

EPICUREAN

CHARLOTTE

Food & Wine Magazine



patio pleasures

explore the best of the
city's patio personalities

step inside one family's
adventures in barbequing

make an escape to follow the
vines and wines of surry county

test the limits of your taste
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hot! hot! hot!

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Food & Wine Magazine

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Thierry Garconnet of Terra Restaurant is drinking the Langhe Arneis D.O.C. Cordero di Montezemolo 2010.
Bottle \$45.00

Made from the white grape of Italy's Piedmont region, this wine is bright straw in color with an intense bouquet of peach and acacia blossoms, hazelnuts and yellow flowers. It's lightly styled white wine with gentle citrus edged orchard fruits that recall pear and apricot and a slightly bitter floral note that can resemble almonds on the palate.



Monte Smith of Café Monte French Bakery and Bistro is enjoying the Francois Lurton Les Fume Blanches Sauvignon Blanc de Pays from France.
Glass \$8.00; Bottle \$28.00

The aromatics are classic Sauvignon Blanc grassiness and grapefruit. It's pure bright and lively in the mouth, boasting fresh cut lime, lemon and citrus flavors. Monte just loves the zestiness of this wine. It's so very clean and goes well with shellfish and hot afternoons.



Brad Scorse of Kennedy's Premium Bar & Grill is drinking the 2010 Jardin Stellenbosch Chardonnay from South Africa for the hot days of summer.
Glass \$7.00; Bottle \$26.00

A powerful expression of Chardonnay, the Jardin is brimming with fruit flavor and elegance. A buttery toastiness from the Burgundian oak fermentation balances the complex hazelnut and citrus flavors offered by the tank fermented component of this wine.



Jim Foster of Selwyn Avenue Pub is recommending the Santa Margherita Pinot Grigio Valdadige 2009.
Glass \$8.00; Bottle \$29.00

This dry white wine has a straw yellow color with characteristics of a fresh, fragrant bouquet and versatile taste. It's clean, intense aroma and bone-dry taste (with an appealing flavor of Golden Delicious apples) make Santa Margherita's Pinot Grigio a wine of great personality and versatility.

Kiel Arrington from Lebowskis Neighborhood Grill is sipping on Willamette Valley Vineyard 2009 Riesling for the warmer months.
Glass \$7.00; Bottle \$24.00

A semi sweet medium-body Germantic-style wine, its delicate peach and lychee aromas lead into explosive mouth-filling stone fruit flavors and a stealy acidity. Notes of pineapple contribute to a clean, well-formed fruit to acid balance. The tart rhubarb finish lingers into spicy red pepper flakes in the mid-palate, refreshing and mouth watering.



Terry Miller of D'Vine Wine Café is recommending the 2008 Trenza Tinto—San Luis Obispo County for the summer.
Bottle \$34.99

This is a big, rich wine with complex aromas of leather, tobacco, blueberries, sweet oak and a hint of white pepper. It's earthy and well structured with concentrated flavors of black currants and spearmint. The finish is long and silky, leaving a note of bittersweet chocolate behind. Firm tannins will allow this wine to develop nicely with age.



Jai Budsri of Deejai Thai Restaurant is enjoying the 2008 Valley of the Moon Pinot Blanc.
Glass \$8.00; Bottle \$30.00

Aromas of honeysuckle, guava and Pink Lady apple are accented with hints of mineral and lychee in this full-bodied white. Ripe and round on the palate, it's integrated and rich fruit flavors of pears, apple and kiwi lead to a lengthy finish balanced.



Sean McCormack of Johnny's Red Bowl Restaurant is excited about the Umani Ronchi Villa Bianchi Verdicchio Classico 2009.
Glass \$10.00; Bottle \$30.00

Brilliant straw yellow in color with greenish tints, the bouquet is fine and intense, fruity and floral. To the taste, the wine demonstrates a pleasant structure based on vibrant and fresh notes, followed by a typically almond aftertaste and refreshing tingle. Remember, all bottles are half price at Red Bowl.



Wine director Erik Carpenter of Georges Brasserie is raving about the 2009 Au Bon Climat Pinot Gris Blanc.
Glass \$10.00; Bottle \$40.00

This wine is brilliant pale gold in the glass with aromas of green apples, Meyer lemon, hay, iodine and minerals. A brisk attack betrays zippy, fresh-fruit acidity that is matched by plenty of apple, pear, grapefruit and pineapple, touched with gingery spices and a hint of oak. Finishes crisp and clean with a nice balance of sweet fruit and racy acids.

James Porter of Total Wine & More recommends the 2009 Val do Sosego Albariño.
Bottle \$14.99

Lemon in color with greenish highlights, this wine boasts high intensity on the nose with the characteristic aromas of the Albariño grape. This is a dry, elegant example with broad flavors, fine balance and a lingering, mouth-watering finish. It's excellent with fish and seafood.



Tim Pence of McCormick & Schmick's Seafood Restaurant is drinking 2009 Ponzi Pinot Gris on their new patio for the summer.
Glass \$10.50; Bottle \$38.00

Aged entirely in stainless steel, this wine boasts aromas of tangerine, apricot and a hint of tropical aromas, which lead to a crisp, dry, concentrated wine with good depth and a medium-long finish. The palate is crisp and clean, with flavors of green apple, Asian pear and lemon. Very tasty with oysters on the half shell.



Helen Marie White of Sir Edmond Halley's is drinking Oskar Blues' Mama's Little Yella Pils for the summer.
20 oz. pint \$5.00

Unlike mass market pilsners, Mama's Little Yella Pils is an uncompromising, small-batch version of the beer that made Pilsen, Czech Republic famous is built with 100% pale malt, German specialty malts and Bavarian hops. While it's rich with Czeched-out flavor, its gentle hopping and low ABV make it a luxurious but low-dose refresher.



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by zenda douglas



carolina breeze owner james davis



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M.L. Davis Beverages can be reached at 704.953.2671, or visit the website at www.carolinabreezetea.com.

The little boy who grew up helping his grandfather make his special sweet tea never imagined that one day, that secret recipe would be the inspiration behind his career and livelihood. “I hated it—the process, that is,” says James Davis, owner of M.L. Davis Beverages LLC and maker of Carolina Breeze. “I’d rather have been outside playing football, but I loved drinking it.”

Today, the former producer of television and radio commercials with a degree in film and video from Columbia College in Chicago spends much of his time concocting the Southern-style sweet tea that he describes as “springtime in a bottle.” He also bottles and distributes it to his customers. “I would be a one-man operation if it weren’t for the family members and friends that donate their wonderful time to help me,” says Davis, smiling.

The recipe for Carolina Breeze was created in the early 1970s by Melvin L. Davis, Sr., James’s grandfather, who lived in the University Park neighborhood of Charlotte. It was lovingly improved and enhanced over the years in the same kitchen where he prepared his famous Sunday soul food dinners for family and friends.

The recipe was secret to all but James’s grandmother.

It starts with kettle-brewed tea leaves—not extract—in addition to pure cane sugar and a secret blend of natural ingredients. It ends with a Southern-style sweet tea with a metropolitan flair. “I would never have thought this combination would create this kind of flavor,” marvels Davis, who came into the recipe shortly before his grandfather died in 2003.

Brewed and flavored in a commercial kitchen in Harrisburg, the tea is available in three flavors: sweet tea, semi-sweet tea and strawberry-lemonade. The semi-sweet version is for those watching their sugar and caloric intake. A 16-ounce bottle has only 50 calories.

Unlike his grandfather’s product, Davis’s tea is pasteurized—heated to 180° before bottling. Carolina Breeze is preservative free and requires no refrigeration. While Southern sweet tea is traditionally served cold, some people prefer the beverage served hot. Davis has also replaced some natural fruit juices (yes, there’s a hint!) with concentrates or natural flavors. This helps with the pasteurization process and mass production.

Outside of family, Davis used customers in local-area barber shops as his test market. “My test market quickly turned into my first customers,” says Davis. Carolina Breeze was first sold in 2008 in gallon containers. In 2009, it became available in 16-ounce bottles. Every bottle carries the story about his grandfather on the label.

Word of mouth is still Davis’s best marketing tool, along with placing samples in stores and giveaways. You might find him in a booth at the race tracks or at one of Charlotte’s many festivals. But leaning on his background, he’s also gearing up for advertising to his next target audience—women ages 25 to 40. “Women are the ones that try new products and bring them into their homes,” says Davis.

The Common Market on South Tryon Street was the first retailer to offer Carolina Breeze. Since then, Davis’s clientele has grown to 14 stores, two country clubs, six caterers and around 50 individuals.

