

SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE

# Southern Living®

SL

BEST CITY

**CHARLESTON**

BEST NEW  
HOTEL

PG. 130

## The South's Best

Your favorite small towns, cities,  
hotels, restaurants, barbecue joints, bars,  
boutiques, and catfish places

A bird's-eye  
view of  
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**Clockwise from top right:** The Dewberry's elegant lobby, Meeting Street entrance, and rooftop bar



## BEST NEW HOTEL

# A Signature Stay in the Holy City

Luxury meets local charm at this reimagined property in Charleston

BY  
ZOE DENENBERG

**IN THE SOUTH**, even the locations we call “new” may not be entirely so. They are very often rooted in the old—vintage garages converted into restaurants or crumbling department stores transformed into

vibrant, thriving community centers.

The story of one of Charleston, South Carolina’s latest hotels, The Dewberry, begins with the L. Mendel Rivers Federal Building, originally commissioned by John F. Kennedy in 1963. After 35 years as government offices, it suffered extensive hurricane damage. Preservationist and developer John Dewberry then purchased the site at auction and transformed what was once a boxy cubicle maze into a luxury stay. Guided by the philosophy “Southern Reimagined,” the design team chose each detail with thoughtful nods to history.

Some of those ties are obvious: Upon checking in, you’re greeted with a glass of Dewberry Tea (served hot in the winter, cold in the summer).

Others are more subtle, like the brass map of the Holy City hung near the elevators—it was crafted by Peyton Averett, whose grandmother worked in the original federal building.

Southern hospitality is woven into the fabric of the hotel. Guest suites, which feature panoramic views of the city, are outfitted with velvet couches and custom mahogany-and-linen armoires. Minibars are stocked with local snacks and spirits. Henrietta’s, the hotel brasserie, combines

## THE TOP 10

### 1. The Dewberry (Charleston, SC)

2. Perry Lane Hotel (Savannah, GA)

3. The Lodge at Gulf State Park (Gulf Shores, AL)

4. Hotel Bennett (Charleston, SC)

5. Quirk Hotel (Richmond, VA)

6. Hotel Clermont (Atlanta, GA)

7. Amelia Schoolhouse Inn (Fernandina Beach, FL)

8. The Adolphus (Dallas, TX)

9. Noelle (Nashville, TN)

10. The Line DC (Washington, D.C.)

Southern and French sensibilities with ease—the Cheddar biscuits and the brioche are made in-house. In The Living Room, the hotel’s award-winning bar, guests and locals mingle over chess sets. It feels like home, right down to the doors that open onto

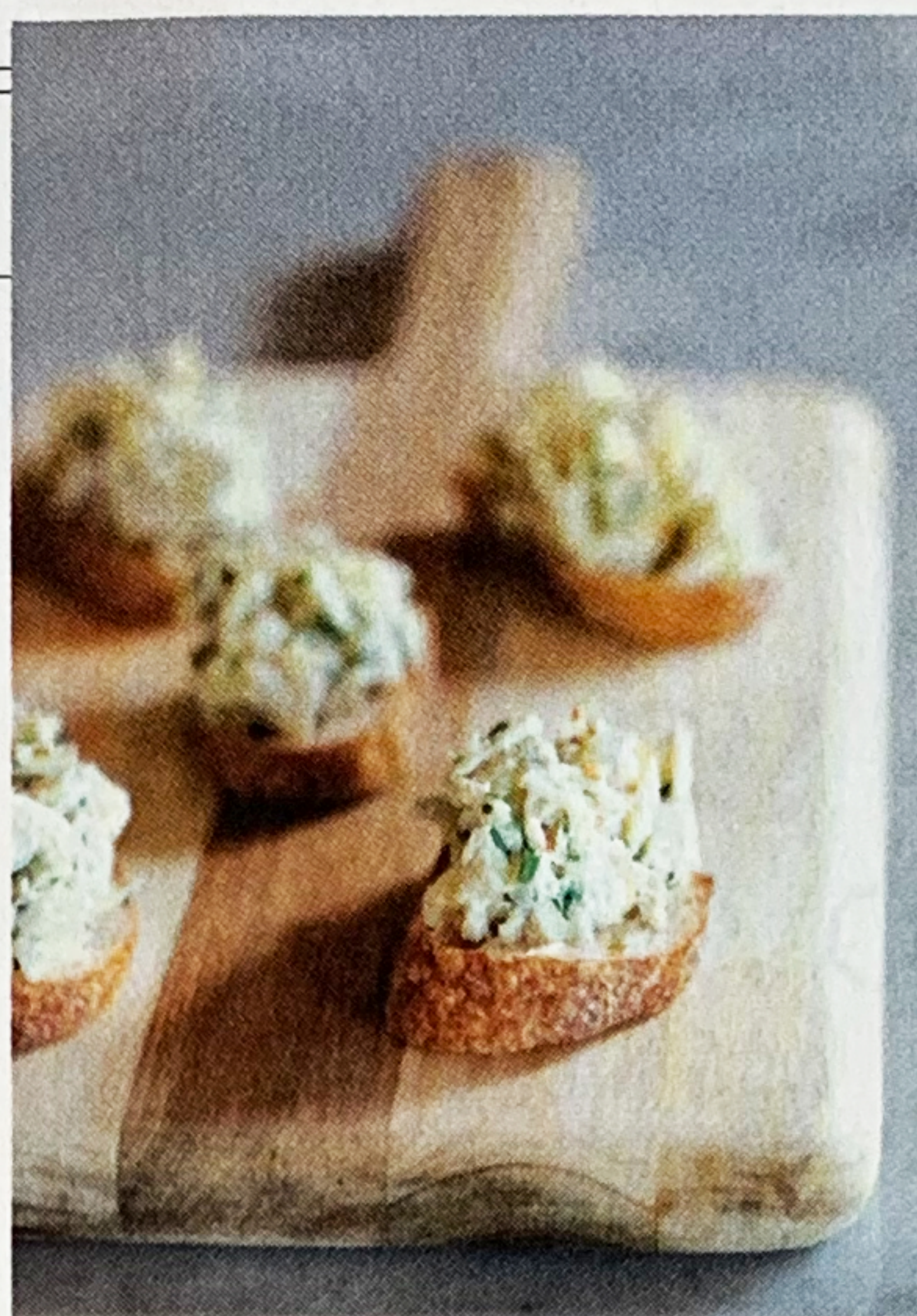
a wraparound porch.

