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Due South

TRAVEL AND ADVENTURE FOR THE SOUTHERN SOUL



LOWCOUNTRY HIGH LIFE: The fried chicken platter with a trio of sides at Leon's Oyster Shop; cycling in Hampton Park.

Charleston's New Charm

The Holy City's hottest neighborhood isn't the one you might expect

BY MATT LEE AND TED LEE

★ CITY PORTRAIT: **CHARLESTON, SC** / FORK IN THE ROAD p. 163 / THE SOUTHERN AGENDA p. 171

WE LOVE TALKING TO FOLKS WHO recently moved to Charleston, most likely because we remember—viscerally—being newcomers ourselves to the Holy City. In August 1979, our parents moved from bleak, post-Son of Sam Manhattan into a tall yellow townhouse on Rainbow Row, in predominantly residential South of Broad. That neighborhood encompasses the southern tip of the peninsula, where the Ashley River meets the Cooper River in Charleston Harbor. We were eight and ten, awed and overwhelmed trying to make sense of this world of old houses and horse-drawn carriages, where a street vendor pushing a perambulator-style stroller sold wet paper bags of peanuts that had been boiled

STREET CRED

Left to right: Jen Sample takes a seat at Holy City Barber; Zero George, Charleston's newest boutique hotel, is a quiet refuge; the Junesong Provision at Edmund's Oast; coffee and breakfast sweets to go at Brown's Court Bakery.



HOT SPOTS

Holding Court on Upper King

The newest hangouts drawing locals north of Calhoun
by Elizabeth Hutchison

Eat + Drink

BROWN'S COURT BAKERY

The classics—pillowy brioche, crusty baguettes, tangy sour-dough boules—are well represented. But it's head baker David Schnell's creations such as Sriracha croissants, benne seed hamburger buns, and porter pretzel breads that you won't find at just any bakery. (And if you don't get to Brown's Court early,

you may not find those croissants at all.) In the unlikely event that any offerings remain at the end of the day, Schnell sells leftovers at a discount during a nightly 5:00 to 7:00 happy hour. brownscourt.com

CALLIE'S HOT LITTLE BISCUIT

It's best to pretend calories don't count at biscuit maven Carrie Morey's new bakeshop. At the counter-service-

only space, you can choose from seven varieties of Morey's tender and buttery biscuits—blackberry, cinnamon, country ham—or try the day's special (think hot fried chicken-stuffed). Oh, just go on and get a sweet and a savory. On Fridays and Saturdays, Callie's is open late—handy if you need breakfast served at 1:00 a.m. calliesbiscuits.com

CHEZ NOUS

This jewelry box of a restaurant—only five tables downstairs and nine up—builds on the success of co-owners Patrick and Fanny Panella's much-loved just-north-of-Broad wine bar, Bin 152, with adventurous French-focused fare. The menu changes daily, and, like the space,



it's small: two appetizers, two entrées, and two desserts. Thankfully, they do pour more than two wines. cheznouschs.com

EDMUND'S OAST

There are forty-one beers on tap (many of them rare), thirty canned and bottled options, rotating house-brewed labels, and even growlers. But Charleston native Andy Henderson's menu of snacks and shared plates—from pickled local white shrimp to fresh ricotta with charred seasonal vegetables—is generating as much buzz as the suds. edmundsoast.com

ELLIOTBOROUGH MINI BAR

Though this out-of-the-way salon on the corner of Bogard and Percy is too small for a full restaurant

kitchen, locals know to stop by on Tuesday nights for owner Anna Faenza's intimate weekly pop-up dinners, hosted by a rotating cast of in-town guest chefs. Can't make it? That's okay. Near-nightly live music, a diverse wine list, and a cozy corner table are reasons enough to come any evening. elliottboroughminibar.com

JENI'S SPLENDID ICE CREAM

Although ice cream queen Jeni Britton Bauer originally hails from Ohio, she has a way with Southern flavors. Her Dixie-inspired farm-to-pint frozen offerings—think whiskey and pecans, and Savannah buttermint—keep a near constant stream of happy (if sticky) customers coming to

her new Charleston outpost. jenis.com

LEON'S OYSTER SHOP

Opened in May, this neighborhood hang-out already has the feel of a time-tested haunt—with a devoted group of regulars to prove it. Come for the oysters, served raw, Rockefeller, or char-grilled. But come back for what you'll most likely see on locals' plates: flawlessly crisp fried chicken, which gets a little "surf" courtesy of Old Bay seasoning. leonsoystershop.com

THE ORDINARY

Housed inside a former bank, James Beard Award-winning chef Mike Lata's fancy-but-not-fussy fish house sources briny bounty from the entire

Eastern Seaboard, with emphasis on coastal Georgia and the Carolinas. You can sample it all in one of the decadent seafood towers or perch at the raw bar to watch shuckers make quick work of local Capers Blades. eattheordinary.com

THE PARK CAFE

Good food made with fresh regional ingredients doesn't have to come with a fine-dining price tag. Let restaurateur Karalee Nielsen prove it to you at her full-service neighborhood café in Wagener Terrace. Open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, the tucked-away eatery sits adjacent to Hampton Park. Explore the green space—the peninsula's largest—post meal or hit the café's grab-and-go grocery

to pick up all the fixings for a picnic. theparkcafechs.com

PROOF

A quiet cocktail den perfect for pre-dinner drinks, Proof is an easy walk to most King Street restaurants. Community tables butt up against dark wood-paneled walls, and a chalkboard above the bar advertises drink specials and light snacks such as boiled peanut hummus, deviled eggs, and mini doughnuts. The signature Dark and Stormy gets an extra kick from house-made ginger beer. 843-793-1422