Davis feels close to his Charlotte roots. Although his long-term plans include regional, national and even global distribution, he plans to keep manufacturing operations in

Charlotte. And he doesn’t intend to sell the business to another beverage maker. “I don’t want to sell to a Coca-Cola or Pepsi; I want to *be* a Coke or Pepsi,” he pronounces. “I want to be the product that visitors to Charlotte must try before leaving town.”

Still experimenting, Davis is working now to produce an organic tea beverage. He’s also looking for an entry into the food service industry, which may include restaurants that serve sweet tea. “They can brew their tea so quickly and so cheaply, so they aren’t likely to purchase a tea beverage, however, there may be a way for them to add the Carolina Breeze flavors into their tea,” muses Davis.

While the number of people who enjoy Carolina Breeze is rapidly growing, the secret recipe is safe and the beverage invigorating as ever. “It’s Southern-style sweet tea to the bone. Not just tea and sugar—there’s a little flavor to it,” says Davis. “I’m pretty sure my grandfather would be proud.”

Zenda Douglas is a Charlotte based writer whose work appears in a variety of print and online publications. She also provides public relations and marketing consultation to non-profits and cause-related organizations. She may be reached by email at zeabest@aol.com.

RIGHT: GETSTOCKPHOTO.COM/PAUL JOHNSON



the return of a quaint neighborhood pub

a look at sir edmond halley's restaurant & freehouse by bea quirk
images by ashley blake summerlin

There were sad sighs among fans of Sir Edmond Halley's Restaurant & Freehouse last July when the word came that it was shutting its doors.

The sadness turned to glee, however, when a new ownership group—headed up by Svend Deal, one of the restaurant's original founders—re-opened the popular eatery in November. The interior was refurbished and repainted, the carpet and ceiling replaced, new kitchen equipment purchased and even a new computer system installed (customers can even enjoy free WiFi access). In addition, the new tap system increased the number of taps to 12.

Many of the pub's signature features, including the stammtisch table, are still there. The stammtisch table provides space for up to 14, depending on how well you know the people you're with. By the time you leave, you'll undoubtedly know each other much better. It includes a bell that is rung whenever someone wants to buy a round for the table.

The menu still features many Sir Ed's staple items, such as the vegetarian egg rolls, ostrich meat loaf, Guinness stew and fish & chips (made the authentic British way with cod), but with a number of new offerings for vegetarians and those with more traditional American appetites. Think flank steak and fried chicken, veggie burgers and quinoa and roasted corn stuffed yellow peppers. There's also more nouveau and ethnic fare, such as goat cheese fritters, edamame and jerk chicken nachos. No matter what your preferences, you'll find something to please your palate and assuage your hunger.

"We've made a fundamental return to what our customers

like," Deal says. "And we're still all about being conducive to conversation and making friends. We gave it a face lift but made no fundamental changes."

As a pub, Sir Ed's is proud to serve up traditional 20-ounce English pints with everything from ambers to pale ales, as well as 'Charlotte's Best Pint of Guinness.' An excellent array of small-batch bourbons and single-malt Scotches complement a well-rounded wine list. There are daily drink specials, as well as half-priced appetizers after 10 p.m. They also host trivia every Monday starting at 7 p.m.

The pub's unique location—tucked away downstairs in the back of Park Road Shopping Center—does make Sir Ed's hard to find, Deal acknowledges. But he adds, "Often, when a person comes for the first time, someone brings them, so they feel welcome. Everyone knows each other. It's all about meeting customers' expectations."

The shopping center is always full, and the other businesses complement us well. Plus, there's tons of free parking."

The 50-plus-year-old Park Road Shopping Center is well-situated to serve the upscale Myers Park, Eastover and SouthPark neighborhoods, as well as the more middle/working class areas bordering South Boulevard.

On a recent Friday night around 7 p.m., Sir Ed's, including its spacious outdoor patio, was full of bar regulars watching sports on the TV screens, 20-somethings out for an early evening drink, families and friends grabbing a quick casual dinner (there's a children's menu) and couples enjoying a fine dining experience. It was a diverse crowd,

but everyone was comfortable and blended well together.

Whether you're eating in the handsome dining room or enjoying your meal in the fresh air on the patio, scooting up to the bar for a pint or following the passage behind the bar to the pub room (where you'll find dart boards and tables for chess, checkers, backgammon and Scrabble), you're sure to have a delightful experience.

General manager Helen Marie White oversaw the pleasant hub-bub, keeping the beer and wine flowing and making sure everyone was well-fed and happy. Chef Yojany Caceres, who's been in the kitchen for 11 years, is now the head chef. Regulars will recognize many familiar faces among the waitstaff.

Business has been good since Sir Ed's re-opened. For example, this past St. Patrick's Day—always a popular night—was the busiest March 17th in the pub's history.

Although now a practicing attorney, Deal has enjoyed a long career in the restaurant business, dating back to 1984 when he was a dishwasher at the old Eli's on East Boulevard (now home to Copper). He and Tobin McAfee worked together at a number of eateries in the mid-1990s, when they decided to start their own restaurant. At the time—1996—there were no other English-style pubs in the area.

Recalls Deal, "When I played rugby and traveled around the world, there was always a place where people could go to talk and hang out. Charlotte didn't have anything like that. Or if there was, it was just a bar. There was no place

that had food, too. We wanted it casual but sophisticated."

Sir Ed's also became the first restaurant in Charlotte—and still one of the few—that serves a full menu until 2 a.m. every night of the week. That has made it a popular spot among those working a second shift and fellow restaurant and hospitality industry workers. It's also open for lunch six days a week, offering an \$8 meal that includes a drink and tax.

The name, Sir Edmond Halley's, was Deal's idea, and he didn't hit upon it until the week before the restaurant opened. Deal studied astrophysics as an undergrad and was fascinated by the 17th century astronomer. Halley not only discovered the comet that bears his name, but charted the Southern Hemisphere stars for the British Navy and published Isaac Newton's first work, even though it ran counter to his own theories. "He was a stand-up guy," Deal says.

Deal and McAfee were the pub's majority owners until 2003, when McAfee bought out all the partners, Deal included. So Deal went to law school at UNC Chapel Hill and went on to work as an attorney for Cozen O'Connor.

Deal is currently joined by several other owners, including Lane Jefferies and Jeff Roberts, Sir Ed's original head bartender.

Deal no longer works at Sir Ed's, but his love for the pub remains strong. "I had a long emotional attachment to Sir Ed's, and I didn't want to see it die." So with that, my friends, make sure you stop by for the food and drink, and stay for the fun. 🍷



sir edmond halley's

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the luxury of
knowing the
butler did it

by zenda douglas

Many executives, professional athletes, celebrities and others who live high-end lifestyles don't have time to sit around and wait for the cable guy. And, when they come off of an airplane after two weeks of travel, the last thing they want to do is go grocery shopping. In fact, those that are often looked upon as fortunate are just as often challenged by ordinary tasks due to their overbearing schedules and long work hours.

In steps Charlotte Premier Butler Services, LLC (CPBS) to the rescue. "I noticed that a lot of individuals within Charlotte's affluent population don't have time to cook for themselves, spend time driving or pick up medical prescriptions or the dry-cleaning. We offer them an opportunity to say, 'The butler did it,'" says owner Adam Dietrich, who started the business in August of 2008.

A classically trained sommelier and head butler, Dietrich and CPBS have supplied Charlotte's most elite residents with services including personal assistants, personal chefs, sommeliers, butlers, drivers and household managers.

Well-known within the restaurant industry, Dietrich landed upon the idea for a butler service while still serving as manager of Upstream, one of Charlotte's most popular fine-dining establishments. "I saw that a few of our guests utilized chauffeur and other types of assistance coming and going to the restaurant, such as reservation-makers and travel companions. I met many others who could benefit from such services."

The idea gelled when a customer asked Dietrich to come along on a trip to assist with travel logistics. He couldn't go, but he helped the customer find someone who could and trained her in all aspects important to the client. "After I did that, the client told others, and word spread rapidly. I realized that there was nothing like this in Charlotte," says Dietrich, explaining that while there are companies offering services on a full-time, live-in basis, no one was doing it on a temporary, as-needed basis. Dietrich calls this latter type of service personal assistance. Live-in butlers are usually referred to as household or estate managers.

"We have clients that only need 10 hours per week for appointments, taking the car for an oil change or shopping," says Dietrich. "It doesn't make sense to pay the \$90,000 to \$150,000 it usually takes for a permanent, live-in butler."

