



Charlotte, NC

## Relocation Guide

[www.iorworld.com](http://www.iorworld.com)

*IOR makes every effort to ensure that the information contained in this guide is as current as possible. If you notice errors, or information which is no longer accurate, please contact us immediately so that we may correct the issue.*

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## WELCOME AND OVERVIEW



Photo Courtesy of [Elly](#) on Flickr

Charlotte has a rich history steeped in the discovery of gold and the pride of Scottish-Irish settlers. The ‘Queen City’, as it got its name from Queen Charlotte, wife of King George III of England, was founded in 1769. Charlotte was originally built at the crossroads of two Native-American trading paths, now major streets “Trade & Tyron”. The discovery of a 17-pound gold nugget in 1799 drew immigrants into the area and launched the nation’s first gold rush.

The rush, however, was short-lived. The many Charlotte opportunists moved to California in 1848 to keep looking for gold. By the time of the Civil War, Charlotte’s economy revolved around tobacco and cotton. Following the war, the city joined the industrial revolution and textile factories brought new life and wealth into the city. Soon, Charlotte had outgrown its reputation as an agricultural town and became a major railroad hub.

The railroad’s success led Charlotte to become the Carolinas’ largest city. The addition of the streetcar system, skyscrapers, and suburbs helped propel Charlotte into the economic hub it is today. City planners including John Nolen helped shape Charlotte’s modern-day suburbs such as Myers Park and Dilworth.

As businesses continued to flock to Charlotte, the city’s banking industry gained momentum in the 1970s and 1980s under the leadership of financier Hugh McColl. McColl transformed North Carolina National Bank into the present-day Bank of America. The combination of Bank of America and Wachovia made Charlotte the nation’s second-largest banking center, behind New York City.

### **City of Charlotte Overview**

- [Official Website of the City of Charlotte](#)
- [Mayor of the City of Charlotte](#)
- Population: 1,249,442
- Land Area: 297.7 mi<sup>2</sup> (771 km<sup>2</sup>)

### **History of Charlotte**

- [The Charlotte Museum of History](#)

### **Recommended Reading (in print)**

- Insiders' Guide to Charlotte, 11th (Insiders' Guide Series) – [Purchase on Amazon](#)
- Day Trips from Charlotte: Getaway Ideas for the Local Traveler (Day Trips Series) – [Purchase on Amazon](#)
- Charlotte and the State of North Carolina: Cool Stuff Every Kid Should (Arcadia Kids) – [Purchase on Amazon](#)
- [For architecture](#)

### **What to See, Sightseeing Tours, Value Packages and Passes, Tourist Information**

- [Charlotte Event and Travel Center](#)
- [Best of Charlotte Guide – TripAdvisor](#)
- [Official Tourism Board Website of Charlotte](#)

### **Where to Find Arts & Entertainment**

- [Official Charlotte Calendar of Events](#)
- [Downtown Charlotte \(Center City\) Calendar of Events](#)
- [Theatre Productions in Charlotte](#)
- [Movie Theatres in Charlotte](#)

### **Where to Eat**

- [List of Restaurants – Organized by Yelp](#)
- [List of Restaurants – Organized by Zagat](#)
- [Taste of Charlotte – Annual Festival of Food](#)
- [Charlotte's 25 best restaurants – Organized by Charlotte Magazine](#)

### **Sales Tax**

7.25% sales tax in Charlotte.

## EMERGENCY

**IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY  
DIAL 911  
for  
FIRE, POLICE & AMBULANCE**

Emergency personnel will ask for the following information so keep this page close to your phone:

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

**If you accidentally call 911, please do not hang up.** The police will automatically be dispatched to your home to make sure there are no problems. Explain to the Operator the call was an accident.

**Other Important Numbers:**

PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN

WORK PHONE NUMBER

- [POISON CONTROL](#) 1-800-222-1222
- [ANIMAL POISON CONTROL](#) 1-888-426-4435
- City/County Information 311
- Water Emergency 704-336-2564
- Sewer Emergency 704-357-6064
- Electric Emergency 800-796-3766
- Natural Gas Emergency 800-356-2593
- Telephone Emergency 611 **or** 704-780-2500
- Animal Control Hotline 704-336-3840
- Mecklenburg County Health Department 704-336-4700
- Environmental Health 704-336-5500
- Emergency Management Office 704-336-2461

**Hospital & Clinics**

- [Directory of all Hospitals and Clinics](#)
- [Best Hospitals in 25 mi radius of Charlotte, NC](#)
- [VCA Stoney Creek Animal Hospital](#)

## **Pharmacies**

There are several major pharmacy chains in Charlotte, found on nearly every block on commercial streets. Click on “Store Locator” and enter your zip (postal) code to find the pharmacy near you. Several pharmacies are open 24 hours. Check for hours of operation. Also the main grocery stores like Food Lion, Target and Wal-Mart have full service pharmacies.

