-mile taxi ride from downtown, this seafood shack has been serving fresh oysters since 1946. Catch an amazing sunset and scrawl your name on the wall before you leave. Here, even the graffiti is charming. 1870 Bowens Island Road, [bowensislandrestaurant.com](http://bowensislandrestaurant.com).

**The Ordinary/FIG**

The team behind both has created two of the most convivial spots in town. At FIG, all the vegetable dishes are fantastic; at the Ordinary, the oyster sliders are a must. 544 King Street, [eattheordinary.com](http://eattheordinary.com). 232 Meeting Street, [eatatfig.com](http://eatatfig.com).

## SHOP

**Ben Silver**

You know that perfectly put-together southern gentleman in the bow tie and argyle socks? He shops here. 149 King Street, [bensilver.com](http://bensilver.com).

**Magar Hatworks**

Check out Leigh Magar's exquisite hats, take a tour of her millinery workshop, and sit down to a traditional tea. 57 Cannon Street, [magarhatworks.com](http://magarhatworks.com).

**Heirloom Book Company**

A foodie bibliophile's dream, this store houses an impressive collection of vintage and first-edition cookbooks, along with a variety of heirloom seeds. 54½ Broad Street, [heirloombookcompany.com](http://heirloombookcompany.com).

**Sugar Bakeshop**

Grab a post-shopping pick-me-up at this tiny sweet spot, run by two transplanted architects turned bakers. The Lady Baltimore cupcakes (sherry-soaked figs, raisins, walnuts, and meringue icing) have inspired a cultlike following. 59½ Cannon Street, [sugarbake.com](http://sugarbake.com).

## EXPLORE

**Planter's Inn**

A blend of old-school charm and modern comfort, it's a great home base for exploring the city. Rent a bike and cruise downtown at dusk, stopping to look at the magnificent homes along the way. 112 North Market Street, [plantersinn.com](http://plantersinn.com).

**Charleston Farmers Market**

Situated in the heart of historic Charleston, it's the place to go on Saturdays to ogle produce, sample regional treats like boiled peanuts, and try local goods, such as the Cannonborough Beverage Co.'s fantastic lemon-laurel soda. Marion Square at King Street and Calhoun Street, [charlestonfarmersmarket.com](http://charlestonfarmersmarket.com).

**Angel Oak Park**

This park is home to the majestic Angel Oak Tree, thought to be one of the oldest trees east of the Mississippi. Bring a picnic lunch; there's plenty of shade under its canopy (17,200 square feet, to be exact). 3688 Angel Oak Road, [charlestonparksconservancy.org](http://charlestonparksconservancy.org).

## A Perfect Day

Brooks Reitz, founder of Jack Rudy Cocktail Co. and our resident Charleston expert, gives us his ideal day in the city: "Charleston will happily reveal its best-kept secrets to the curious traveler. Start the day at the Marina Variety Store. Amid salvaged ship wheels, feast on breakfast staples while overlooking Charleston City Marina—one of the best views in the city. Then decamp for Gaulart & Malicet and a high-octane cup of coffee. The room screams 'locals only,' but we don't bite. Next, a pedicab tour of the tree-lined streets and stately homes of the Battery will set you right, followed by a rest in Battery Park. For lunch, you can't beat Bertha's Kitchen, a soul-food lover's haven in North Charleston. Go all in on the fried whitefish. Keep heading north and you'll find a bustling tasting room and bold beers at Holy City Brewing. Yes, please, barkeep. At that rate, dinner is optional."