According to Dietrich, Charlotteans aren't used to a lot of domestic staff and personal chefs. "I have to paint them a picture. What scares people is the word 'butler.' We're not Jeeves," chuckles Dietrich. Rather, CPBS is creating a modern-day butler—a trained personal assistant who can get a stain out of a silk tie and caddy on the golf course the next day, prepare a fine meal and detail an automobile. No matter the particular service, clients can expect the highest quality performance as well as discretion and complete privacy.

Dietrich says the most popular services are errands, house-sitting and waiting for the repair man. There's been a big demand for handyman services. Not all services amount to luxuries; some are need-based, such as accompanying a child or an individual with a disability on a flight.

Like Dietrich, who graduated in 2004 from the Johnson & Wales' Charleston campus, most of CPBS's 25 permanent employees are Johnson & Wales graduates or current students. Some are graduates of the International Butler Academy. "I know the level of professionalism I'm going to get, the level of passion for the hospitality business," he says, adding that most of the people who work for him are friends or past school-mates. "I know them all, trust them all, and they trust me." CPBS employees are carefully trained, supervised and matched with the individual needs of the clients they work with.

Professional sub-contractors are equally well-chosen. "Whether the need is for a sommelier or someone to work on an air conditioner, we deal with professionals. Everyone involved is appropriately bonded, licensed and insured," says Dietrich.

Dietrich is confident of the company's ability to match the right butler with a given client based on qualifications for services needed. Customization and flexibility are key.

"Understanding the level of service necessary to take care of the elite client is critical," says Dietrich. Often that level of service requires knowledge and awareness of products and services available. "I have a select few companies, individuals and stores that I highly recommend. For instance, for great seafood, there's one place—Clean Catch [Fish Market]. Whether the need is for tree removal, wine shops or toilet paper, we reach for the best."

CPBS's success is all due to word-of-mouth advertising. "Our clients keep passing our name along," says Dietrich, who says he's never engaged in formal advertising nor had a website until recently. "Praises from our clients and participating in charity events and silent auctions, that's how we've done it." The company specializes in wine and cheese parties to gain exposure.

Having served over 100 clients since its beginning a year and a half ago, the company currently manages services for over 30 clients weekly throughout the Charlotte

metropolitan area.

There's no question that CPBS caters to an elite clientele. Nevertheless, many of the services are surprisingly affordable. Dietrich stresses that since the needs of each client vary, all services and packages are completely customizable. Rates are negotiable as packages of services are chosen. CPBS offers a trial period for its services to help get a client through the initial startup. Seasonal services are also enjoyed by CPBS clients; this year the company began a Christmas tree service, setting up and taking down trees in clients' homes.

Dietrich's passion for the hospitality industry began at age 15 when he worked for a large beach resort called Don Cesar in St. Petersburg, FL, his hometown. He grew up working in fine-dining restaurants, then moved to Charleston for school and continued work there. Following graduation, he moved to Charlotte, where he went to work with the Harper's Restaurant Group. He spent one year with Mimosa Grill, two years with Upstream and two years at Savannah Red before starting CPBS.

Demonstrating growth, services to corporate clients will be offered this fall. Employers are looking outside the box for incentives, according to Dietrich. "They give employees cards to restaurants and cash, but they don't free them up or help them maintain a lifestyle. Our services are able to do that," says Dietrich. CPBS is initially focusing on auditors and tax accountants whose lives are put on hold during very busy tax seasons. "Just five to 10 hours per week for errands, cooking

and the like can make a big difference."

In the more distant future, Dietrich plans to franchise the service throughout the Southeast. But for now, he is concentrating on Charlotte. "We've just scratched the surface here," says Dietrich. "There are lots of overwhelmed people wishing to live a simpler life."

"Some people have a hard time believing they need a butler, but once they try us, they have a hard time living without us." 🍷

Zenda Douglas is a Charlotte based writer whose work appears in a variety of print and online publications. She also provides public relations and marketing consultation to non-profits and cause-related organizations. She may be reached by email at zeabest@aol.com.



cpbs owner adam dietrich

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the barbeque

by judy gruen

My kids have a bizarre notion that barbeques are the easiest way to fix dinner this side of a take out menu. This is because their main contributions to barbeques have been eating twice as much meat as normal, urgently spraying ketchup as if they're putting out a fire and chugging sodas. My husband usually mans the grill ('persons the grill' just doesn't sound right, does it?), but apparently is only capable of this feat while wearing his 'Official Barbeque Shirt,' festooned with a blinding pattern of beers and burgers. This forces us to look at the shirt for at least three hours, or until the last beer is finished, whichever comes first.

So when one of my teenage sons asked me, "Can we barbeque?" I decided it was time to teach him about the unsung, behind-the-scenes work involved in transforming raw hunks of steer into tender and juicy burgers, medium rare.

"We cannot barbeque," I replied, "but *you* can barbeque. Go to the store, buy the meat, clean the grill, baste the meat, watch it carefully so it doesn't burn, wipe down the backyard table and clean up afterwards. You need to be responsible for everything."

This response was sure to squelch the idea, and I would be safe.

"No problem," he said.

Now I was in for it. I reluctantly tendered my credit



can't have a barbeque without beer."

They refused to make a salad, but to humor me, they set out a jar of pickles and a bowl of chips on the table, claiming they were "vegetables." I steamed some broccoli, in the event any of the other kids had parents who would ask them what the Gruens had served at dinner.

"Nobody eats any burgers till the potatoes are done!" I ordered. "I took the time to make them, even though this was supposedly *your* barbeque." The boys hustled back to play more basketball while I stood sentry over the spuds. When they were done, I decided to grill the remaining burgers. "How's everything?" I asked, resorting to my default waitress mode.

"Everything's delicious. Thanks, Mom."

"Especially the beer," my husband said, nursing a foreign import while slathering mustard on a burger. He was attired in his 'Official Barbeque Shirt,' which required me to wear my strongest sunglasses. The boys tried to sneak a few beers, which we intercepted and which is why college is such a terrifying idea.

As soon as the last burger was gone, so were the boys. The table was a mess, and it took all my self-control not to clean it up. But I didn't. After all, it was *their* barbeque. 🍷

Judy Gruen is the mother of four, wife of one and author of three award-winning humor books, including *The Women's Daily Irony Supplement*.

card to him, knowing that in addition to our own six hungry family members, several of his large teenage friends were at the house. They had appetites the size of a congressional appropriations bill.

"Better make a salad and some mashed potatoes also," I said when they returned. "But remember, it's *your* barbeque."

"Relax, Mom!" he said.

I went to my room to take a nap—after all, my son had told me to relax. I'd been asleep for nearly two entire minutes when a baseball began thwacking against the side of the house right outside my room. I had forgotten that baseball practice was an essential step in preparing for successful barbeques. I'm sure I've seen Emeril Lagasse do it many times.

"Hold it down out there, guys, I'm trying to sleep!" I complained.

The baseball fell silent, but the basketball immediately was put into play. Thunk, thunk, thunk, thunk went the basketball.

With a sinking feeling, I went to check on things in the kitchen.

"Don't you know you have to peel and cut the potatoes before you boil them? And put a lid over the pot, or it'll take a month for them to boil." I fished the Russets out

of the pot, peeled and cut them, then returned them to the pot. "Remember to marinate the meat," I reminded them. "After all, this is *your* barbeque!"

I left the kitchen to attend to other matters, but my unerring motherly intuition kept sending me Code Red emergency warnings. I returned to the scene of the culinary crimes.

I left the kitchen to attend to other matters, but my unerring motherly intuition kept sending me Code Red emergency warnings.

"You said you'd clean the grill!" I shouted. I lifted the lid only to discover a hot dogicide: A dozen dogs were so charred that DNA tests would never determine their origin. Coughing and blinded by smoke, I turned off the gas. After the grill had cooled and I could see again, I took the wire brush and scraped off vestiges of barbeques past. "You should have done it yourself. This was supposed to be *YOUR BARBEQUE!*"

"We had everything under control,"

my son said. "We like our hot dogs well done."

"I still need to make sure you don't accidentally cook Salmonella Surprise on a dirty grill and serve it with a side of raw, dirty spuds. I didn't want all the hassle of a barbeque in the first place. Where's Dad?"

"He went to buy beer," reported Sam, one of my son's friends. Sam always miraculously shows up whenever we have meat on the grill. It's uncanny, really. "You



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shelton vineyards

following the vines and wines of surry county

by zenda douglas with contributions by joe barsin

Charlotteans are fortunate, indeed, to live in an area so rich in things to see, do and places to dine. But sometimes, it's also good to get away for a bit—from our routines and our familiar landscapes. A second fortune is the bounty of places within only 100 miles of Charlotte that make for perfect getaways.