- [Walgreens](#)
- [CVS](#)
- [Local pharmacies in Charlotte](#)

### **US Leasing/Housing Guide**

A lease is an agreement that outlines the obligations of the owner and the tenants of a house or apartment. It is a legally binding document, so it is important for you to know the exact terms of the lease agreement before you sign it. Please do not sign a lease without reviewing it with your IOR DS Consultant.

### **Rental Agents**

In most situations, your IOR consultant will partner with a local realtor to have access to the most current and extensive property listings as well as the realtor's expertise in preparing and negotiating leases. This agent receives a commission for their assistance, and in most US locations this commission is paid by the Landlord, not the tenant. Your IOR DS Consultant will discuss this with you.

### **Renter's Rights**

Tenants who lease or rent property are protected against discrimination by [The Fair Housing Act](#). If you think your rights have been violated, you may write a letter or telephone the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) office nearest you. You have one year after the alleged violation to file a complaint with HUD, but you should file as soon as possible.

While you can generally expect the same service from landlords, it's important to know your state's laws. Each state and most major cities have their own tenant rights, laws and protections. [Here](#) are North Carolina's.

You can also visit the [HUD website here for a full guide to renters' rights by states](#).

If your rental property ever suffers any defects that make your place uninhabitable, your landlord has a duty to fix it. While some apartments let you make online requests for repairs, as well as provide a phone number for "emergencies," always make sure you document your request in writing. The landlord will then have a certain amount of time to make those repairs.

### **Privacy**

You have the right to privacy. While the landlord owns the property, they can't access it anytime they want. All states have laws stating renters have a right to privacy while renting. Pretty much the only time the landlord can come into your rental without permission or notice is when they're responding to an emergency that threatens injury or property damage.

Any other time the landlord wants to enter your apartment, they need to have your permission and in most cases give you 24-hours' notice before entering.

### **What to expect from the landlord:**

In most states, you are legally entitled to:

- Safe structural elements including floors, walls, roofs and secure doors and windows.
- Privacy as described above.

- All electrical, plumbing, heating and air conditioning systems function.
- Working hot and cold water.
- Exterminating infestations of rodents and other insects.
- Access to trash receptacles.
- Landlords cannot discriminate based on race, gender, sexual orientation or disabilities.
- Apartment buildings sometimes come with laundry and dryer machines in the basement.
- Water, electricity and gas bills are up to you to pay. **Your IOR consultant will assist you with this process.**

### Utilities and Appliances

Your IOR DS Consultant will assist you or provide information on connecting your utilities. It is possible some will be included in your rent, but typically most are not.

### Recycling

The [City of Charlotte Solid Waste Services](#) is one of the largest municipal collection systems in the southeastern United States.

### The Lease Process

#### Review your housing budget with your IOR DS Consultant

Your IOR DS Consultant can help you understand what kind of property you can afford. You also need to take into account that you may be responsible for some of the utility costs of your rental.

#### Know what you want

What are you looking for in a property? Do you want a studio or a single bedroom? Maybe you want to rent a single family home? Do you need the property to come with appliances, including washer and dryer? Do want it to be close to school or your work? Do you want it to be within walking distance of retail, like groceries or coffee shops? Are you looking for a child friendly area?

Keep in mind that outside of the city center in major cities, there is not much public transportation and most locals drive everywhere.

#### Identify potential apartments

IOR offers home finding services to aid you with this process. Your consultant may work with a local broker who will help to organize appointments and visit properties. They will also assist in the rental application and the leasing process.

### Common Abbreviations and Acronyms used in rental housing listings

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
<b>24-hr mtn</b>	24-hour emergency maintenance
<b>AC or A/C</b>	Air conditioning

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
<b>LA</b>	Living area
<b>LR</b>	Living room



<b>Appls</b>	Appliances
<b>Apt</b>	Apartment
<b>BA</b>	Bathroom
<b>BR</b>	Bedroom
<b>Bsmt</b>	Basement
<b>CAC</b>	Central air conditioning
<b>DA</b>	Dining area
<b>Det</b>	Detached
<b>Dk</b>	Deck
<b>DR</b>	Dining room
<b>Dw (D/w)</b>	Dishwasher
<b>Eff</b>	Efficiency
<b>EiK</b>	Eat-in kitchen
<b>Fin bsmt</b>	Finished basement
<b>FDR</b>	Formal dining room
<b>FHA</b>	Fair Housing Act
<b>FMR</b>	Fair market rent
<b>FP</b>	Floorplan
<b>Gar</b>	Garage
<b>H/A</b>	Handicapped accessible
<b>H/W</b>	Hardwood floors
<b>Hi ceil</b>	High ceilings
<b>HVAC</b>	Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning

