The Weekender: Charleston, South Carolina

This charming city boasts some of the best food and history in the country.

Written by Natasha Wolff

A two-hour flight from New York City, South Carolina's oldest and largest city, Charleston is a perfect weekend getaway, especially for those who love to eat and drink, play golf, visit historic homes or just chill out. Here are some of our favorite spots visited during a recent December long weekend trip. It's hard to choose just a few restaurants to hit—and you'll certainly return home several pounds heavier.

Where to Stay:

Watermark Mansion is a 24-room hotel situated in a historic 1830s mansion downtown. Warm, welcoming service and Southern charm abound and the old-world rooms feel very cozy and in keeping with the lowcountry homes in the neighborhood. An onsite restaurant provides complimentary breakfast and the Urban Nirvana Spa on the manicured grounds offers relaxing treatments.

The year-old Dewberry Charleston hotel honors the history of the famed 1960s L. Mendel Rivers Federal Building with a tastefully restored interior in collaboration with Studio Dew (John Dewberry's design studio) and design firm Workstead. The 155-room hotel boasts modern rooms with hand-painted wallpaper and marble bathrooms, a gorgeous cypress-beamed spa, Hermitage's restaurant and the lively Living Room lounge and bar. A must for a stay or just a cocktail!
Dunbar’s Charlestoun

Where to Eat:

Now in a larger location in an up-and-coming neighborhood, beloved bakery and café, *Busch & Bar* has expanded its offerings with both breakfast/brunch items and pastries as well as more evolved Middle Eastern fare for lunch and dinner. Aside from the famous chocolate tahini halva and eggs shakshuka, there are many unique mezze plates like whipped feta and a play on a Waldorf salad with kohlrabi that will delight.

Bucher & Bar

Hulk is a refined barbecue eatery in Charleston. Aside from the burger you can get on the bar there are lots of delicious pig options (we enjoyed the pork ribs, pork mac and cheese, and pork chop) as well as delectable country ham with biscuits and cornmeal-crusted fish to delight. And can’t miss the cornbread or the homemade desserts. Great for brunch, lunch or dinner.

Hulk

McClelds’ Tavern is a cozy American restaurant serving delicious local seafood, charred salad, skewers, and local fish. It was the ideal place to enjoy a leisurely Sunday night dinner in a spacious setting.

McClelds’ Tavern

After years of running his family’s Bar-B-Que in Hemingway, South Carolina, chef and pitmaster Rodney Scott has opened his own eponymous BBQ spot, *Rodney Scott’s BBQ* to much fanfare. Having named accolades from Bon Appetit, you’d be hard to wait on line for Scott’s “‘holy hell’ fare like spare ribs and pulled pork alongside pan-seared chicken and must-have sides like mac and cheese, cornbread and hush puppies. And while you’re there, grab a banana pudding to go before checking out the impressive pit housed in an adjacent building.

Eggs, which is just as hard to get into now as it was when it first opened, is worth a visit for dinner. Lowcountry favorites like pitted Carolina shrimp, mustard-crusted fish and fish stew Provençal will wow your taste buds and the always-packed yet quiet room is a perfect place to spend an evening. The sticky southern cake (think sticky toffee pudding) for dessert is not to be missed.

Where to Spa:

Kiawah Island is a barrier island golf resort and community located just 35 minutes south of Charleston on the Atlantic Ocean. Boasting five championship golf courses, the 255-room *The Sanctuary at Kiawah Island* resort and luxury villas and homes to rent, there is enough on the island to keep you busy for days. The Sanctuary spa is the ultimate retreat for the mind and body. With 12 spa rooms and aromatic treatments to calm and restore, you’ll want to spend all day lounging in the relaxation rooms.

Kiawah Island