During spring and summer, Surry County shines among them, beckoning visitors to the Appalachian foothills. Whether lured by exquisite views, vineyard exploration, diverse outdoor activities, Blue Ridge musicians or a step back in time as only a fictional town can accommodate, visitors to Surry County go away relaxed and glad they came.

Four small towns grace the landscape with Southern hospitality and charm: Mount Airy, Elkin, Pilot Mountain and Dobson. Each one is different, but all serve up Appalachian culture, both old and new.

Mount Airy is the most well-known of the four, as it welcomes Andy Griffith and Mayberry fans from around the world. Mayberry was the fictional setting of *The Andy Griffith Show*, the 1960s television program about Sheriff Andy Taylor, son Opie and friends, which still airs in re-runs today.

Visitors might get a tad confused as to whether they are in Historic Mount Airy or Mayberry as they visit **Floyd's Barber Shop**, the **Old City Jail** or have a bite at **Snappy Lunch** or the **Blue Bird Diner**. 'Kids' of all ages enjoy a tour of the town in the Mayberry Squad Car. Visitors can even see the home of the real Andy, actor Andy Griffith. Mount Airy could well be the best spot to settle in, as it is centrally located to the Blue Ridge Parkway and the many wineries in the Yadkin Valley. Outdoor musical entertainment is available within Mount Airy most weekends, but the event of the year is **Mayberry Days**, set for September 22nd through 25th.

Elkin offers a relaxing stroll along the banks of the Yadkin River after a day of shopping in unique, independently owned shops and fine arts galleries or after a wine tasting, after all, **Brushy Mountain Winery** is located right on Main Street.

Dobson plays an important role to North Carolina's wine industry, as it's home to the **North Carolina Center for Viticulture and Enology** on the campus of Surry Community College. It's the only campus east of the Rocky Mountains with a working vineyard and bonded winery. History

buffs will enjoy the historic courthouse square and downtown. Dining options range from homestyle country cooking to fine dining.

Pilot Mountain is home to **Pilot Mountain State Park**, a 3,703-acre gem for outdoor enthusiasts. The town is rich in history, which documents settlers back as far as 1761.

Any one of these towns makes an excellent home base from which to explore the county's many attractions.

Wine enthusiasts won't be disappointed as they get acquainted with what's happening in the North Carolina wine country. There are numerous Surry County wineries along the Yadkin Valley Wine Trail that offer tours and tastings. **Old North State Winery and Brewery** is situated in a renovated 1890s mercantile building in downtown Mount Airy. It started as a cooperative, processing grapes from many farms, but now focuses on the Muscadine grapes grown by the two families that own the winery. The basement houses modern fermentation and wine- and beer-making equipment.

Wine enthusiasts won't be disappointed as they get acquainted with what's happening in the North Carolina wine country.

The largest family-owned estate winery in North Carolina, **Shelton Vineyards** in Dobson boasts a large visitor center with a tasting bar and gift shop. Driving into the vineyard, guests are surrounded on both sides by the vines, with rosebushes at the end of each row. Shelton's Harvest Grill, located on the grounds of Shelton Vineyards, offers upscale dining with a bistro-style atmosphere. The Harvest Grill offers lunch and dinner in its intimate dining room or the enclosed patio with spectacular views. Chef Paul has earned AAA's three diamonds for the past three years. The beautifully landscaped grounds are dotted with picnic tables, and Shelton Vineyards' outdoor stage comes alive each year with a summer concert series. The Shelton Hampton Inn and Suites is just two miles down the road and is the only Hampton Inn in the country with its own wine tasting bar.

Round Peak Vineyards is a 12-acre estate producing eight French and Italian varietals. Its



ragapple lassie vineyards



raffaldini vineyards

winery and tasting room are available for weddings or private events. Founded in 1896, **Stony Knoll Vineyards** is a family-owned wine producer and also a North Carolina Century Farm sitting high on the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

In nearby Yadkin County, **RagApple Lassie Vineyards** offers tours on demand of its grounds and wine and gift shops from noon to 6 p.m. daily. This vineyard has a special reputation as the 'green' vineyard, as special care is taken to protect the earth and environment. The vineyards are enhanced by carefully rotating additional crops, including soy beans, wheat, tobacco and corn. An aggressive recycling program re-uses or repurposes most of the material used at the vineyard, including wine bottles. Even the vines are saved for the annual spring wreath day, when visitors can make their own wreaths. The Back Door Café welcomes visitors for light lunch fare and, of course, RagApple Lassie wines.

North of Dobson is **Raffaldini Vineyards**. Set in the Swain Valley, their approach to the Tuscan-style villa takes you along a brook and past rose gardens to the winery

entrance. It's best known as 'Chianti in the Carolinas.'

Two excellent resources for assistance—for planning your wine trip, including accommodations and dining, are **Yadkin Valley Wine Country** (www.yadkinvalleywinecountry.com) and the **Yadkin Valley Wine Trail** (www.yvwt.com).

Among the excellent host of lodging opportunities is Mount Airy's **Sobotta Manor**, an elegant Tudor revival bed-and-breakfast, built in 1932 and located in the town's historic district. The interior of the house is precious with fine furnishings, large bedrooms, private baths and a garden in the formal English style. Though furnished in period pieces, it has all the modern amenities. Sobotta Manor is one of nine bed-and-breakfast inns scattered across the four towns. There are also numerous hotels to choose from and plenty cabins, cottages and campgrounds.

There's good fishing in Surry County, and public sites such as **Fisher River Park**, the **Yadkin River** in Pilot Mountain State Park and **Mitchell River** make it easy to find the trout and bass that swim in these waters. If the fish aren't biting, you can join them by paddling many of the county's rivers and streams. For those who prefer higher views, **Carolina Ziplines** offers canopy tours 50 feet above the forest floor. You can even add hiking, cycling, horseback riding, rock climbing, hunting and golf to Surry County's already

other wineries of interest

laurel gray vineyards
www.laurelgray.com
hamptonville

sanders ridge vineyards
www.sandersridge.com
booneville

hanover park vineyard
www.hanoverparkwines.com
yadkinville

SHELTON Vineyards

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Dobson, NC 27017
(336) 366-4724
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Sunday 1:00—6:00
Tour & Tastings

Harvest Grill
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(336) 366-3590
Reservations Recommended
Lunch/Dinner
Monday-Thursday
11:00-9:00
Friday-Saturday
11:00-10:00
*Sunday 11:00-6:00
*Brunch/Lunch

L TO R: RAGAPPLE LASSIE; NORTH CAROLINA DIVISION OF TOURISM; FILM & SPORTS DEVELOPMENT—TULL RUSSELL

abundant list of Surry's attractions.

Construction of the 469-mile **Blue Ridge Parkway** began in Surry County in the 1930s, and it's easily accessible from most of Surry County. Going north, visitors will be headed towards **Shenandoah National Park**; traveling south will lead to the **Great Smoky Mountains**.

Music is a large part of any culture, and here it's dominated by old-time, bluegrass, country, blues, gospel and folk. Playing, singing and dancing are highly encouraged at the **Andy Griffith Playhouse** as musicians gather for the Thursday Night Jam Sessions. Close by, the **Old-Time Music Heritage Hall** presents old-time bands and dances open to the public. The **Merry-Go-Round** jam session and live radio broadcast is the third oldest live radio broadcast in the U.S. These sessions can be heard every Saturday morning at the **Downtown Cinema Theater** in Historic Mount Airy. For those who want to combine their musical and fresh-air experiences, **Blackmon Amphitheatre** offers outdoor music events from early spring through late fall. Many of the wineries, such as RagApple Lassie and Shelton, also offer live music and concerts.

Getaway travelers might consider making the trip last by driving home on the back roads, past cattle and tobacco farms, until the looming skyscrapers of Charlotte re-appear. Time to go home until the next time... hopefully soon. 🍷

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bull Snort Cowboy, Bee Sting Mango, Ring of Fire, Vicious Viper, Spontaneous Combustion, Reindeer Revenge, Hog's Breath, Toad Sweat and Bayou Love Potion. They could be the names of hard metal bands or micro-brews, but they happen to be the names of hot sauces, just a few of the thousands, yes, thousands, being produced for your consumption today. There's even a Charlie Sheen's Tiger Blood Winning Hot Sauce!

So how did we get started on this penchant to add as much heat on the tongue as the palate will take? It all starts with peppers, all kinds of peppers. Chili peppers, a popular choice for making hot sauce, have been around and cultivated for centuries. In Mexico, chipotles, which are smoked and dried jalapeño peppers, are one of the primary ingredients in hot sauces, along with jalapeños.