<b>MBR</b>	Master bedroom
<b>MBTH</b>	Master bathroom
<b>Neg</b>	Negotiable
<b>Ofc</b>	Office
<b>OSP</b>	Off-street parking
<b>Pkg</b>	Parking
<b>PM</b>	Property manager (management)
<b>Pvt</b>	Private
<b>Pwdr rm</b>	Powder room (1/2 bath)
<b>RE</b>	Real estate
<b>Renov</b>	Renovated
<b>Rf</b>	Roof
<b>Rm</b>	Room
<b>SF</b>	Single-family
<b>SFA</b>	Single-family attached
<b>SFD</b>	Single-family detached
<b>Sp, PI (S/p)</b>	Swimming pool
<b>Sq. ft</b>	Square feet
<b>Th (T/H)</b>	Townhouse
<b>Vw (vu)</b>	View
<b>W/A</b>	Wheelchair accessible
<b>W/W</b>	Wall-to-wall carpeting

## **Visit**

Make this process as efficient as possible by visiting as many potential properties as you can in one or two days. Try to go sometime during the week if possible. Your IOR DS consultant will work with you to set an appropriate schedule and to ensure that the properties you visit meet your needs as closely as possible.

## **What to do once you're there**

As you look at the rental unit, be sure to ask a lot of questions. While you should keep small concerns to yourself about the unit while looking at it, feel free to ask the landlord or apartment manager any questions you might have that will help in your decision. Here are some possible questions you may consider asking:

- What's the monthly rent?
- Are any utilities included with the rent?
- How much is the security deposit?
- When is rent due? Do you have auto-pay?
- What's the make-up of the other tenants? Are they mainly younger students? Married couples with families? Older folks?
- What's the parking situation like? Do you pay for a parking spot?
- Do you take care of small maintenance issues or am I responsible for some of the repairs in the property?
- Am I able to re-paint the walls or make other modifications?

Again, be friendly and polite when you ask these questions.

## **The Application**

The next step in the leasing process for an apartment is to submit a rental application for the location you want. The manager or landlord will be able to give you the application as well as anything else that they may need to have filled out. Your IOR DS Consultant will assist with this process. For a single family home there will likely be a rental application.

You will need your passport, Social Security number, Driver's License and proof of employment. Some landlords may charge you an application fee which could be between \$20 to \$400 dollars, depending on the landlord. This could be a combination of an application fee and move-in fee.

Once you've done this, it can take up to a few days to hear back from the property manager. Once your application has been approved the lease approval process will begin with IOR and likely your employer.

## **Signing the lease**

DO NOT SIGN THE LEASE until your IOR DS consultant has reviewed it in full and given their approval.

The lease is a binding contract, so it is very important to pay attention as a leasing agent goes over it with you. It is perfectly normal for you to take your time and read all the fine print for yourself. If you are working with an IOR DS consultant, make sure to talk with them and receive approval before signing.

You will also be given a copy of the lease to take with you and keep for your records, but it is very important to know everything included in your lease from the start.

Some things to look for in a lease:

- Term of the lease and any important dates such as when the rent is due.
- Extra fees for parking spaces or storage, garbage collection, and pets.
- Information regarding utility providers and whether you or the landlord is responsible for those bills.
- Notification requirements in case of renewal.
- Requirements/responsibilities of the tenants to do routine repairs such as lawn maintenance, cleaning or notification of repairs.
- Clauses that allow the landlord to change the terms of the lease after it is signed.
- Restrictions that would prevent you from living normally or comfortably in the home.

Sometimes landlords will ask for a security deposit before you sign the lease. This is normal, but you shouldn't pay in cash. Make sure all payments are made out as a check or money order just in case.

### **What to expect from the lease**

Most leases include the following or a variation thereof:

- Your employer requires that all leases include a Break Clause in case you are transferred for work or personal needs.
- Contracts will often be for periods of a year or more.
- Minimum stay. Typically three fourths of your lease contract time. If you choose to move out before this date, you will lose your security deposit. If you move out afterwards, you are still required to give a specified number of days notice.
- Security Deposit. Landlords will expect you to leave them with a deposit (usually about one to two month's rent) that they will hold for the duration of your lease. You will receive your security deposit back at the end of the lease provided you don't break any specific clauses in your lease, such as moving out without proper notice, not paying rent, causing damages to the property, etc.
- Landlords should not be given unchecked access to your apartment. If there isn't anything in your lease about landlord's rights to enter the leased premises, suggest the following clause:

*Entry by the Landlord. Landlord or his agent will not enter Tenant's home except to deal with an emergency; to make necessary or agreed repairs; to supply necessary or agreed services; or to show the unit to potential purchasers, tenants, or repair persons. Unless there is an emergency, Landlord will give Tenant at least 24 hours' written notice of the date, time, and purpose of the intended entry and will schedule entries during normal business hours, Monday–Friday.*

Most landlords will be hard-pressed to say no to such a reasonable clause. If the landlord refuses, it's a sure sign that he won't be reasonable in other respects, too. Continue on in your housing search.

