

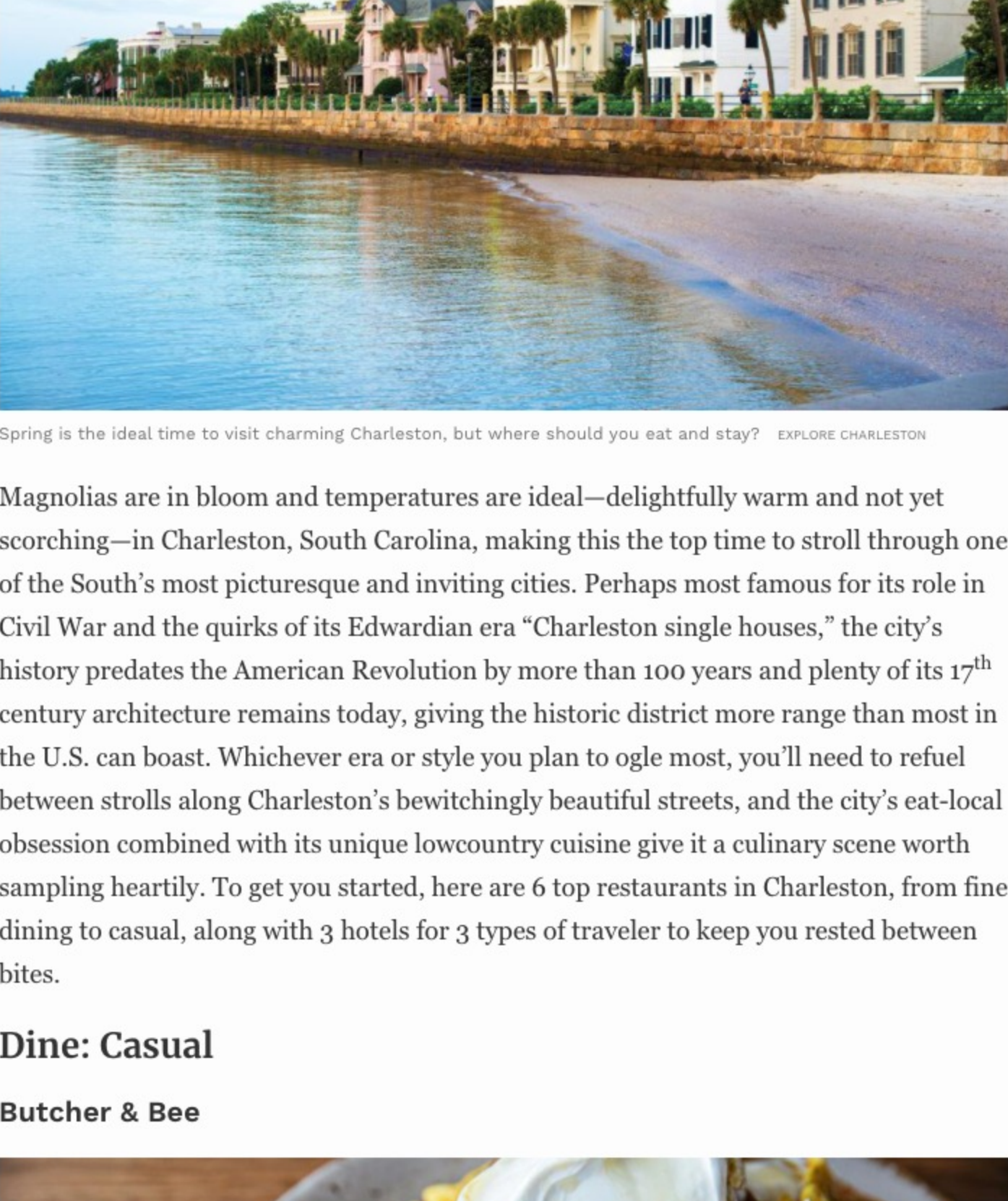
# The Top Restaurants And Hotels To Visit In Charleston