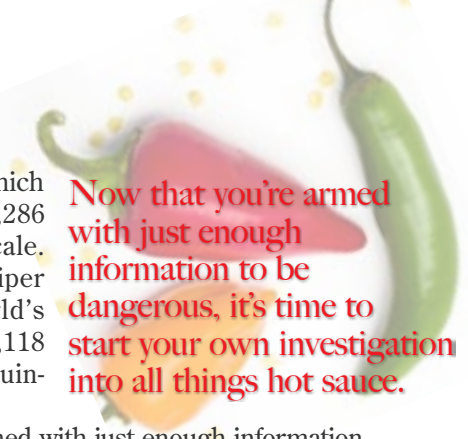
History

Pepper sauces were being made in homes for individual use in the 1800s. One family in particular, the McIlhenny's, had a 'Jack in the beanstalk' experience, kind of. A food lover and avid gardener, Edmund McIlhenny was given seeds of capsicum frutescens peppers, a type of chili pepper that had come from Mexico or Central America. Edmund sowed the seeds on Avery Island in southern Louisiana and was delighted in the spicy flavor of the peppers. His next step was to make a sauce from these deliciously spicy peppers. Thus, in the mid-to-late 1860s, the Original TABASCO® brand Pepper Sauce was born.

McIlhenny made the sauce by first choosing and

hot! hot! hot!

by charles jenkin



Now that you're armed with just enough information to be dangerous, it's time to start your own investigation into all things hot sauce.

Human Nutrition at the Division of Clinical Nutrition at UCLA. He talks at length about the antioxidant abilities hidden within peppers. Antioxidants are known to neutralize free radicals that damage cells within the body. It is well documented that peppers are rich in nutrients. It doesn't necessarily matter if they are green, yellow, orange, red or any other color, provided it's natural, of course. Peppers are a great source of vitamins A and C, along with several other beneficial substances.

Picking and Choosing

Now the question remains, what kind of hot sauce should I use? Instead, I think the question should be, how many different hot sauces should I try? Here's your chance to experiment. Most hot pepper sauces will fall into the categories of mild, medium, hot and extra hot, or hottest. Keep in mind that these are all hot sauces to begin with. If you're not indoctrinated into hot sauce, consider starting mild and working your way up to the hottest comfortable level. Yes, the hotter the sauce, the more capsaicin, and potentially the more health benefits.

The Bhut Jolokia, or ghost chili pepper, is another chili pepper that has been recognized as one of the world's hottest chili peppers. It's been found to be over 400 times hotter than Tabasco sauce. Another contender, the Naga Viper pepper, is rated more than 300,000 points higher. Also up there on the scale is the

Infinity chili pepper, which has registered 1,067,286 units on Scoville's scale. Currently, a Naga Viper is listed as the world's hottest chili at 1,382,118 units, according to Guinness World Records.

Now that you're armed with just enough information to be dangerous, it's time to start your own investigation, or continue on the path, to all things hot sauce. A great place to start is the grocery store or specialty food shop. Additionally, seek out recipes that incorporate hot sauce, or simply experiment. If you wish to shop in your pajamas, just go to www.hotsauceworld.com. You can choose from hundreds of different kinds of hot sauces utilizing just about every type of pepper under the sun.

One note of caution: Some of the hottest hot sauces can be dangerous to consume straight from the bottle or even in recipes if you over pour, especially if you're not used to the particular hot sauce you may be experimenting with. The idea is to enhance the flavor of the food you eat and recipes you make without the need for medical attention. Go forth and enjoy, with care, all the marvelous flavors attributed to peppers. 🌶️

Charles Jenkin is the host of *This Show Is Cookin'* on WBT radio, Sundays at 12 p.m.

crushing the reddest peppers from the plants. He added salt to make a mash that would sit for 30 days. He then added French white wine vinegar and allowed it to sit for another month. After straining it, he distributed the sauce into small bottles for sale. Today, the mash is stored for up to three years; otherwise, the recipe remains pretty much unchanged.

In addition to finding Tabasco at almost every restaurant, usually on the table, you may also see a bottle of Cholula Hot Sauce next to it. Their mix includes pequin peppers, red peppers and spices. Pequin is a hot chili pepper and is also called a bird pepper, so when you see 'bird pepper' on a label or in a name, you'll be in the know. Pequin sauces date back about as far as 1850, when J. McCollick & Company of New York City produced its Bird Pepper Sauce. Anyway, Cholula Hot Sauce has been around for over 100 years. It's named after 'Cholula,' a 2,500-year-old city in Mexico. In fact, Cholula is the oldest inhabited city in Central America. The word is derived from 'chollollan' or "the place of retreat." Somehow, 'retreat' became 'heat.'

Cholula, Tabasco and practically all hot pepper sauces derive their heat from capsaicin. In 1912, pharmacist Wilbur Scoville developed a test to measure the heat that exists in each type of pepper. At one end of the spectrum you'll find bell peppers, which contain up to 100 Scoville units. Capsaicin, in its extracted pure form comes, falls at the opposite end of the spectrum, measuring in at about 15,000,000 units. Habaneros, an extremely hot pepper

used by some to make really hot, hot sauces, tips the scale at about 250,000 Scoville units. Pequin and Arbol peppers, like those used in Cholula, average around 50,000 units.

Cholula delivers a tasty 1,000 Scoville units. Tangy Tabasco has a range of sauces that go up the heat ladder. The most popular, Tabasco Sweet & Spicy, goes up to 600 units; the Tabasco Chipotle has upwards of 2,500 units; and Tabasco's Habanero exceeds 7,000 units of heat.

Let's talk about health benefits.

We know that capsaicin is used to help relieve certain types of pain. Arthritis, muscle pains and strained ligaments are often treated with a topical lotion that includes capsaicin. Hundreds of medical articles have been written describing a myriad of benefits derived from consuming this fiery substance. It's been found to assist in protecting the heart, fighting inflammation, burning fat, relieving congestion and possibly even helping to manage cancer. In a study published by the American Association for Cancer Research, capsaicin was even shown to have a role in the management of prostate cancer. (cancerres.aacrjournals.org)

So What Is a Pepper?

A fruit? A vegetable? A good starting point for learning more and finding out what researchers are studying about this wonderful *fruit* (raise your hand if you said vegetable) is by going to WebMD (www.webmd.com). Search 'peppers and your health,' and you'll find information on David Heber, MD, PhD, professor of medicine and public health and chief and founding director of the Center for

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MacSpeedShop.com



mccormick & schmick's

charlotte's patio personalities and pleasures

by h. babington guiles

I'm that rarest of breeds—a Charlotte native actually living here after more than three decades away. People seem to marvel at my choice to return from a hilltop San Francisco home in view of the Golden Gate Bridge. Their eyes glaze over with California dreaming when asking how I'm 'adjusting.' That's when I set them straight on Charlotte's singular reason of superiority to San Francisco: for at least part of the year, in Charlotte, one can actually gather with friends at an outdoor patio past sunset—without layers of clothes.

There, in a city famous for its foodie culture, such nights are rare and serious cause for major revelry. While coastal California's year-round climate is famously temperate by day, forget about temperate San Francisco nights. As Mark Twain wrote, "The coldest winter I ever spent was a summer in San Francisco."

Seriously, when the Pacific fog rolls in at sunset, I've seen women at outdoor cafés don down feather parkas in July! I spent many a summer night there huddled with goose bumps, dreaming of Charlotte summer evenings on some of the city's great restaurants' patios.

What makes a restaurant patio great? One as delightful in itself as its great food and wine. One with enough personality and pizzazz to evoke the Epicurean ideals of pleasures from friendship and other transcendent experiences. And one where you can bare your shoulders and legs!

I've made it my mission this summer to find these patio treasures and tip you off to some of the best. Someone's gotta do it, so I did, blissfully sleeveless and bare-legged night after night. Here are five of Charlotte's patio personalities I've sampled with great pleasure.



selwyn avenue pub



kennedy's premium bar & grill



mccormick & schmick's

Selwyn Pub: The Dean of Charlotte's Patio Tradition

It seems fitting to begin at Selwyn Avenue Pub, the oldest of Charlotte's existing great patios. A distinct patina of exceptional qualities has grown especially beautiful with 21 years of relating responsibly to its customers and Myers Park neighborhood.

If you believe the philosophy of "When in Rome, do as the Romans do," go experience the Selwyn Pub patio, for it *IS* Charlotte's personality at its bona fide best. Charlotte's heritage of subtly refined, Southern charm is authentically conveyed in every visual patio detail, starting with the huge, center stage, a 150-year-old tree sheltering the wooden, covered front porch and deck wrapping around the old house. And just as the towering tree presides like a patriarch over the patio, Selwyn Pub presides like the Dean of Charlotte's patio tradition, introducing Charlotte to its first of many now-common patio offerings, like large-screen TVs and an abundance of luxe Frontgate outdoor furnishings, including fire-pit tables, patio heaters, mister fans and a plethora of classy and comfy upholstered furniture.