### **Moving In**

On your selected move-in date, after the lease has been signed, and deposits have been paid...you should be given your keys and more than likely a move-in form to fill out. Your IOR DS Consultant will assist you with an initial walk through of your apartment. Look for dings in the walls, cracked windows, or other irregularities and report them on this form. This will indicate that these things were there before you moved in and you will not be held responsible for them at the end of the lease term.

### **Get Renter's Insurance**

Renter's insurance covers any loss to your personal property due to robbery or accidents. It also covers any damage you might cause to other tenant's property. For example, let's say your washing machine springs a leak and water seeps through the floor and ruins your neighbor's antique dresser. Renter's insurance would cover that.

Renter's insurance will cost approximately about \$15-125 a month, less if you tack it onto another policy (like auto) you have with an insurance company. A few popular options are [Allstate](#) and [StateFarm](#).

## SCHOOLS IN YOUR AREA

In a city as metropolitan as Charlotte, the education options are in no short supply. Charlotte has one of the nation's 25 largest school districts and has a large selection of public schools. In addition, there are number of charter schools and private schools in Charlotte as well. Statistics say that more than 26,000 students are enrolled in 80 private schools and charter schools in the county. The teaching language of schools in Charlotte is English, with the exception of those international schools that uphold the teaching language found in their home country. The following are useful information and links on the schools in your area. Look through and talk with your local DSC to decide the perfect fit for your child.

- [Charlotte board of education](#)
- Charlotte's top public school's ranking
  - [Charlotte Magazine](#)
  - [US News](#)
- [Directory of private and charter schools in Charlotte](#)

### Colleges and Universities

College	Location
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Chapel Hill
Duke University	Durham
North Carolina State University	Raleigh
East Carolina University	Greenville
Appalachian State University	Boone
Wake Forest University	Winston Salem
University of North Carolina at Charlotte	Charlotte
University of North Carolina at Greensboro	Greensboro
Davidson College	Davidson
Western Carolina University	Cullowhee ...
North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University	Greensboro
University of North Carolina Wilmington	Wilmington
Elon University	Elon
University of North Carolina at Asheville	Asheville
University of North Carolina at Pembroke	Pembroke
North Carolina Central University	Durham
Elizabeth City State University	Elizabeth City
Guilford College	Greensboro
Campbell University	Buies Creek
High Point University	High Point

## OBTAINING A NORTH CAROLINA DRIVER'S LICENSE

[For information on how to obtain a driver's license, see the website of North Carolina's DMV.](#)

### [General Information about driver's licenses](#)

Charlotte locations of the DMVs:

- **Charlotte, East**  
6635 Executive Circle, Suite 130  
Charlotte, NC 28212  
Ph: (704) 531-5563  
Monday - Friday 8:00 - 4:30
- **Charlotte, North, DMV Building**  
8446 North Tryon Street  
Charlotte, NC 28262  
Ph: (704) 547-5786, (704) 547-5787  
Monday - Friday 8:00 - 5:30  
Saturday 8:00 - Noon
- **Charlotte, South**  
201-H West Arrowood Road  
Charlotte, NC 28217  
Ph: (704) 527-2562, (704) 527-2563  
Monday - Friday 8:00 - 4:30
- **Charlotte, State Office, West**  
6016 Brookshire Boulevard  
Charlotte, NC 28216  
Ph: (704) 392-3266, (704) 392-3267  
Monday - Friday 8:00 - 5:30  
Saturday 8:00 - Noon

**Your Destination Services Consultant will assist you with the proper procedure.**

### Checking and Savings Accounts

To open a checking or savings account you will need the following information:

- Two forms of picture identification including but not limited to your passport, driver's license, or work ID.
- Social security number
- Local mailing address. You may use your office address as your mailing address, but be prepared to call your bank branch as soon as you have your permanent address.
- Letter of Employment
- Cash for the initial deposit can range from \$25-\$150 dollars.

