

# CHARLESTON NOW



## What to Do in Charleston in May 2018

by BRAD RICKMAN  
April 23, 2018

*What's happening in the city this month.*



▼

Charleston hits its stride and then some in May, with a calendar that's full from start to finish with some of the year's biggest events. Get these down on your to-do list.

### Whole Lotta Local Art

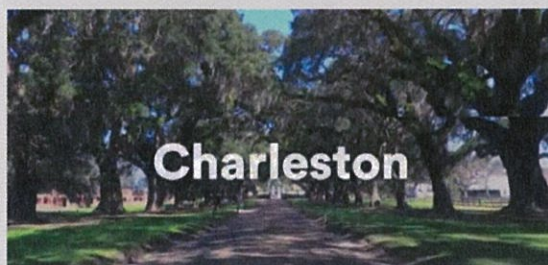
The **North Charleston Arts Fest** brings its eclectic survey of the region's considerable talent pool back for the 36th year, May 2 through 6. The Fest takes pride in its variety; you'll find everything from Gullah spirituals to puppet shows to films to live music and theater, with multiple events each day. The whole thing culminates on May 5 and 6, when the Arts Fest Expo drops two halls and four stages of come-all entertainment, exhibitions, and activities on the local convention center. There's no better way to get acquainted with the contemporary culture of the region.

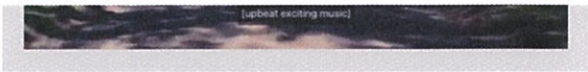
### Plus Some From Around the World

The **Spoleto Festival USA** may have started as an almost tongue-in-cheek response to its Italian namesake, but it glides into its 41st year (May 25 through June 10) as a venerated national institution, one of the country's most wide-ranging arts festivals. Over 150 performances will span genres and media—opera, classical music, jazz, theater, film, dance—and give you the chance to catch artists from around the world. We're particularly looking forward to the U.S. premiere of Donizetti's *Pia de' Tolomei*, which recasts the setting of its high-drama romantic entanglement and tragic misunderstanding to 1930s pre-war Europe; and to Cornish company **Kneehigh's** sweeping musical take on the fascinating, colorful life of Marc and Bella Chagall. Oh, and you'll have to arm-wrestle us for the front row at shows by Cuban legend **Chucho Valdés**, *Late Show* music director **Jon Batiste**, and **Fred Hirsch's Trio**. Tickets and everything else you need to know are [here](#).

WATCH THIS

### A Day in Charleston





The companion **Piccolo Spoleto Festival** also runs May 25 through June 10, and focuses on artists from the Southeast. You'll find everything from art exhibits to concerts (the traditional *Sunset Serenade* by the Charleston Symphony Orchestra at the U.S. Custom House on May 25 is a highlight), theater, comedy shows, and even a courtyard poetry series—all of it reasonably priced, some of it even free. **Tickets are on sale as of today, May 1.**

### Meanwhile, on the Water

The **Atlantic Cup**, which runs May 22 through May 26, is not only the country's most environmentally responsible sailing race—it's fully carbon neutral—it's also the longest offshore race in the western Atlantic, with the first of its three legs running for three or more days and 640 nautical miles from Charleston to New York, and the second another 360 miles up to Portland, Maine. (The third leg runs inshore in the Portland area.) If you have young ones, don't miss the special family program on May 24, when kids can visit the boats and meet the sailors.

### Get A Round

The **Seventh Annual Charleston Beer Garden** flows in on May 19 at the Grove at Patriots Point. It's a major gathering—you'll be able to sample the work of 30 craft breweries from North and South Carolina, with more than 60 beers on tap, as well as food trucks, beer games, live music, and a "Homebrewers' Village" in which you can taste the personal, limited supplies of select local home brews, and let the brewers themselves—who'll be on hand—know what you think of them. ☺

### More Stories From Around The Web

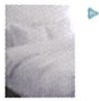
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