

16 Under-the-Radar Southern Food Destinations

BY ZAGAT STAFF | MARCH 23, 2016



American dining is about much more than big-city chefs and fussy small plates; in fact, sometimes it's in those smaller, off-the-beaten path destinations where you find the most soulful experiences. In the first installment of our new series, we're exploring the best under-the-radar dining destinations across America. Our first stop is the Southeastern United States — a region that produced some of the only indigenous cuisines that exist in America today. From Cajun and Creole specialties to Lowcountry cooking of the Carolinas to droolworthy BBQ joints, the Southeastern U.S. is stacked with hidden gems from Mississippi to Florida. Here are 16 destinations to visit on your next Southern road trip.



Greenville, SC

Greenville is often overshadowed by the Antebellum glamour and decadent Lowcountry dishes of South Carolina's major food center, Charleston. What it lacks in population and James Beard awards, it makes up for stunning Blue Ridge Mountain scenery, small-town charm and fantastic fare. It's like the perfect lovechild of Chucktown and Asheville.

Walk down Main Street's idyllic mile-and-a-half drag that houses well over 100 mostly locally owned restaurants including seasonal [Roost Restaurant](#), regional American Grocery and a number of spots owned by multiple Beard dinner participants [Table 301 Restaurant Group: Soby's New Southern Cuisine](#), [Nosedive](#), [Passerelle Bistro](#). In between meals, stop have a drink at [Dark Corner Distillery](#), a production center and tasting room making handcrafted moonshine right on the strip.

The city is so hot that's it's been attracting satellite locations of Asheville favorites like [Tupelo Honey Cafe](#) and soon-to-come, nationally acclaimed [Biscuit Head](#).

Although Southern cuisine is obviously the most widespread, the city flaunts international appeal, as well. Snack on Mediterranean small plates with influences spanning from Spain and Italy to North Africa and the Middle East at chic riverfront spot [The Lazy Goat](#). Slurp on noodles and fragrant broth at one of several pho shops. Visit a sushi joint or Jamaican restaurant, then head over to one of excellent bakeries like French patisserie [Le Grand](#), as well as cupcake and dessert bar [The Chocolate Moose](#).

-- Sara Ventiera