But Selwyn Pub's patina really shines through its neighborhood 'Village Green' ambience, fusing Myers Park's more casual traditions with true Irish Pub values, where people matter more than trendy beers, and an interactive community is fostered 365 days per year among patrons of all ages. Newcomers can also feel right at home in such an authentically

welcoming atmosphere rather than feeling like visitors to a Disney-like version of an Irish pub with overblown prices and disconnected people. The pub's reasonably priced cuisine is as high-quality as its furnishings, and is a entire subject in itself, but Selwyn Pub's fusion of genuine old-Charlotte tastes and Irish Pub values makes its seasoned patio patina impossible to replicate. Remember, 'Rome wasn't built in a day,' and neither was Charlotte's Selwyn Pub.

Kennedy's Cures 'The Corner Curse' with Kegs of Camaraderie

While Selwyn Pub's personality gleams with authentic Charlotte patina, another great patio also shines brightly, while being neither old nor old-Charlotte. Less than a year old, Kennedy's Premium Bar & Grill is New York owned and operated, with special appeal to homesick, New York transplants.

As for this Charlotte native, I sampled this particular patio personality on an enticing "Kegs and Legs" Monday. With 'All-You-Can-Eat Crab Legs' for \$19.99 and all pints for \$3.00, a broad array of like-minded clientele also couldn't resist: couples, singles, sports fans, families and surrounding Elizabeth neighborhood residents, filling the patio with a peacefully eclectic vibe. The ambience is family and dog friendly, with music kept at a level suitable for conversations and tables arranged to easily facilitate either privacy or camaraderie.

This ambience is also reflected in an eclectic

'Southern Shamrocks' aesthetic. A blooming gardenia border alongside the house gracefully ushered me through a fragrant Southern portal onto the large patio deck wrapping the front of the old Caswell Street house. After dark, a playful display of nightlights twinkled around and above the patio—green crystal lights laced through the fence surrounded us while a romantic web of white crystal lights holding a green-lit shamrock in its center floated above. High-tech umbrellas tilt to block the sun as it moves throughout the day, while large-screen TVs are scattered about, but only dominate the scene on significant game days.

Wandering around, I discovered another lovely portal of entry: the wooden front staircase from Caswell Street through a torch-lit, brick and iron fence wall, past a lower level of two large cabanas to the left and a bench-lined fire pit to the right.

Kennedy's satisfies its diverse clientele with a variety of weekly specials and events like "Kegs and Legs Mondays," live music on weekends and convivial collaborations with neighboring establishments. Add in the rest of the significant menu and attentive service, and anyone will be sure to enjoy Kennedy's. Whether you're a homesick New Yorker or a native Charlottean, it could just become your new home away from home.

Finding My Lost San Francisco Heart at McCormick & Schmick's Seafood Restaurant

Tucked between a beautiful indoor restaurant

and Southpark Mall's western side is McCormick & Schmick's hidden jewel—their patio. Not content to rest on their laurels or their awards for impeccable indoor dining, the restaurant recently renovated its patio into a sumptuous oasis with an equally engaging menu and perfectly pampering service.

The tastefully swanky yet comfortable décor of stylish outdoor furnishings immediately transported me into a breezy oasis far from Southpark Mall's extensive spread. Patrons choose between patio tables covered with large, high tech heated umbrellas or clusters of ample, upholstered loveseats and chairs. Three outdoor plasma TVs, tastefully unique artisan lamps and overflowing planters accent the layout of patio pavers, flanked at its end by a large, stone, gas log fireplace.

Already wowing Charlotte, McCormick & Schmick's was the winner of the "2010 Best Happy Hour" award and won "Charlotte's Best Seafood" award three consecutive years. They recently launched a new, special menu for the patio and bar, with divine small plates, enticing food and drink specials and live entertainment on the patio every Thursday and Friday from 4 to 7 p.m.

We sampled an exquisite array of the freshest seafood and beef from a menu reminiscent of San Francisco's best. Also very memorable was my cocktail—Ketel One vodka with delicately and naturally sweet, fresh-squeezed pink grapefruit juice. In fact, the combination of exquisite seafood-centric cuisine, sublime cocktails and a patio personality of graceful



vivace



mac's speed shop

patio, flying their proud Mac's colors alongside the NC state flag. The ambience is decidedly that of "Southern Everyman's Beer, Bikes & BBQ," and the restaurant and patio have gained so much popularity in the six years since they opened, that they've expanded it from a small porch overhang all the way to the edge of South Boulevard.

At Mac's, CEOs, politicians and police rub shoulders with bikers, babes and families on a patio that offers plenty of attitude, yet is unpretentiously welcoming. Mac's patio really shows its stuff on Wednesday Biker night, when live rock bands belt out their hearts to a crowd chowing down in steel, wood and concrete aesthetics, while bikes and bikers shooting the breeze fill the adjacent, custom painted checkerboard parking lot beneath the original "Mac's Automotive" metal overhang. During my last visit, a smiling guy wearing a Harley t-shirt with a beer gut and Mac's attitude danced freely between his picnic table and the band.

This spirited ambience is definitely enhanced by Mac's great menu and food, centered around the art of slow cooked, pulled BBQ with classic, housemade sauces. Variations on the BBQ theme include the towering MacDaddy sandwich, the five-pound Fatboy that serves eight and the classic pulled BBQ plate, which

we sampled and was loaded with yummy sides like green bean casserole and crusty mac-n-cheese. The menu boasts plenty of non-BBQ options as well, and the extensive beer list can't be beat.

Check their website for regular events, live music and daily specials. And when you can't finish those huge servings, stuff 'em in a to-go box, and don't forget to take home some of that attitude too!

To finish the patio tour, I came back full-circle to Selwyn Pub, just like I came back full-circle from San Francisco to live very near this Selwyn Avenue neighborhood of my birth.

I braved my first summer afternoon on a patio while meeting with ECFW publisher and editor Linda Seligman at Selwyn Pub, where we had first met on an evening a few weeks prior. Despite the outside oven, I was thoroughly cooled until sunset slid in by Selwyn's grand mister fans tickling my bare skin. Again celebrating my return to Charlotte's patios with special personality, how well this Charlotte Prodigal exemplifies Linda's favorite saying, "You never get these days back." Almost feverishly mindful of the fleeting summer season, I say 'Carpe Noctem' (*seize the night*) at one of Charlotte's primo patio destinations! 🍷

beauty transported me to resonant San Francisco scenarios and dearest hearts left behind.

But this impeccable patio oasis will surely seduce all kinds of patrons, with lots of lively, lush and delicious appeal to after work professionals, business travelers and anyone else seeking a high end but affordable experience to pamper themselves or someone special. With seating for 60 guests, keep this patio jewel in mind for your next corporate event or social gathering.

Vivace: The Ultimate Patio Portal to 'La Dolce Vita'

Of all the patios I visited, none provided a total escape quite like Vivace. Billed as a "Contemporary Italian Trattoria," I found Vivace's patios a celebration in triplicate, with three patio areas that reflect the energy that already enlivens the restaurant's interior. Outdoor dining tables seat 80+ diners on inviting sectionals of upholstered teak and rattan, with splashes of hot pink Mandeville blooms overflowing from large planters, plus twists of citrus-hued modern chairs. Vivace means 'lively,' and that quality really comes to life on Vivace's patios, one of which edges Charlotte's new Midtown greenway at ground level, and another that rises high to overlook the city's soaring skyline and gorgeous sunsets.

I've enjoyed both levels, kicking back for a convivial birthday party in the cushioned sectionals at ground-level, as well as being wooed upstairs, crossing through a vertical Air Curtain that not only keeps bugs at bay,

but also seemed a magically invisible portal to the patio. Low-volume music, best described as acid-jazz, adds an exhilarating hum to the Vivace vibe.

Also perfect for patio pleasures is Vivace's affordable menu of Italian classics with a sophisticated, healthy twist. Even more affordable is the Monday through Friday 'Bar Bites' menu of daily appetizer specials at half price. I've loved everything I've tasted there so far, though my favorite is the steamed P.E.I. mussels, served in an amazing broth studded with roasted tomatoes and garlic and served with grilled ciabatta. Vivace excels at many other offerings, including numerous homemade pastas, antipasto plates, specialty cocktails based on housemade cello and ample glasses of some serious Sangria.