### Major US Banks

Below is a list of links to some of the larger US banks. Not every bank is represented in all US locations; in some cases you may find that the local bank is a better option for you than some of the larger banks. Your IOR DS Consultant can help you in selecting a bank by sharing the various options available locally as well as the products they offer to support expatriates.

- [Bank of America](#)
- [Chase](#)
- [Citibank](#)
- [HSBC](#)
- [TD Bank](#)
- [US Bank](#)
- [Wells Fargo](#)
- [Local Banks in Charlotte](#)

### Getting Around Charlotte

#### By Foot

While the center of the city is walking-friendly, the same can be said of only a few outer districts. These include North Davidson and Dilworth. Places like Ballantyne and University City are not pedestrian-friendly. If you do decide to walk around, pay attention to the weather. During the summer it is advisable to carry sunscreen and water.

#### By Car

The center of the city is laid out in a grid with few exceptions, making it fairly easy to navigate. Driving through Charlotte's outer districts and suburbs can be a bit more of a challenge. It is a good idea to have a GPS or specific and trustworthy directions before venturing into unknown areas. If you need to ask directions don't be shy, Charlotte residents are usually friendly and happy to help you reach your destination.

Secondary roads in Charlotte are notoriously difficult to navigate. In particular, visitors and residents alike are often befuddled by frequent name changes in the roads. To make matters worse, many roads in the city share similar names. Also, very few of the city's roads are based on a grid or similarly organized system; most of the roads outside the city core are winding avenues that follow the natural features of the land.

#### By Taxi

Taxis are generally available to any part of Charlotte. There are several prominent companies, and unlike larger cities (for instance, New York City or London) the design of the vehicles is not uniform. However, a taxi is always recognizable by a sign on the roof of the car. If the taxi is vacant, the sign will be lit up; if it has a passenger, the sign will be off. It is customary to give a tip to cab drivers, especially if they help you with luggage or other items. It is usually a good idea to inquire about the fare before boarding if you are planning to make a longer trip; Charlotte's sprawled-out nature can lead to high fares for trips outside the center city.

Major taxi companies include:

- Yellow Cab Charlotte – (704) 444-4444
- Affordable Charlotte Shuttle – (704) 238-3204

#### Transportation “App” Options

Several web based phone applications to secure a driver are available throughout the area. The driver knows your approximate location based on your phone GPS. Payment is automatic through the app and fares may be cheaper than a taxi.

- [Uber](#)
- [Lyft](#)



### **By Light Rail**

[The Light Rail Corridor](#) is a rapid and efficient way to commute from Uptown to the southern edges of Mecklenburg County. It stops at major Uptown destinations (Time Warner Cable Arena, the Convention Center), travels through South End, and proceeds along South Blvd all the way down to I-485.

Trains typically arrive between 7-10 minutes on weekdays to 20-30 minutes on weekends. Tickets are either for a one-way ticket (discounts for seniors and youth) or a day pass. Tickets are good for 90 minutes and allow for transfer to CATS transit buses.

### **By Bus**

[Charlotte Area Transit System \(CATS\)](#) operates transit service throughout the Charlotte area. Most bus routes start at the Transportation Center in Uptown (across the street from the Time Warner Cable Arena) and go toward the suburbs. Though they are generally clean and safe, they are usually not the most efficient way to get around the city. Bus fare is \$1.75 for a one-leg or two-leg trip, \$2 for an express bus (these run mornings and evenings and go to an outlying area without stopping), and \$0.60 for a shuttle.

### **By Trolley**

Charlotte Trolley is a replica streetcar system that operates on the LYNX line between the South End and Uptown. The Trolley stops at LYNX Light Rail stations in Uptown and South End as well as stops at Atherton Mill, Tremont and 9th St.

### **By Bicycle**

Some parts of Charlotte are very friendly to cyclists, especially the south-central area around Myers Park and Dilworth, but be aware that most of the city is not friendly toward bikers. Also know that bicycles are subject to the same traffic laws as cars. Helmets are highly recommended but not legally required for adults.

Charlotte instituted in 2012 a bike program for uptown that is taking off nicely. The program is funded by a group of private sponsors who will put 200 rental bicycles on the streets of uptown Charlotte. The bike-share program allows anyone with a credit card to grab a three-speed touring cycle and peddle in and around the center city. The program will have 20 automated stations where bikes can be picked up and turned in. The locations are listed here:

- Johnson C. Smith
- 6th & Pine
- UNC Charlotte  
uptown
- 7th Street Public  
Market
- Tryon & 3rd
- Gateway Village
- Tryon & 7th
- Trade & Tryon
- Levine Avenue of the Arts
- 4th & College

- Trade St. at Arena
- Government Center
- Kings Drive/CPCC
- Carolinas Medical Center
- Metropolitan
- Convention Center
- Bland St. Station
- East/West Blvd Station
- Elizabeth Ave at Presbyterian Hospital
- Freedom Park

#### **Map Websites**

- [Apple Maps](#)
- [Expedia](#)
- [MapQuest](#)

A full comprehensive map of Charlotte's Bus system can be found on the [official website](#).