**Brandon Schultz** Contributor

Travel

*I travel the world bringing back stories for you.*

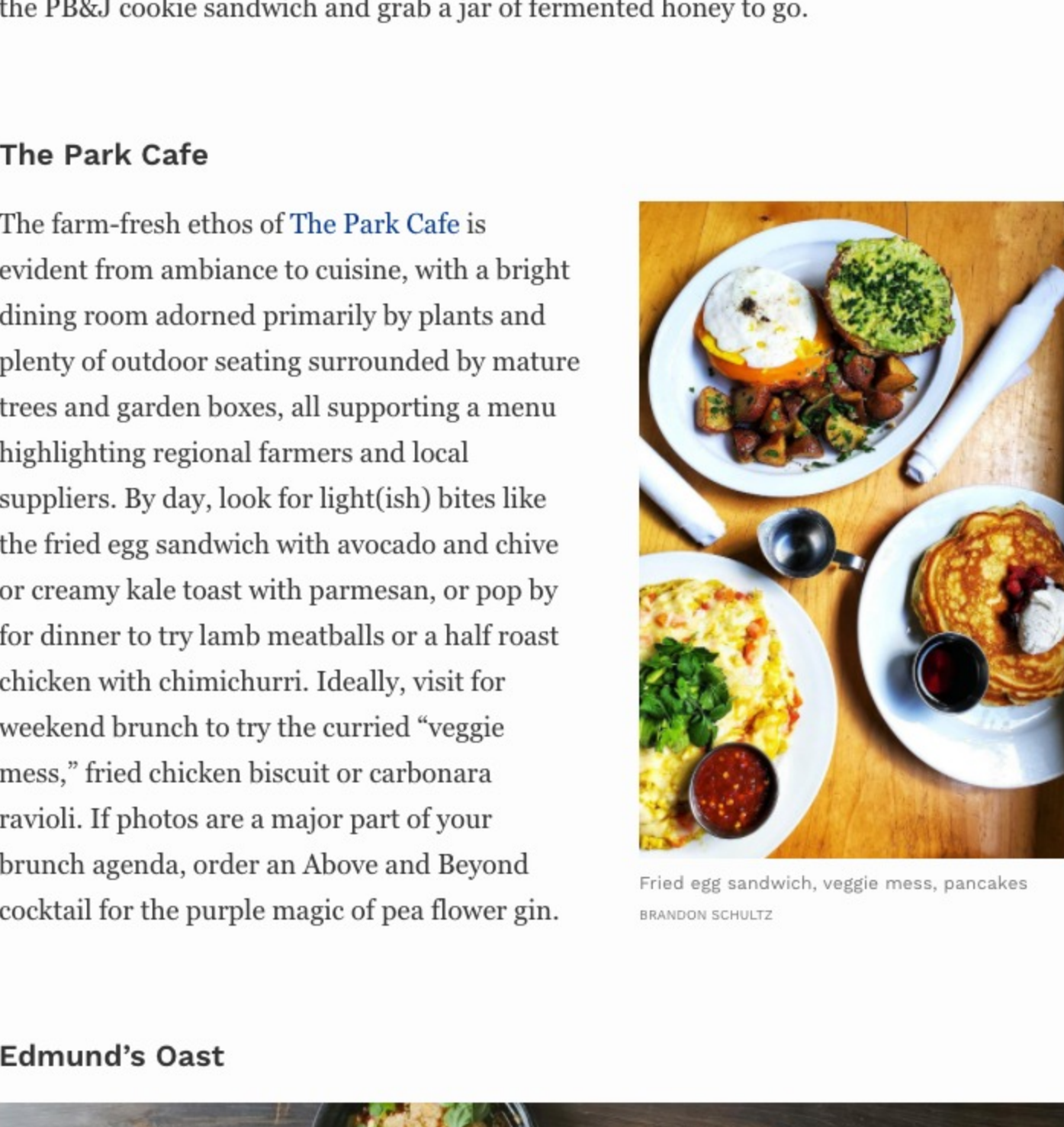


Spring is the ideal time to visit charming Charleston, but where should you eat and stay? [EXPLORE CHARLESTON](#)

Magnolias are in bloom and temperatures are ideal—delightfully warm and not yet scorching—in Charleston, South Carolina, making this the top time to stroll through one of the South’s most picturesque and inviting cities. Perhaps most famous for its role in Civil War and the quirks of its Edwardian era “Charleston single houses,” the city’s history predates the American Revolution by more than 100 years and plenty of its 17<sup>th</sup> century architecture remains today, giving the historic district more range than most in the U.S. can boast. Whichever era or style you plan to ogle most, you’ll need to refuel between strolls along Charleston’s bewitchingly beautiful streets, and the city’s eat-local obsession combined with its unique lowcountry cuisine give it a culinary scene worth sampling heartily. To get you started, here are 6 top restaurants in Charleston, from fine dining to casual, along with 3 hotels for 3 types of traveler to keep you rested between bites.