After exploring the city on one of the hotel’s blue bikes (or in a complimentary house car), head up to the eighth-floor terrace. At the rooftop Citrus Club, sip on playful Caribbean-inspired drinks like the Tropical Itch, which comes with a miniature back scratcher. Relax, take in the view, and stay awhile.





**Left to right:** Alley Cat's  
Kyle Law making a Rosa  
Rose; crostini at Black  
Bear Bar Room



## BEST BARS

# A Toast to the Top Ten

You'll find everything from sustainable wines to tiki drinks at these reader favorites

BY  
ZOE DENENBERG

No. 1

## Alley Cat Lounge

Savannah, GA

A newspaper-like menu features over 150 cocktails, along with lots of helpful commentary guiding you from sweet to sour and offering suggestions to suit your taste. You can even choose a drink based on your astrological sign.

No. 2

## The Living Room at The Dewberry

Charleston, SC

This is not your ordinary hotel bar—and it has James Beard Award-semifinalist status to prove it. From a carefully curated library to luxe sofas imported from Denmark, each detail makes the space feel like home. Signature drinks include the Dark as Night, described as the “nightcap of nightcaps.”

No. 3

## The Jasper

Richmond, VA

Named after iconic early 19th-century Richmond bartender Jasper Crouch, this place is serious about cocktails. Try the Caribbean Kween, and snack on the Togarashi Popcorn.

No. 4

## Black Bear Bar Room

Grayton Beach, FL

Pair a natural wine with a tray of farm-raised oysters or house-made sourdough from sister cafe Black Bear Bread Co. next door.

No. 5

## Saint-Germain

New Orleans, LA

Serving top-rated wines without the white-tablecloth formality, Saint-Germain channels the breezy spirit of a French bistro in the Bywater neighborhood.

No. 6

## The Fox Bar & Cocktail Club

Nashville, TN

Considering the 1920s glamour of this spot (think blue velvet booths, sleek gold detailing, and quilted leather armchairs), you'd

No. 7

## The Expat

Athens, GA

This two-story bungalow brings sustainable wine, French bites, and classic cocktails to Athens. Dine on fougasse and escargot at the downstairs restaurant, or settle in for a daiquiri in the upstairs lounge.

No. 8

## The Atomic Bar & Lounge

Birmingham, AL

At random moments, bubbles fall from the ceiling at this eclectic Magic City haunt. Cozy up in one of the secluded alcoves for date night, or gather a group of friends and take advantage of the loan-out costumes.

No. 9

## Columbia Room

Washington, D.C.

Sip in style at this D.C. hot spot that celebrates the art of the cocktail. Indulge in an intimate dining experience in the Tasting Room; order a Grasshopper Julep in the Spirits Library; or start a night out in the lush, whimsical Punch Garden.

No. 10

## Ticonderoga Club

Atlanta, GA

At this Colonial-style bar hidden inside Atlanta's Krog Street Market, enjoy terrific plates, bold cocktails, and boisterous bartenders.