#### **[AAA Travel Protection](#)**

AAA is a membership organization that offers benefits such as roadside service and towing, discounts on car products and services, maps, reference materials, etc.

Call 1-800-352-5382 for additional information and cost.

## PET RESOURCES

All dogs, cats and ferrets 4 months of age and older must be vaccinated for rabies and licensed annually or triennially with Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

The cities of Charlotte, Mint Hill, Pineville and the unincorporated area of Mecklenburg County are required to license through Charlotte-Mecklenburg Animal Licensing.

If you live within the town limits of Matthews, you are required to license with Matthews Animal Licensing.

### **Dog Parks**

Dog Parks are open from 7:30am until sunset seven days a week. Use of [county dog parks](#) is now free. As of July 1, 2008, Dog Passes are no longer sold or required.

## LIVING AND SHOPPING

### TV, Cable, Telephone, and Internet

The main service providers for TV cable, landline telephone and internet all offer combination packages. They are in stiff competition with each other, so special offers change monthly, sometimes even weekly.

- [AT&T](#)
- [Comcast](#)
- [DirecTV](#)
- [Dish](#)

### Food Shopping

For the most part, Charlotte's culinary tastes are in line with the rest of the American South. Standards such as grits, sweet potatoes (yams), and greens are common in kitchens and restaurants. Southern food is typically high in fats and carbohydrates, so dieters should be careful to stick to higher-end restaurants that serve a more cosmopolitan fare. Otherwise, dig in and enjoy the richness of the Southern diet.

Many of Charlotte's older restaurants are owned by **Greek** families. Often, you will unexpectedly find Greek items on the menus of restaurants that otherwise serve American fare.

North Carolinians have long been fiercely competitive about their **barbecue**, and Charlotte's eateries reflect that heritage. Carolinas barbeque is typically chopped and sauced pork. Barbecue sandwiches are invariably served with slaw (either a vinegar-based red slaw, or a mayonnaise-based white slaw) on the meat, though it will be left out or on the side if you request. This is a local custom and one of the many things that makes Charlotte and more generally NC interesting. "**Carolinas style**" hamburgers and hot dogs are typically served with mustard, chili, and coleslaw.

### Grocery

The dominant local grocery chains are [Harris Teeter](#) and [Food Lion](#), both owned by N.C. companies. Harris Teeter is relatively expensive but more upscale. Food Lion is a middle-class favorite, and usually has an extensive ethnic section. Other groceries include [Bi-Lo](#), [ALDI](#), [Lowe's Foods](#), and [Bloom](#) (a high-tech spin off of Food Lion). The city is also dotted with dozens of ethnic groceries, especially Hispanic, Indian and Vietnamese. Check out [Compare Foods](#) stores dotted around the city.

The specialty grocery store scene is also growing, as Charlotte has [Trader Joe's](#) stores, [Earth Fare](#) stores and [Fresh Markets](#). These stores specialize in natural and organic foods.

## **Farmers Markets**

The [Charlotte Farmers Market](#) is one of four regional Farmers Markets owned by the State of North Carolina. They provide modern, well maintained facilities, in prime locations that are inviting to sellers and buyers. If you are looking for a friendly place to shop for fresh produce, fresh pork products, grass fed beef, goat milk cheese, scrumptious baked goods, delectable jams and jellies, unique handmade crafts, goat milk soap, beautiful fresh cut flowers and plants of every kind, you can find it all at the Charlotte Farmers Market. Here you can actually talk to the farmer who grew the freshly harvested produce and/or fruit.

## RECREATION

### Places of Interest

- [Concord Mills](#)
- [U.S. National Whitewater Center](#)
- [Lowe's Motor Speedway](#)
- [Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden](#)
- [North Carolina Zoo](#)
- [Reed Gold Mine](#)
- [Schiele Museum of Natural History](#)
- [Catawba Lands Conservancy](#): See how this Native American tribe used to live and lives today (southwest of Charlotte)
- [Carowinds](#). Large theme park with a focus on movies.
- [Chimney Rock Park](#) is one of the region's most visited parks, primarily because of its unusual rock formations and waterfalls.
- [Nantahala Outdoor Center](#) has excellent whitewater rafting and tubing for all experience levels; the river runs particularly well after big rains.



