This iconic Southern town has no shortage of attractions, which is why it’s a perennial haven for tourists. From historic homes and architecture, a thriving culinary scene, to its stylish locals, there are many reasons why T+L readers named Charleston the Number One City in America for 2015. In town for a short jaunt? Check our itinerary for the ideal weekend there now.

Where to Stay

On August 27, Charleston’s newest boutique hot spot, the Grand Bohemian Hotel Charleston, opened with all the panache and flash, rivaling wine rooms and a rooftop lounge with a shades-of-Philippe-STARCK-does-Miami tone, right down to the inevitable fire pit. The Grand Bohemian is a symbol of what’s to come to the increasingly slick Charleston, with more than five new boutique hotels opening in line in the next year or two.

On Wentworth Street, The Restoration, a stylish boutique property, is expanding from 16 to 30 rooms. On State Street, The Spectator opened in July, themed around The Great Gatsby (the bar serves a “Fitz-gerald” w/ish local Hat Trick Gin) with elegant hand-painted silk tapestries in the Jazz Age-esque lobby. In the French Quarter, The Vendue—a funky art-themed boutique hotel with high-ceilinged old Charleston rooms—features painters working at their easels in the public areas.

What to Eat

The Pecking Room is run by a cooking-good chef, Lins Creps. His Brown & Grits is a perfectly balanced blend of local Goochie Boy grits, tasso duck, and prawn cream. For honest southern food, locals favor The Glass Onion, named after the Beatles song and devoted to fried green tomatoes and cornmeal-fried catfish.

The adjacent Swig & Swine is ramping up barbecue to an art form, with smoked pork belly that melts in the mouth like caramels. On East Bay Street, Sean Brock—named for McCready’s and Husk—has opened the first-rate Mexican restaurant Minero (pictured); the Minero Burrito features both nacho de Oaxaca and hoppin’ John.

What to See and Do

The allure of the city begins with Historic Charleston Foundation architecture tours, highlighted by the free-floating staircase at the 1818 Nathaniel Russell House Museum. Afterward, wind down at Mira Winery’s brand new facility, the Napa Valley Education Center & Tasting Rooms (NVEC), offering lecturers on wine and tasting flights of Mira Winery products from the Napa Valley—we’re partial to the 2010 Syrah.

Where to Shop
On Cannon Street, breaking-trend types seek out Indigo & Cotton for a selection of curated men's wear, ranging from Gitman Brothers shirts to Raleigh Denim. Another Cannon Street mainstay is Candy Shop Vintage, with Charleston rice beads and other retro jewelry looks, featured on Mad Men and such. (For more shopping tips, check out the blog of local stylist Andrea Serrano, www.charlestonshopcurator.com.)

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