THE RAREBIT

The uncommon Charleston restaurant and bar with late-night fare that's not aimed at a college crowd, this Rat Pack-

style diner serves breakfast until 1:00 a.m. Classic cocktails such as Corpse Revivers, Sazeracs, and whiskey sours go down just as well with a plate of chicken and waffles at 8:00 p.m. as with steak and eggs at midnight. therarebit.com

WAREHOUSE

This former restaurant supply warehouse on Spring Street retains an industrial feel, albeit a dressed-up version with elevated bar food—crispy cauliflower with black pepper aioli, twice-baked potato skins—that flies out of the kitchen. Stiff drinks that range from beer-based cocktails (try the Shandy Shakedown) to pitchers of Rodeo Ruckus (made with bourbon, lemon, ba-

in salt water. Now we're especially solicitous of recent arrivals—reaching out to them, finding out what they're interested in, sending them on paths of inquiry we hope will prove this place to be even richer in story and culture than they ever imagined.

Recently we spoke with a woman who, just weeks earlier, had moved with her husband into a new apartment complex in one of the clutch of booming neighborhoods that orbit Upper King Street. One of the city's main thoroughfares up and down the peninsula, King Street is divided into upper and lower halves by Calhoun Street. South of Calhoun is where you'll find the Charleston of guidebook fame—the tourist-heavy Market district and hotel corridor, and beyond that, pastel-hued colonial mansions with wide porches and secret gardens guarded by wrought-iron gates. But these days, Upper King Street has become a

TASTING NOTES

Clockwise from top: Small-batch sorghum whiskey at High Wire Distilling; roll a few frames at the retro bowling center the Alley; the bar at Chez Nous offers a living room–like hideaway.



HOT SPOTS Continued

sil, and ginger syrup) keep the crowd loose and lively till last call. wearewarehouse.com

XIAO BAO BISCUIT

In the land of shrimp and grits, authentic Asian cuisine was pretty hard to come by until the husband-and-wife team Joshua Walker and Duolan Li began serving their down-home brand of pan-Asian comfort food. If it's nice out, secure a seat on the porch and order the Okonomiyaki (griddled Japanese cabbage, kale, and scallion pancakes) to share. xiaobao.biscuit.com

See + Do

AFFORD-A-BIKE

Not-so-sweaty October is the perfect time to experience this increasingly cyclist-friendly city via pedal power. At Afford-a-Bike's new 10,000-square-foot King Street space, out-of-towners can rent a standard cruiser for just twenty bucks per day. Want to take one home? The owners, Griff Ducworth and Daniel Russell-Einhorn, build custom bicycles starting at \$200. affordabike.com

THE ALLEY

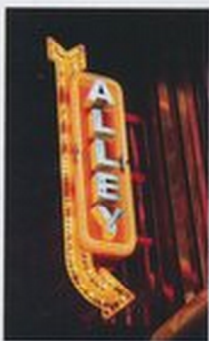
Come early (before 7:00 p.m.) to claim one of eight lanes at this retro sixties-style bowling alley. Go a couple of rounds on vintage arcade games. Or work on your actual jump shot



on the outdoor half-court. Refuel with local beers at the bar and snack on reimagined bowling-alley eats such as Holy City Porter-braised pulled-pork sliders or honey habanero wings. thealleycharleston.com

CHANNELS

Leave it to a couple of sunbaked surfers to put the cool back in beachwear. Founded by Charleston native Russell Robinson and long-time boarder Angelo Vlcek, Channels will have you dressed to impress if you're headed just about anywhere near the



water: from swimwear to sunglasses to sandals by such boutique brands as Roark, Freedom Artist, and Citrine Swim, a line of locally

designed suits. 843-297-4036

DISTILLERY TOURS

No question, Charleston is a drinking town. And yet until a year ago, there wasn't a distillery to be found in the city proper. Now there are two. At **High Wire Distilling Co.**, Culinary Institute of America-trained baker turned distiller Scott Blackwell bottles two small-batch rums, a gin, a vodka, and an award-winning limited-run sorghum whiskey. (Look for bourbon and brandy soon.) Within walking distance, spanking-new **Charleston Distilling Company** crafts vodka and gin, with a rye in the works. Both offer tastings and tours, where you can follow the entire process from grain to glass. highwiredistilling.com; charlestondistilling.com

THE GEORGE GALLERY

A renovated historic home in a largely residential neighborhood probably isn't the first place you'd expect to find a contemporary art gallery that deals in highly modern

abstract paintings. But owner Anne Elkins's knowledge and cheerful enthusiasm (not to mention the impressive work of Southern artists such as Tim Hussey and Paul Yanko) make a trip to the George worth the detour. georgegalleryart.com

HOLY CITY BARBER

Good grooming, plain and simple. That's proprietor Jen Sample's cut-and-shave philosophy. A throwback to old-school barbershops, Holy City takes only walk-ins and doesn't accept cards or checks. Quality haircuts aren't quick haircuts, but with Blind Willie Johnson vinyls spinning on the shop's vintage record player, you'll want to sit and stay awhile. holycitybarber.com

Sleep

ZERO GEORGE

Dean and Lynn Andrews's comfortable eighteen-room boutique hotel sits just two blocks south of Calhoun—a horse-shoe toss from the Upper King Street action. It's comfortably modern but not mod. Find a courtyard table for afternoon cocktails from Zero Café and Bar or reserve space in one of the twice-weekly cooking classes, hosted by the head chef, Vinson Petrillo, inside the property's 1804 kitchen carriage house. Or just sink back into the 350-thread-count linens and sleep in. zerogeorge.com