Just like inside, Vivace's amazing customer service on its patios seals the deal, making it the perfect place to relax, dream, people watch and celebrate 'La Dolce Vita' with friends. By the end of an evening at Vivace, you'll be speaking Italian, even if you don't... È squisito!

Mac's Speed Shop Cops the Right Patio Attitude

When summer's Southern patio charm gets too heady, I head over to Mac's to get grounded. Winning 2010's "Most Arrogant Bar in America" award from Stone Brewery in Escondido, CA, for the highest American sales of its "Arrogant Bastard" beer, Mac's celebrated a few months ago on their South Boulevard

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<p><i>Epicurean Charlotte Food and Wine</i> magazine has gone digital! Visit us at www.epicureancharlotte.com for up-to-date information on events and news around town, and be sure to follow us on Facebook and Twitter!</p>	<p>RayLen Vineyards & Winery is celebrating its 10-year anniversary this year. Help them celebrate by enjoying a glass of wine during their Sunset Musical Flights. 336.998.3100 • www.raylenvineyards.com</p>	<p>Table 274 is now serving American cuisine with a Carolina influence in Cotswold in the spot formerly occupied by Charley's. Stop by and enjoy dinner and a glass of wine to welcome the new owners to the neighborhood. 704.817.9721 • www.table274.com</p>	
<p>Eat pasta, run fasta.</p>	<p>Midwood Smokehouse BBQ & Bar has opened at 1401 Central Avenue in Plaza Midwood. Get ready to enjoy Eastern NC-style vinegar-based barbecue, half chickens with SC-style mustard sauce and even Texas-style brisket. 704.295.4BBQ www.midwoodsmokehouse.com</p>	<p>The Wine Palette has opened on The Plaza beside Akahana Asian Bistro. At this sip and paint studio, you'll receive hands-on painting lessons from a local artist while sipping wine or any beverage of your choice. Sign up today to sip, stroke and socialize! www.thewinepalette.com</p>	
<p>Fresh pasta, gourmet sauces, homemade focaccia, imported cheeses, wines, Boar's Head deli meats</p>  <p>1528 Providence Road (in Myers Park, next to Providence Road Sunset) Charlotte NC 28207 • 704.364.2622 Mon-Fri 10-7, Sat 10-6, Sun 12-5 www.pastaprovisions.com</p>	<p>Taco Mac has opened a new location at University Center. They'll be opening another location in the former Max and Erma's across from Birkdale Village later this summer. That makes three in a year—you go boys! 704.717.7083 • www.tacomac.com</p>	<p>Ben Philpott, formerly of Rooster's Wood-Fired Kitchen, has accepted the position of Chef at Café Monte French Bakery & Bistro. Welcome Ben! 704.552.1116 • cafemonte.net</p>	
<p>WINE • BEER • URBAN PROVISIONS</p>  <p>THE COMMON MARKET WWW.COMMONMARKETISGOOD.COM</p>	<p>Jimmy Hermann (of Toscana and Firenze fame) is doing well at his own place, Il Bosco Ristorante & Bar, in downtown Davidson. 704.987.1388 • www.ilboscoristorante.com</p>	<p>Eddie Fahmy is the new owner of Presto Restaurant Bar and Grill in Uptown. Stop by to introduce yourself and have a great meal! 704.334.7088 • www.prestobarandgrill.com</p>	
<p>Mugs Coffee has opened beside Portofino's Ristorante Italiano e Pizzeria in the Park Selwyn Terrace shopping center. Be sure to go by and have a cup of java with the boys. 704.733.9014 • www.mugsofcharlotte.com</p>	<p>FireWater has opened in the University area and is serving eclectic American cuisine in the space previously occupied by Lava Bistro & Bar. 704.549.0050 • www.firewatercharlotte.com</p>	<p>Terrace Café will open in late July in the former Village Bistro location in Ballantyne Village. Mellow Mushroom will open a new location in the space formerly occupied by Table Restaurant in Ballantyne later this summer. 704.554.6177 • www.terracecafecharlotte.com 704.966.7499 • www.mellowmushroom.com</p>	<p>Dave Cozzens, a longtime fixture in the Charlotte and Raleigh wine scene, has taken a job with Coastal Wine Brands as their Sales Manager for the Eastern U.S. Brian Mockler, current On Premise Supervisor for Mutual Distributing, will be moving to Raleigh July 1st to become a Brand Manager with corporate Mutual.</p>



july august

- 04 **July 4th Spectacular**
Come to Memorial Stadium in Center City for a spectacular 4th of July celebration! The show begins at 9:30 p.m. (weather permitting).
www.charlottecentercity.org
- 10-19 **Charlotte Restaurant Week**
Enjoy a culinary extravaganza during this 10-day celebration of Charlotte's restaurant scene. Each participating restaurant will offer a spectacular three course, prix fixe dinner menu for only \$30 per person (excluding tax & gratuity).
www.charlotterestaurantweek.com
- 21 **Chow Down Uptown—A Food Truck Festival**
Support your Charlotte food trucks and local vendors at this free event. Vendors will be showcasing delicious choices like duck confit tacos, gourmet pizzas, BBQ ribs and more.
www.findyourcenter.com
- 29-30 **24 Hours of Booty**
Support more than 1,200 riders as they participate in this 24 hour cycling event to raise money for cancer research and survivorship.
www.24hoursofbooty.org

- 03-07 **Cirque du Soleil Presents Alegria**
Cirque du Soleil is back with a show that has wowed more than 10 million people worldwide since it premiered in 1994 in Montreal.
www.cirquedusoleil.com
- 06 **Carolina Panthers Fan Fest**
Get back to football with the 2011 Carolina Panthers at Fan Fest. All fans are invited, and admission is free. The day will feature activities in and around the stadium and a Panthers practice.
www.panthers.com
- 20 **Shelton at Sunset Concert Featuring The Embers**
Enjoy good food and wine while listening to the sounds of legendary group The Embers on a Blue Ridge Mountain hillside at North Carolina's largest family-owned vineyard.
www.sheltonvineyards.com
- 25 **An Inspiring Taste of Italy**
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▲ CHARLOTTE WINE & FOOD WEEKEND KICKOFF ▼

1 to r: Pam and Chuck Smith of Morrison Smith Jewelers, Board Chair Leslie Schlernitzauer

▲ VINO VINO TASTING AT DEAN & DELUCA ▼

1 to r: Bill Laffoday, Dee Petersen, Sean McCormack, Ciro Marino (Vino Vino), Gary Mullins

▲ ALIVE AFTER FIVE AT GEORGES BRASSERIE ▼

1 to r: Ryan Robinson, Scott Cline, Augusto Conte, Bob Bishop; seated: Irene Small, Linda Seligman, Jack Rosenblatt

▲ TGIC IMPORTERS AMBASSADOR'S WORLD PORTFOLIO TASTING AT REID'S ▼

1 to r: Mike Bell, Marcelo Victoria, Christophe Courteaud, Carlos Serrano

▲ PIEDMONT NATURAL GAS EMPLOYEES CELEBRATING 5-YEAR ANNIVERSARY AT BRIO ▼

1 to r: L. Polite-Coleman, Tom Lorello, Elizabeth Pressley, Kim Smith, Alicia Mooney

▲ ENJOYING A COLD BREW AT TASTE OF CHARLOTTE ▼

1 to r: Cale Evans, Lauren Hannan, Mark Powers



sweet and spicy sustenance for summer



cajun tuna wrap

selwyn avenue pub • chef mayor madera

ingredients:

- flour tortilla wrap
- lettuce
- tomatoes
- maui tuna
- 4 tbsp. mayonnaise
- 1 tbsp. cajun seasoning
- ½ tablespoon dry dill
- squirt lemon juice
- 1 tbsp. romero cheese

Combine mayonnaise, cajun seasoning, dill, lemon juice and cheese, and mix together until well blended. Set aside. Blacken tuna until cooked semi raw. Layer lettuce, tomato, tuna and cajun dill sauce down the center of tortilla. Roll tortilla snugly around filling, cut in half and serve.

grilled beef salad

deejai thai restaurant

ingredients:

- 1 lb. top-round flank steak, about 1 to 1½ inches thick
- 3 tbsp. fresh lime juice
- 3 tbsp. fish sauce
- 2 tsp. sugar
- 1 Thai chili pepper
- 3 shallots (about ½ cup), thinly sliced, divided
- 2 tbsp. Deejai homemade roasted chili paste (available for purchase)
- ¼ head iceberg lettuce
- 1 tomato, sliced
- 1 cucumber, sliced
- ½ cup cilantro
- 1 cup mint leaves

Rinse and pat the meat dry. Spray grill or grill pan with cooking spray and preheat. Grill steak until medium to medium rare, about five to seven minutes per side, depending on desired doneness. Let rest until room temperature, then slice thinly against the grain. Combine fish sauce, lime juice, sugar, homemade roasted chili paste, Thai chili pepper, sliced shallot, cilantro, mint, tomato, cucumber and beef in a salad bowl and mixed all ingredients together. Divide salad among four plates and garnish with reserved sliced shallots and iceberg lettuce.