## Dine: Casual

### Butcher & Bee

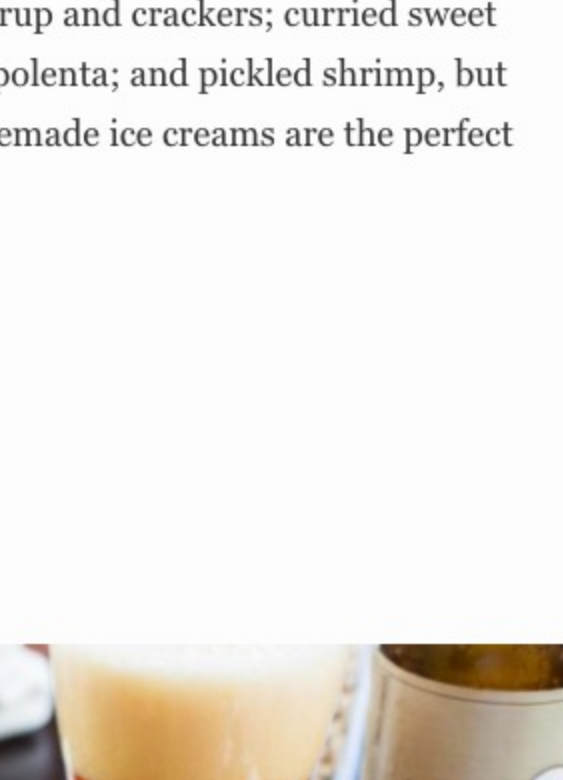


Seasonal French toast, banana, curried cashews, fermented honey [ANDREW CEBULKA FOR BUTCHER & BEE](#)

For a restaurant that launched on the principle of assembling the perfectly crafted sandwich, it should be no surprise that **Butcher & Bee** bakes all of its own swoon-worthy breads and pastries from starters through desserts, and with an open-kitchen bakery, it’s easy to keep an eye on the action yourself from the more intimate space just off the main dining room. The menu changes often, but one constant you shouldn’t miss is the signature whipped feta with fermented honey, served with soft pita (house-made, obviously). Celery root socca; avocado crispy salad with Carolina Gold crispy rice; and roasted maitake mushrooms with peas and cashew fromage blanc are among the seasonal offerings of the veggie-forward program, but this is not vegetarian restaurant. Roasted chicken with turmeric yogurt and skirt steak with creamed sour corn should help you recall the “butcher” half of this cheerful establishment’s name. Save room for the PB&J cookie sandwich and grab a jar of fermented honey to go.

