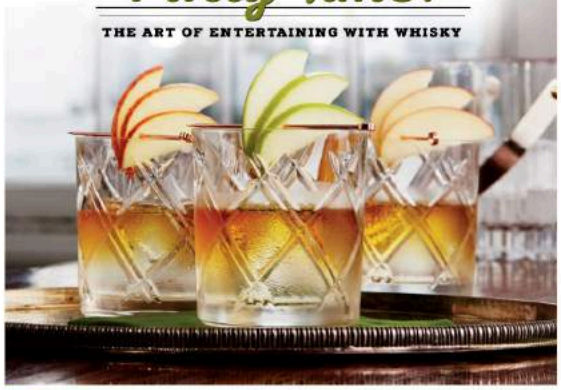
150+ WHISKIES RATED!

Whisky ADVOCATE

Party Time!

THE ART OF ENTERTAINING WITH WHISKY



48 HOURS

Chucktown Craft

Discover a bounty of breweries and distilleries

With its endless cobblestone streets, finely manicured gardens, bright-colored antebellum houses, and historic churches, food and beverage have a lot of competition for the attention of visitors to Charleston, S.C. Fortunately, the city's chefs and bartenders are up to the challenge, combining local ingredients and history into inventive tasting dishes and drinks. Charleston's vibrant food and beverage scene is rooted in its rich agricultural diversity. Visitors can explore flavors they may not encounter anywhere else in the world, and that is music just for its many amazing restaurants, but its whiskey makers to.” says Scott Blackwell, High Wire Distilling Co.’s co-owner and distiller. With every destination either walkable or a short ride, it’s easy to indulge in Charleston’s flavors, hospitality, and local pride.

Day One

Allow the aroma of butter and baked goods to lure you to **Callie’s Hot Little Biscuit**, a cozy, popular grab-and-go eatery. Grab their small, fluffy handmade biscuits for breakfast and savor along with a single-origin coffee at **Kudu Coffee and Craft Beer**, few minutes down King Street.

Then walk toward Liberty Square to board the first ferry of the day, either 9:30 or 11 a.m., depending on the time of year, to **Fort Sumter**. That way you can catch the flag-raising ceremony before spending the rest of the hour touring the grounds of the fort where North and South first clashed in the Civil War.

After the ferry ride back to downtown, journey over to **Goat.Sheep.Cow.** to nab their sandwich of the day. Daily creations, like a prosciutto cotto, Cajun cheddar, cucumber, and mustard sandwich, often draw upon their vast selection of over 150 cheeses, but are limited to just 30 sandwiches, available every day except Sunday, so call ahead. Take your lunch to Wragg Square Park for a relaxing picnic overlooking Charleston Harbor, or grab a gourmet meaty lobster roll from **167 Raw**, just a ten-minute walk from the ferry stop.

At **High Wire Distilling Company** (Blackwell applies his background as a Culinary Institute of America-trained baker to making small-batch whiskey from locally grown ingredients, their twists their New Southern Revival Jimmy Red straight bourbon, made with heirloom corn that ain’t worn cutouts, their rye made with the ancient Red an Abruzzese variety, and their Southern Revival bourbon distilled from a mash of heirloom white corn, red winter wheat, malted barley, and Carolina Gold rice bran, then finished in maskers casks.

If you stay at the graceful, West Indies-themed **Andaz Peninsula Inn**, book an afternoon Charleston on Tap tour (starting at $199 per night) when you reserve your room. The guide will work with you to choose three brewery visits from among the local favorites like **Westbrook**, **Revelry**, **Holy City**, **Tradesman**, and **Frothy Board.**

Otherwise, drive (or use Uber at $10) twelve minutes north to **Striped Pig Distillery**, which sometimes has limited releases of corn whiskey in addition to Striped Shine—which co-owner and distiller Todd Weiss says was, at one time, the highest proof moonshine bottled in the state (120 proof)—available for sampling before touring their operation. Ice cream infused with neutral grain spirits at **Hardcoop Distillery** in Daniel Island is the perfect afternoon snack, whether you pick a crunchy Revve Bite chocolate or a seasonal specialty like pumpkin spice.

From there, it’s less than 20 minutes to **Bottles Beverage Superstore** in Mount Pleasant with over 600 whiskies, including local craft whiskeys and a trophy case of rare and high-dollar bottlings. After making your purchase, it’s a fifteen-minute ride to **The Tavern at Rainbow Row**, tapas and the oldest liquor store on the country, dating back to 1686. During Prohibition, the store fronted as a barbershop and “liquor was run through tunnels below the store,” says owner Thomas Sandy. Most of the 200-plus bottles of whisky come from local, national, and international craft distilleries, with some rarities mixed in.

Walk to **The Bar at HUSK** for pre-dinner drinks next door to HUSK restaurant where the list of more than 175 mostly American whiskies, along with whiskey-friendly bites like pimento cheese and bourbon-barbecue-glazed chicken wings are a great start to a low-country evening. If you somehow resisted ordering food at HUSK, James Beard Award-winning chef Mike Lata will surely break your resolve at **FIG**. The menu changes daily to incorporate the freshest ingredients from local farmers and fishers. The white-tablecloths and precisely plated dishes add a bit of upscale elegance to the friendly neighborhood bistro atmosphere. Inquire about their whiskey as they often have special bottles not included on the menu. The Happy Yan Winkle’s Family Reserve and A.H. Hirsch Reserve, 16-year-olds are serious about their bourbon and whiskey in Charleston, so we take a little extra care in finding the right whiskeys to suit everyone’s palate,” says co-owner Adam Seaman.