Photo of chimney [Rock State Park](#)

### Festivals and Holidays

- [Raleigh Winter Fest](#) where an outdoors ice skate rink is built and many fun events surround it for two months beginning in December.
- On New Year's Eve, the people of Charlotte celebrate [First Night Charlotte](#) with many live performances, dance music and the famous annual acorn drop, where many come together to downtown and watch a 1,200-pound steel acorn dropped at midnight
- [Midtown Beach Music](#). In the summer, the Midtown beach music takes place every Thursday.
- [Other Events](#)

There are also events throughout Charlotte celebrating traditional events such as July 4<sup>th</sup>, Columbus Day, Halloween events, Christmas, and Hanukkah.

### Sports for the Spectator

Adrenaline Junkies looking for excitement in the Charlotte area have a lot to choose from. From edge-of-your seat North Carolina State football, the [Carolina Panthers](#) NFL Football to the [Carolina Hurricanes](#) NHL hockey. Charlotte is also home to minor-league baseball, with the Carolina Mudcats and Cary's Carolina RailHawks pro soccer team. Greater Charlotte is a big-time sports destination.

One of the local favorites, the Carolina Hurricanes is based at the PNC arena in Charlotte and won the Stanley Cup for the first time in 05-06 seasons. College football also plays an important role in the sports scene in Charlotte and the seat prices can start from \$590.

### **Sports for the Participant**

Charlotte offers various outlets to exercise and be involved in the community as well. There are number of parks in the city such as the Pullen Park and Umstead State Park that offer 300+ year-old hardwood trees, more than 32 miles of hiking, biking and horseback riding trails, camp sites and lots more for nature lovers. In addition, there are great beaches where you can swim and take part in marine sports.

For both novice and seasoned runners, there is an abundance of races starting from 5k to marathons in the Charlotte area. There are many fun events, such as the mud race where people dress up as either zombies or humans and race through an obstacle course, or the Great Glow Run where the race begins at 8:30pm allowing you to run under the stars.



*Photo of [Umstead State Park](#)*

There are many other sporting opportunities in Charlotte such as golfing. Golf is an easily accessible sport to many in Charlotte due to the abundance of public golf courses. The Lonnie Pool Golf course in particular covers over 200 acres and was designed by Arnold Palmer and his team. Rates range from \$25-\$50 and tee times can be made a maximum of seven days in advance. An added bonus: This course features great views of the Charlotte skyline.



*Photo of [Lonnie Pool Golf Course](#)*

## TRANSFEEE RESOURCES

### Volunteer Opportunities

- [Volunteer Match](#)
- [United Way](#)

### Parent & Children Resources

- [Mom's Clubs](#) - social groups offering events and outings with mothers and their young children.

### Smart Phone Apps for Travel:

- [Uber](#) : Similar to a taxi service but all web based. Payment also handled online, do not pay or tip driver directly. Uber driver knows your approximate location based on your phone GPS.
- [Lyft](#) : Wherever you're headed, count on Lyft for rides in minutes. The Lyft app matches you with local drivers at the tap of a button. Just request and go.
- [Google Maps](#) : Map by direction
- [Apple Maps](#) : Map by direction
- [Map Quest](#) : Map by direction
- [Waze](#) : Community based traffic & navigation with alternate route suggestions
- [CityMaps2Go](#) : The #1 travel app lets you discover exciting new places. Beautiful photos and insider tips at the touch of a button. You will receive stories about places you like and can instantly save and find them on your maps and in your lists.

### Smart Phone Apps for Communication:

- [WhatsApp](#) : Free local & international Real Time messaging
- [Line](#) : Exchange free instant messages with friends whenever and wherever with one-on-one and group chats. LINE is available on all smartphone devices (iPhone, Android, Windows Phone, Blackberry, Nokia) and even on your PC.
- [Viber](#) : Free text, calling, photo messages and location-sharing with Viber users. No registration, alias or invitations required. Instantly integrates with your own contact list. Best-quality mobile calls using 3G or Wi-Fi.
- [Skype](#) : Stay in touch with your family and friends for free on Skype. Download Skype today to chat and call on desktop and mobile.

### Smart Phone Apps for Local Information/Reviews:

- [Angie's List](#) : Referrals for doctor, dentist, child care, maid, mechanic, painter, plumber, etc.
- [Yelp!](#) : Find local businesses, restaurants, bars, clubs, events, etc. with map, lists, and reviews
- [Next Door](#) : Neighbors share community events, items for sale, recommendations for babysitters, doctors and handymen, crime reports, ideas about how to improve their neighborhood and more.
- [Meet Ups](#) : Meetups are neighbors getting together to learn something, do something or share something. Cultural groups advertise gatherings here as well.