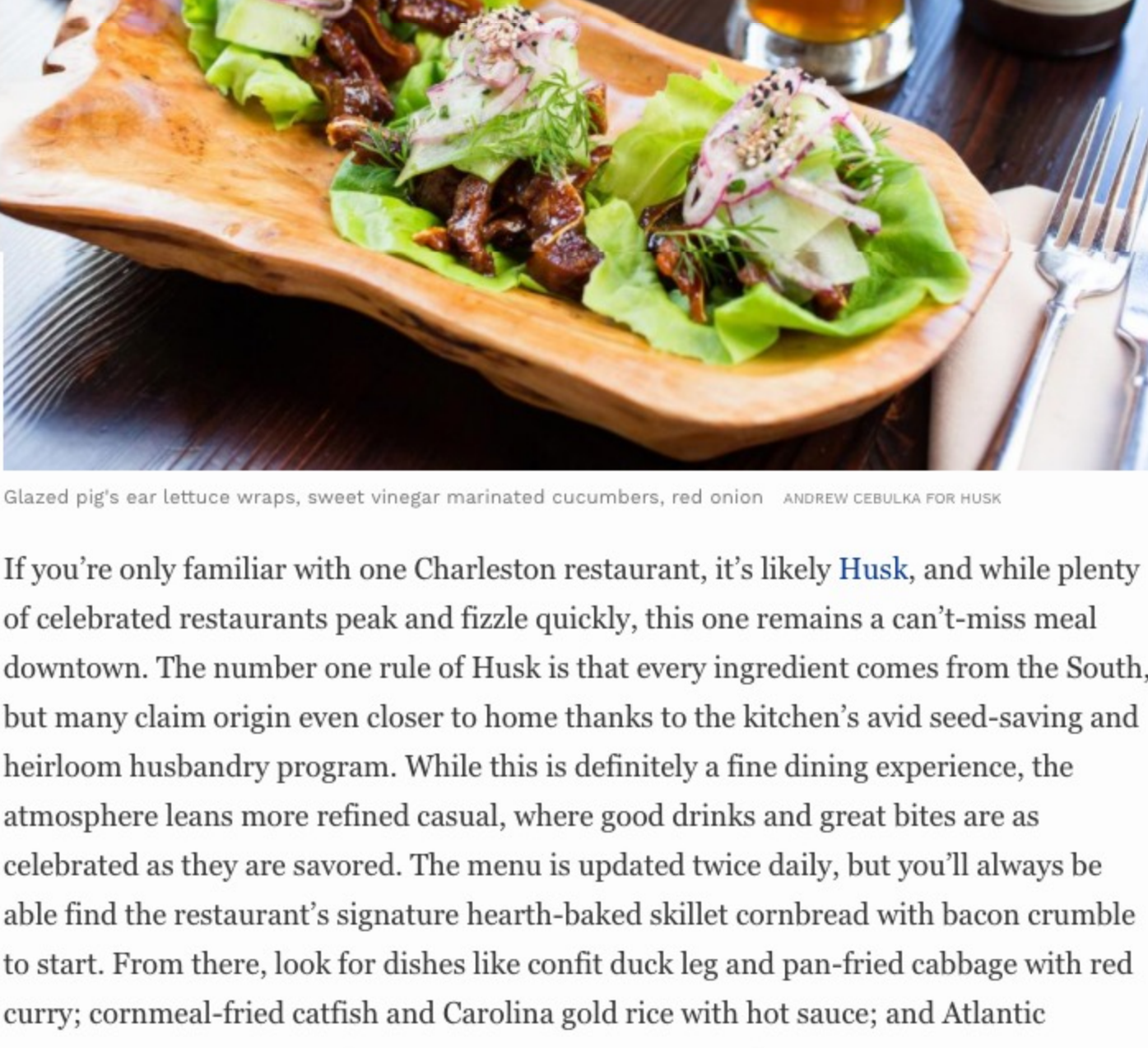
### The Park Cafe

The farm-fresh ethos of **The Park Cafe** is evident from ambiance to cuisine, with a bright dining room adorned primarily by plants and plenty of outdoor seating surrounded by mature trees and garden boxes, all supporting a menu highlighting regional farmers and local suppliers. By day, look for light(ish) bites like the fried egg sandwich with avocado and chive or creamy kale toast with parmesan, or pop by for dinner to try lamb meatballs or a half roast chicken with chimichurri. Ideally, visit for weekend brunch to try the curried “veggie mess,” fried chicken biscuit or carbonara ravioli. If photos are a major part of your brunch agenda, order an Above and Beyond cocktail for the purple magic of pea flower gin.



Fried egg sandwich, veggie mess, pancakes [BRANDON SCHULTZ](#)