DILWORTH/ SOUTHEND

Boardwalk Billy's Raw Bar & Ribs

Kick back—welcome to the no-tie zone! It's time to make your lunch or dinner a vacation. This casual dining restaurant and bar specializes in fresh raw bar seafood as well as ribs, cold beers, specialty drinks and fun times. Enjoy amazing drink specials and relax on their awesome rooftop patio.
704.332.9292 • www.boardwalkbillys.com

The Common Market

The Common Market is your stop for eclectic, neighborhood convenience. A modern twist on the general store, The Common Market offers fresh deli sandwiches, cold beer, knicks & knacks and a great selection of wine for every price range.
704.332.7782 • www.commonmarketclt.com

Lebowski's Neighborhood Grill

Drop into Lebowski's for good times and great food. Located in the heart of Dilworth on East Blvd., this comfortable neighborhood grill features a street-side covered patio, flat screen TVs and the best Buffalo wings south of North Tonawanda, NY. Daily lunch and dinner menu.
704.370.1177 • lebowskisgrillandpub.com

Mac's Speed Shop

They got 'cue; they got brew. Housed in the former location of a classic Charlotte transmission shop and car wash, Mac's features above average Southern cooking (barbecue, ribs, wings and mac-n-cheese to name a few) and cold beer (150 choices) in a unique and friendly atmosphere.
704.522.6227 • www.macspeedshop.com

Zen Asian Fusion

Zen showcases the finest contemporary Asian-infused cuisine with a European style. An eclectic menu of Asian-influenced dishes features plates both small (tapas) and large, all geared to be shared.
704.358.9688 • www.zenasian.com

SOUTH PARK

Barrington's Restaurant

Bruce Moffett brings culinary sophistication to the area with his highly imaginative cuisine. Meals are served in an intimate atmosphere by skilled servers who know the wine list as well as they do their own names.
704.364.5755
www.barringtonsrestaurant.com

Brio Tuscan Grill

Brio offers its guests 'La Dolce Vita.' The food is all simply prepared using the finest and freshest ingredients. The menu's emphasis is on prime steaks and chops, homemade pasta specialties and flatbreads prepared in an authentic Italian wood-burning oven.
704.571.4214 • www.brioitalian.com

Café Monte French Bistro

This French bakery and bistro has a delectable dish for everyone, offering French fare along with freshly baked Artisan breads, pain de croissants and crêpes. Open every day for breakfast, lunch and dinner.
704.552.1116 • www.cafemonte.net

Georges Brasserie

Georges Brasserie is a vibrant French brasserie blending tradition and modern cuisine located in Piedmont Town Center. The restaurant features a main dining room, raw bar, patio seating, bar and private dining.
980.219.7409 • www.georgesbrasserie.com

McCormick & Schmick's

Uniquely designed to create an inviting, original and relaxed dining experience, McCormick & Schmick's is committed to culinary excellence, offering an impressive number of fresh seafood varieties in addition to aged steaks, poultry, entrée salads and pastas.
www.mccormickandschmicks.com
704.442.5522

BALLANTYNE/ STONECREST

D'Vine Wine Café

Casual, relaxed environment with two separate lounge areas featuring 35 wines by the glass and over 500 wines for retail. The menu is focused on gourmet small plates at reasonable prices.
704.369.5050 • www.dvinewinecafe.com

Johnny's Red Bowl

Featuring a full-service bar and Asian-inspired dishes, each dish is handcrafted and prepared with the finest and freshest ingredients. Boasts a create-your-own stir-fry bar and award-winning Sushi bar.
704.814.7777 • www.redbowlusa.com

Miró Spanish Grill

Miró offers the best of Spain. Relax after work with an array of tapas and sangria, or settle in for a feast of steaks, chicken and fresh seafood, accompanied by a bottle of Rioja from their excellent wine list.
704.540.6364 • www.mirospanishgrill.com

Rudy's Italian Restaurant & Bar

This neighborhood Italian restaurant boasts a casual atmosphere, friendly prices for food and bar and great food.
704.544.4949 • www.rudyscharlotte.com

Total Wine & More—Promenade on Providence

The wine superstore offers a huge selection of fine wines at dynamite prices. Choose from everyday wines or some of the wine world's most revered labels. Many selections of beers and gift items are also available. Tastings and classes are offered.
704.841.1212 • www.totalwine.com

<p>UPTOWN/ PLAZA MIDWOOD</p>	<p>Akahana Asian Bistro Bar & Sushi If you're looking for a good fresh sushi experience, you've found the place. The menu is a fusion of everyone's favorite Asian dishes including Pad Thai, hibachi chicken, sesame chicken and Mongolian beef, to name a few. There's also a sushi bar where you can sit to watch your rolls being made. 704.817.9365 • www.akahanaasianbistro.com</p>	<p>The Common Market The Common Market is your stop for eclectic, neighborhood convenience. A modern twist on the general store, The Common Market offers fresh deli sandwiches, cold beer, knicks & knacks and a great selection of wine for every price range. 704.334.5991 • www.commonmarketclt.com</p>
<p>Presto Bar and Grill Presto Bar and Grill features casual dining at its best. Located Uptown, their revamped menu includes daily lunch and appetizer specials, all-you-can-eat sushi and a variety of entrées that can't be beat. 704.334.7088 • www.prestobarandgrill.com</p>	<p>MIDTOWN/ MYERS PARK</p>	<p>Deejai Thai Restaurant Each dish at Deejai is prepared with fresh ingredients by Thai chefs using recipes passed down from generations. Wine and beer is carefully selected to complement the spices and sauces in Thai food. 704.999.7884 • www.deejaithai.com</p>
<p>Kennedy's Premium Bar & Grill Kennedy's boasts the perfect atmosphere to enjoy spirits, great food and live entertainment. Lively and festive any time of the day, it's the perfect place to gather with friends or to meet new people. 704.375.0218 • www.kennedyscharlotte.com</p>	<p>Pasta & Provisions Charlotte's primo Italian gourmet food store features homemade pasta, sauces, olive oils, imported and domestic cheeses, etc., and a huge selection of Italian wines. 704.364.2622 • www.pastaprovisions.com</p>	<p>Selwyn Avenue Pub Selwyn Pub is your neighborhood spot to relax on the patio with big screen TVs and the best pizza, cold beer and pub food in Myers Park. 704.333.3443</p>
<p>Terra Restaurant This intimate bistro's casual atmosphere is perfect for dining with friends, co-workers and family. The creative menu features a wide array of great selections, always made from the highest quality ingredients. 704.332.1886 • www.terracharlotte.com</p>	<p>Vivace Taking its name and cue from the Italian word meaning 'lively,' Vivace is a modern convivial restaurant in a stylish setting offering authentic Italian cuisine, exotic wines and three patios. 704.370.7755 • www.vivacecharlotte.com</p>	<p>PARK ROAD/ WOODLAWN</p>
<p>Good Food on Montford With a focus on the extensive use of local and organic products combined with comfortably humble décor, the result can only be described as Good Food on Montford. 704.525.0881 • www.goodfoodonmontford.com</p>	<p>Sir Edmond Halley's Restaurant & Freehouse Nestled in the elbow of Park Road Shopping Center sits this world-renowned restaurant. Sir Eds' mouth-watering menu is available in full until 2 a.m. seven nights a week. Come for the food and stay for the spirits and camaraderie. 704.525.7775 • halleyspub.com</p>	<p>Total Wine & More-Park Road The wine superstore offers a huge selection of fine wines at dynamite prices. Choose from everyday wines or some of the wine world's most revered labels. Many selections of beers and gift items are also available. Tastings and classes are offered. 704.295.9292 • www.totalwine.com</p>
<p>UNIVERSITY/ MATTHEWS</p>	<p>Total Wine & More-Matthews The wine superstore offers a huge selection of fine wines at dynamite prices. Choose from everyday wines or some of the wine world's most revered labels. Many selections of beers and gift items are also available. Tastings and classes are offered. 704.849.2022 • www.totalwine.com</p>	<p>Total Wine & More-University The wine superstore offers a huge selection of fine wines at dynamite prices. Choose from everyday wines or some of the wine world's most revered labels. Many selections of beers and gift items are also available. Tastings and classes are offered. 704.714.1040 • www.totalwine.com</p>

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