**Smart Phone Apps for Weather:**

- [WTHR13](#) : Local weather and closings; includes radar and forecast
- [Weather Channel](#) : National and international time, temperature & weather
- [Tornado](#) : Set up tornado alerts & siren

## AREA MAP

### Map of Charlotte

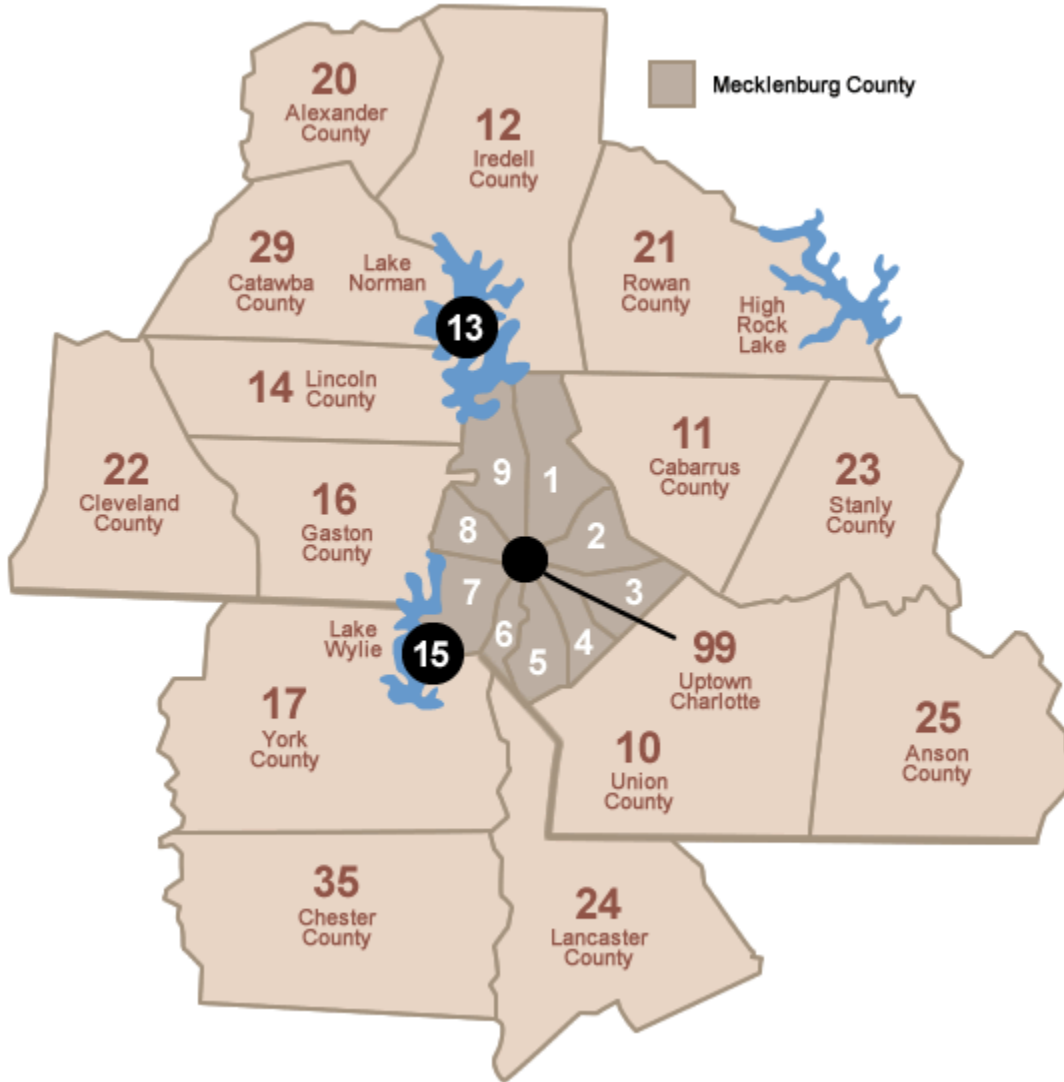


Photo credit of [Hendrix Properties](#)

[You can find a full district map of Charlotte on the official government website here](#)

## PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

[Federal Holidays listed through 2020](#)

[North Carolina Holidays](#)

The following are legal holidays in the United States and need to be treated as such by employers:

- New Year's Day January 1\*
- Martin Luther King Day Third Monday in January
- Memorial Day Last Monday in May
- Independence Day July 4\*
- Labor Day First Monday in September
- Columbus Day Second Monday in October
- Veterans' Day November 11\*
- Thanksgiving Day Fourth Thursday in November
- Christmas Day December 25\*

\*If a holiday falls on a Sunday, the day following is observed as the legal holiday.