### Edmund’s Oast

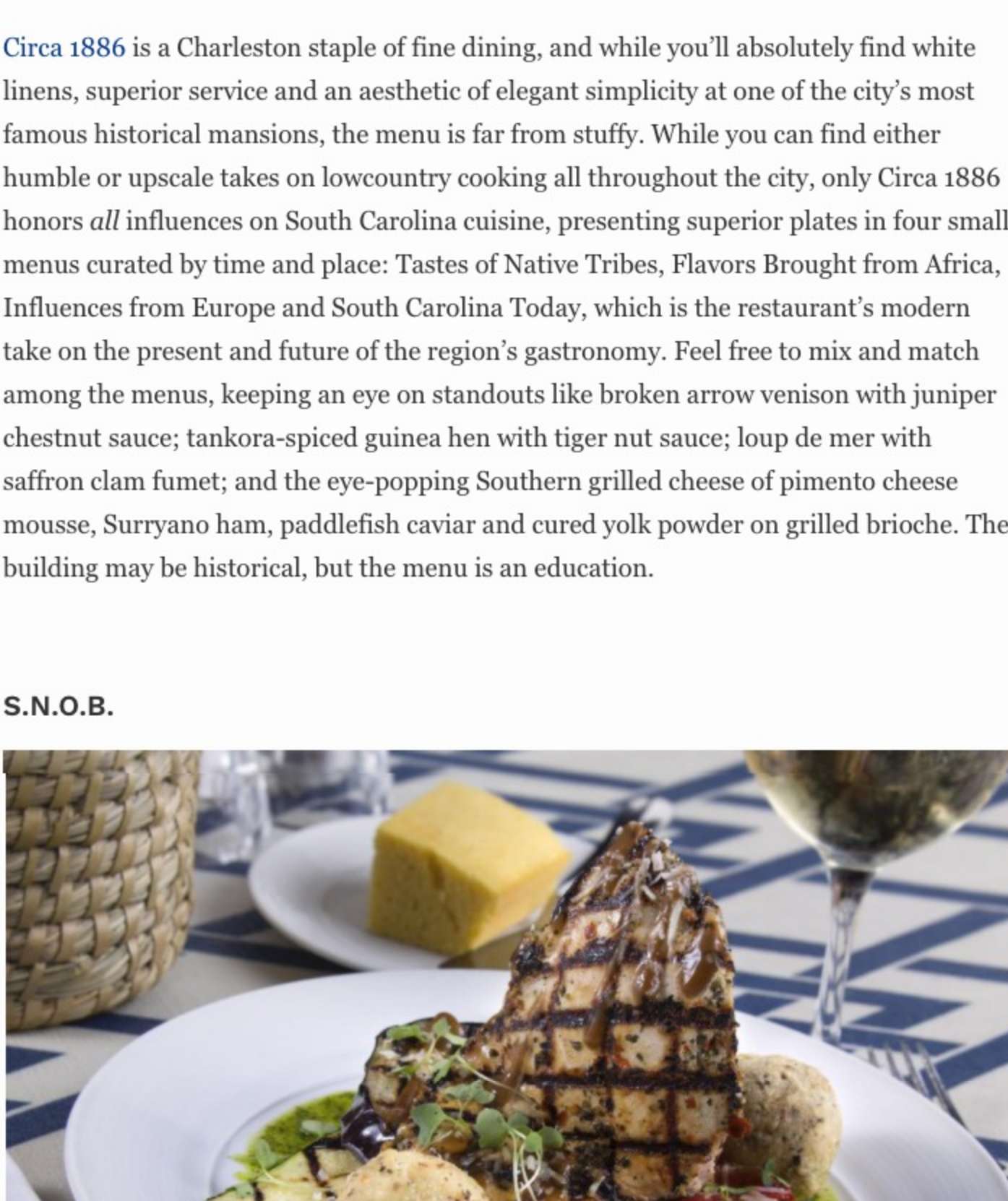


Pimento cheese, mac n’ peas, curried sweet potatoes, spicy collards, and more [BRANDON SCHULTZ](#)

Named for an 18th-century English brewer who made his home and fortune in Charleston (enough to donate plenty toward American Revolutionary War efforts), **Edmund’s Oast** should be equally lauded for its top culinary program as its craft brews. You’ll find more than a dozen of the beers on tap at any given time and can expect everything from IPA and Belgian wits to lagers, stouts and a healthy selection of sours (the brewery has a dedicated chamber for sours and wild fermentation) but, unlike most brewpubs, Edmund’s Oast is worth a visit for the food alone. You can certainly stop in for a quick po’boy and a pint or grab a chicken dinner package to go, but your best bet is to settle into a patio table and order up an array of bites to accompany leisurely sips. Top choices include the pimento cheese with cane syrup and crackers; curried sweet potatoes; Korean meatballs with pineapple and rice polenta; and pickled shrimp, but don’t skip the sides, especially the mac n’ peas. Homemade ice creams are the perfect way to end any meal or flight fest here.