Cap the night off with cocktails at **The Bar** at the **Spectator Hotel.** Get cozy on a leather couch in the dark, Prohibition-style bar and

enjoy seasonal twists on classics, such as Trouble in the Henhouse, a refreshing Old-Fashioned made with a medley of rosin-infused whiskeys. Odd Fellow Cocktail, Chicken Cock, and Old Grove, hay-infused demerara simple syrup, and lemon bitters.

Day Two

Several hotels, including the upscale waterfront **Harbour View Inn**, offer complimentary breakfasts of locally made biscuits, pastries, quiche, and more. Eat on the outside terrace, overlooking the harbor and as how many church steeples you can spot, then come back in the early evening for the wine hour.

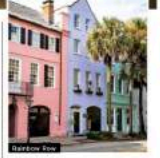
Spend the morning finding historical buildings, art galleries, and antiques shops at every turn, notably the row of colorful houses dating back to circa 1740 known as **Rainbow Row**, and **The Sportsman’s Gallery**, featuring sporting and wildlife art by painters such as Ogden Pleissner, Frank Benson, and Bob Kuhn. Souvenir hunters will want to visit **Charleston City Market**, where local artisans sell sweetgrass baskets, leather goods, art, and more. And, if you still haven’t found that priceless whiskey you’ve been looking for, consider heading north to **Surrio Liquor**, which declares to have the largest selection of liquor and alcohol beverages in South Carolina and specializes in high-end bourbon.

Rent a bike from **Holy Spokes** bike shop and work up an appetite with your eyes set on the roast beef with smoked onion jam, red pepper, miso mayo, and roasted tomato at **Butcher and Bee** or slow-cooked South Carolina barbecue at **Home Team BBQ.**

Hop in the car for short ride to visit another young craft distillery, **Charleston Distilling Co.**, which just moved from downtown to James Island. Local legends’ names (John C. Calhoun and Denmark Vesey) adorn their rye and bourbon made with local ingredients. There’s also a bourbon-barrel gin.

On your way back into town, hit **Paddock & Whisky**, a laid-back neighborhood bar with wood paneling on the walls and ceiling. The whisky selection numbers over 100, including a rotating selection of rare bourbons like Heaven Hill 27 year old Barrel. Proof and their own private select Eagle Rare 10 year old.

Play shuffleboard and bocce with a drink



of rosé at **Bar Mash**, a former cigar factory where American whiskey—especially bourbon—dominates the list of about 150 whiskies. There’s a steady stream of ever-changing entries like Parker’s Heritage 11 year old Single Barrel and Jefferson’s Presidential Select 16 year old, so make nice with the bartender and ask what’s new.

Once you can pull yourself away from the games and jukebox, it’s time for dinner. Multiple-time James Beard Award–semifinalist chef Kevin Johnson highlights the flavors of locally farmed, foraged, and fished ingredients in dishes like the Lowcountry Seafood Plate (gold rice, field peas, collards, shrimp, and fish) and the smoked-mussel whole fish with potatoes, fennel, green olives, and anise verde at **The Grocery**.

End the night with a cocktail at one of Charleston’s many top cocktail bars. Wade down a barn-smoky pop-ups, like raspberry, brie, and almond, at Blue69 English butter royale with a Beatnik (pear bon, cinnamon, espresso, and chocolate bitters) at **The Belmont**; sip a Fole gras–infused Old Fashioned Manhattan at **Dear Bess**, tested the irony of rare bee pages of whisky, including Highland Park Odin and Mother’s 20 year old at **Gin Joint**; and embrace the old balance of pickled boiled peanuts and spicy Coke in the bourbon Knuckle Sandwich at **Proof**. No matter where you go, Charleston bartenders aim to please and will stir up something you like—and that’s Southern hospitality at its finest.

—Brittany Risher

Bars & Restaurants

167 Raw 200 E. Bay St.; 167raw.com

The Bar at HUSK 76 Queen St.; huskrestaurants.com

The Bar at The Spectator Hotel 67 Broad St.; thespectatorhotel.com

Bar Mash 701 E. Bay St.; barmashsc.com

The Belmont 205 King St.; thebelmontcharleston.com

Butcher and Bee 1085 Morrison Dr.; butcherandbee.com

Callie’s Hot Little Biscuit 476 1/2 King St.; calliebiscuits.com

Dear Bess. 226 Meeting St.; dearbess.com

FIG 232 Meeting St.; eatatfig.com

Gin Joint 182 E. Bay St.; ginjointsc.com

Goat.Sheep.Cow. 886 Chuck St.; goatsheepcow.com

The Grocery 4 Cannon St.; thegrocerycharleston.com

Home Team BBQ 136 Williams St.; hometeambbq.com

Kudu Coffee and Craft Beer 4 Vendue Lane St.; kuducoffeeandcraftbeer.com

Paddock & Whisky 1082 Maybank Hwy.; paddockandwhisky.com

Proof 477 King St.; charlestonproof.com

Attractions

Charleston City Market 188 Meeting St.; charlestoncitymarket.com

Holy Spokes charlestonbikeshare.com

Fort Sumter National Monument (Liberty Square) 340 Concord St.; fortsumtertours.com

Rainbow Row 83 E. Bay St.; cityofcharleston.com

The Sportsman’s Gallery & Podorowski Fine Arts 161 King St.; sportsmansgallery.com

Retail Stores

Bottles Beverage Superstore 898 Coleman Blvd., Mount Pleasant, shopbottles.com

Harris Liquor 418 Meeting St.; harrisliquor.com

The Tavern at Rainbow Row 106 E. Bay St.; charlestonwinecellar.com

Hotels

Andaz Peninsula Inn 477 Meeting St.; andarpeninsulainn.com

Harbour View Inn 5 Vendue Range; harbourviewinn.com

The Spectator Hotel 67 Broad St.; thespectatorhotel.com