## Dine: Formal

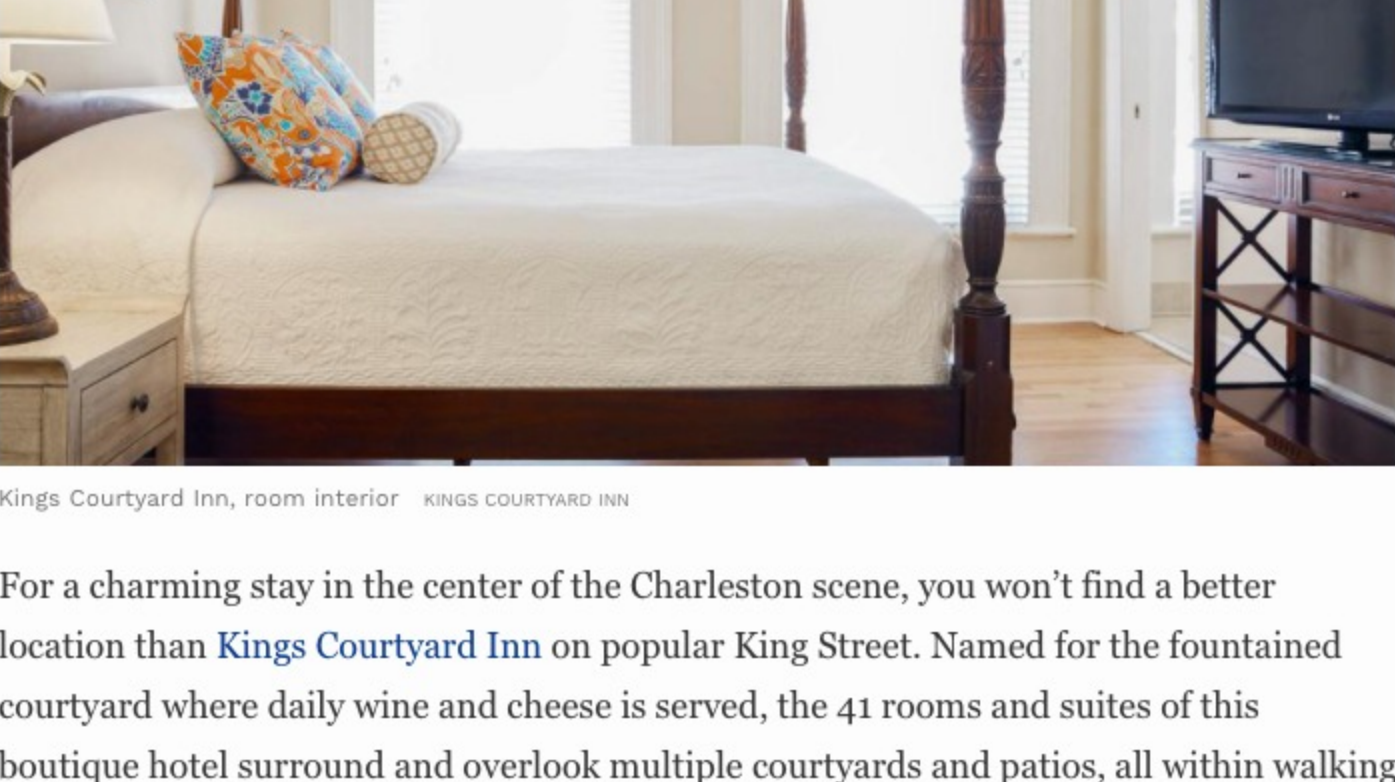
### Husk



Glazed pig’s ear lettuce wraps, sweet vinegar marinated cucumbers, red onion [ANDREW CEBULKA FOR HUSK](#)

If you’re only familiar with one Charleston restaurant, it’s likely **Husk**, and while plenty of celebrated restaurants peak and fizzle quickly, this one remains a can’t-miss meal downtown. The number one ruler of Husk is that every ingredient comes from the South, but many claim origin even closer to home thanks to the kitchen’s avid seed-saving and heirloom husbandry program. While this is definitely a fine dining experience, the atmosphere leans more refined casual, where good drinks and great bites are as celebrated as they are savored. The menu is updated daily, but you’ll always be able find the restaurant’s signature hearth-baked skillet cornbread with bacon crumble to start. From there, look for dishes like confit duck leg and pan-fried cabbage with red curry; cornmeal-fried catfish and Carolina gold rice with hot sauce; and Atlantic grouper, new potatoes and mustard greens with buttermilk broth. After your meal, order Charleston Light Dragoon’s Punch with a recipe that dates to 1792 for a truly local flavor.

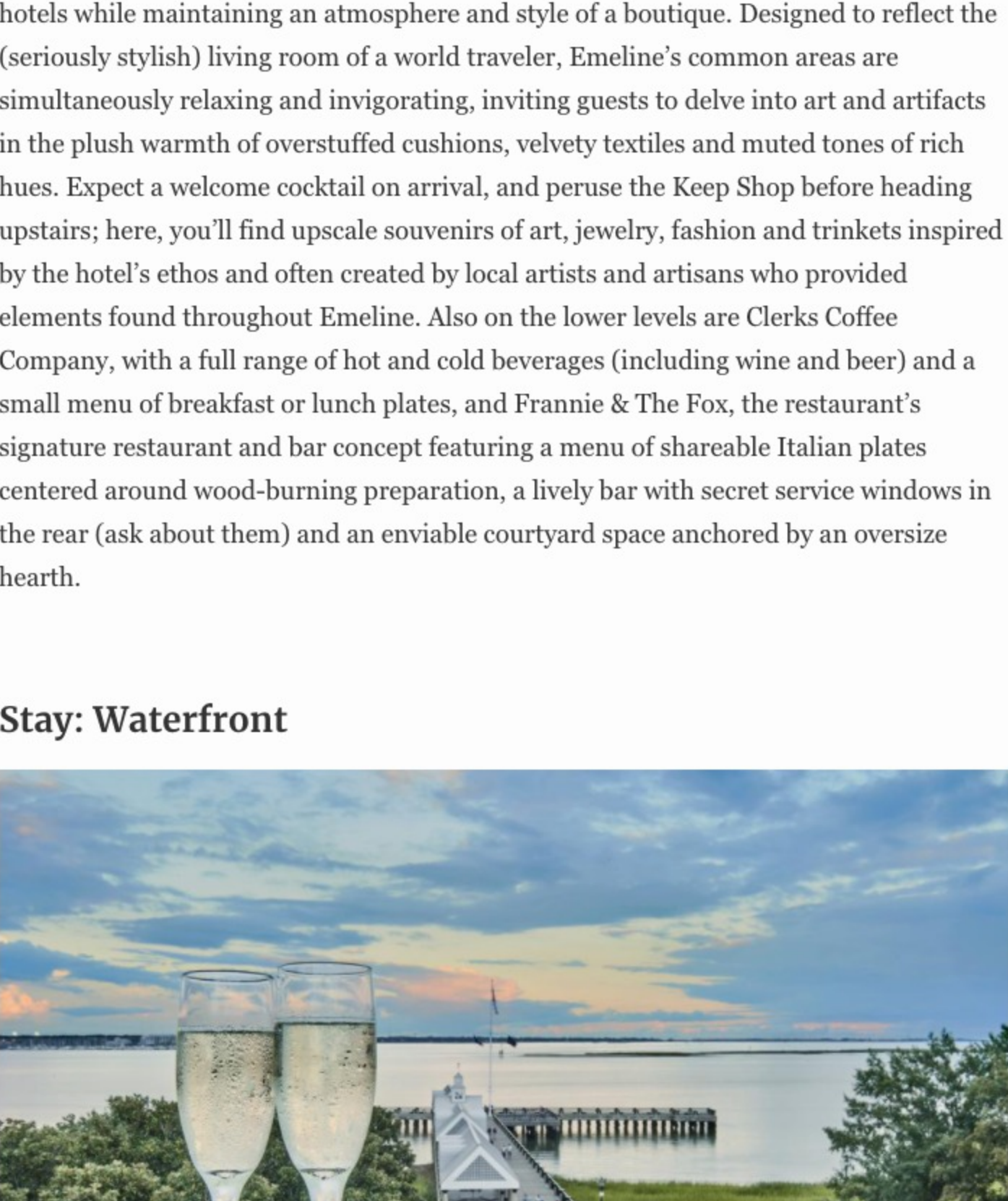
### Circa 1886



Broken arrow venison, sunchoke hash, sunflower seed butter, sour cherry pan sauce, smoked dandelion ... [\[+\]](#) [CIRCA 1886](#)

**Circa 1886** is a Charleston staple of fine dining, and while you’ll absolutely find white linens, superior service and an aesthetic of elegant simplicity at one of the city’s most famous historical mansions, the menu is far from stuffy. While you can find either humble or upscale takes on lowcountry cooking all throughout the city, only **Circa 1886** honors *all* influences on South Carolina cuisine, presenting superior plates in four small menus curated by time and place: Tastes of Native Tribes, Flavors Brought from Africa, Influences from Europe and South Carolina Today, which is the restaurant’s modern take on the present and future of the region’s gastronomy. Feel free to mix and match among the menus, keeping an eye on standouts like broken arrow venison with juniper chestnut sauce; tankora-spiced guinea hen with tiger nut sauce; loup de mer with saffron clam fumet; and the eye-popping Southern grilled cheese of pimento cheese mousse, Surryano ham, paddlefish caviar and cured yolk powder on grilled brioche. The building may be historical, but the menu is an education.

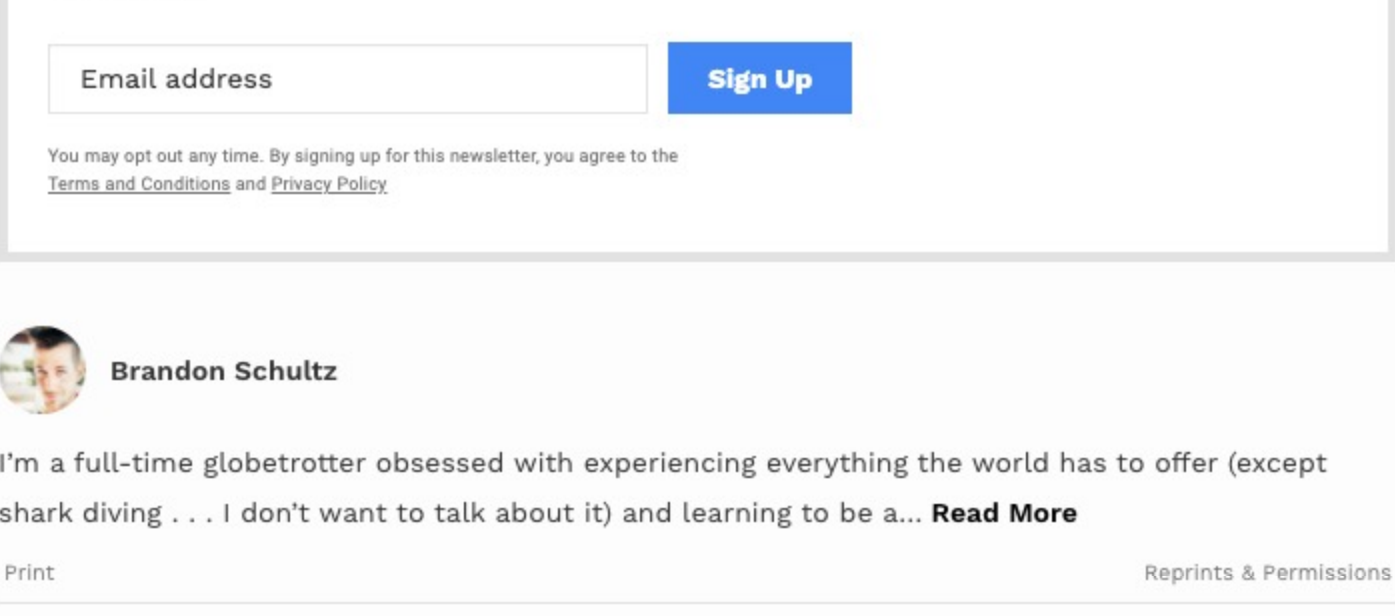
### S.N.O.B.



Southern medley [S.N.O.B.](#)

Fine dining it is, but don’t be fooled by the name: You’re more than welcome here. While the acronym does reflect the caliber of cuisine you’ll experience at S.N.O.B., it’s an indicator of location (Slightly North of Broad), not attitude. Leave behind notions of upturned noses and replace them with anticipation of nightly live music, but also come prepared for elegant preparation of top-notch plates. Menus change daily, but expect starters like steamed oysters or smoked trout rilletes before classics like the Southern medley of grilled chicken, zucchini, eggplant and tomato in basil pesto with goat cheese croissants or shrimp and grits with ham and house sausage at lunch, and pan-seared scallops with Carolina gold rice or New Zealand lamb rack with rosemary reduction at dinner. Daily specials could be anything from grilled swordfish to fried soft shell crab, and usually include an additional soup or salad, as well as a dessert. Always on the menu: a banana cream pie with rum caramel worth saving room for.

## Stay: Small Boutique



Kings Courtyard Inn, room interior [KINGS COURTYARD INN](#)

For a charming stay in the center of the Charleston scene, you won’t find a better location than **Kings Courtyard Inn** on popular King Street. Named for the fountain courtyard where daily wine and cheese is served, the 41 rooms and suites of this boutique hotel surround and overlook multiple courtyards and patios, all within walking distance of some of the city’s most celebrated restaurants, shops and sights. While rooms vary in size and contents, you can count on plenty of Southern comfort from four-poster beds, gas fireplaces, large windows, tall ceilings and vibrant textiles enlivening light and airy spaces. Continental breakfast can be enjoyed in your room or in the courtyard, and you’ll find any time of day improved by the property’s complimentary coffee, water bottles, and sherry (yes, sherry).

## Stay: Large Boutique



Emeline, room interior [EMELINE](#)

Making a considerably splash in Charleston’s hotel and restaurant scene is the recently-opened **Emeline**, offering 200+ rooms and suites along with all the services of large hotels while maintaining an atmosphere and style of a boutique. Designed to reflect the (seriously stylish) living room of a world traveler, Emeline’s common areas are simultaneously relaxing and invigorating, inviting guests to delve into art and artifacts in the plush warmth of overstuffed cushions, velvety textiles and muted tones of rich hues. Expect a welcome cocktail on arrival, and peruse the Keep Shop before heading upstairs; here, you’ll find upscale souvenirs of art, jewelry, fashion and trinkets inspired by the hotel’s ethos and often created by local artists and artisans who provided elements found throughout Emeline. Also on the lower levels are Clerks Coffee Company, with a full range of hot and cold beverages (including wine and beer) and a small menu of breakfast or lunch plates, and Frannie & The Fox, the restaurant’s signature restaurant and bar concept featuring a menu of shareable Italian plates centered around wood-burning preparation, a lively bar with secret service windows in the rear (ask about them) and an enviable courtyard space anchored by an oversize hearth.

## Stay: Waterfront



HarbourView Inn, rooftop terrace [HARBOURVIEW INN](#)

To take full advantage of Charleston’s coastline without leaving the historic district, head to **HarbourView Inn**. The only waterfront property in the neighborhood, you’ll not only find rooms with balconies and harbor views, but a private rooftop terrace overlooking the harbor and Waterfront Park, exclusively for guest use from sunrise to sunset (you’ll recognize Charleston’s famous pineapple fountain below). Complimentary coffee, teas and snacks are available throughout the day with much-loved cookies and milk served each evening, and continental breakfast can be enjoyed in your room or on the rooftop terrace. Rooms range in bonus features from fireplaces and balconies to unique architectural elements like exposed brick accent walls and dramatic windows, but if you’re looking for that waterfront window for views from your pillow, you’ll need to spring for the Grand HarbourView category, which also comes with nearly all of the above.

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**Brandon Schultz**

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