

Recommended Chapel Hill Restaurants

I have tried to list restaurants that offer a variety of cuisines at a variety of prices. All of the restaurants listed below are restaurants that I recommend without hesitation; they don't all offer fine dining but they all do what they do well. I also have selected restaurants that are easily reached either by walking, by car, or by Chapel Hill's free bus service. Chapel Hill/Carrboro have a wealth of good restaurants; if you are interested in any other cuisines or would prefer to look for food in Durham, etc., just let me know and I'll offer some suggestions.

Acme Food & Beverage Co

<http://www.acmecarrboro.com/>
110 East Main St (Downtown)
Carrboro, NC 27510
phone 929-2263

Open for dinner daily, 5:30-9:30pm (Fri-Sat, till 10pm); Sun brunch, 10am-2pm.

A favorite of mine. Acme has a cozy atmosphere and excellent, unpretentious bistro fare. It is located in the heart of Carrboro, so it is a hike from the meeting site. But it is worth it and can be easily reached by Chapel Hill's free buses. Chosen one of the 50 best neighborhood restaurants by Bon Appetit magazine. Serves great seasonal food with an unmistakable Southern flair. Stellar wine list. All ABC permits. Credit cards. Outdoor dining. Free parking. **Reservations suggested.**

Bin 54

<http://www.bin54restaurant.com/>
1201-M Raleigh Rd (Glen Lennox)
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
phone (919) 969-1155

Open for dinner Mon-Thu, 5-10pm; Fri-Sat, 5-11pm; closed Sun.

A very-upscale contemporary steakhouse focusing on the finest quality steaks and seafood to please the palate of the most discerning guest. If you want to splurge you might consider this restaurant. It is a short drive from the meeting hotels. All ABC permits. Credit cards. Free parking. Outdoor dining.

Café Parvaneh

<http://www.cafep.com/>
400-J South Elliott Rd (The Galleria)
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
phone (919) 929-2779

Open Mon-Thu, 10am-8pm; Fri-Sat, 10am-9pm.

An interesting restaurant a short (walking) distance from the meeting hotels. Small, bright café offers predominantly Persian cuisine, with occasional additions of French and Russian dishes, marinated beef and chicken kabobs, saffron-flavored Basmati rice, stews, a variety of vegetarian dishes and homemade pastries. Afternoon tea. Beer & wine only. Outdoor dining. Smoke-free.

Carolina Crossroads

<http://www.carolinainn.com/dining.htm>

211 Pittsboro St (Downtown)

Chapel Hill, NC 27516

phone (919) 918-2777

Open daily for breakfast, 6:30-11am; for lunch, 11am-2pm (including Sun brunch); for dinner, 5:30-10pm.

Located in the Carolina Inn on the campus, this Mobil Four-Star and AAA Four-Diamond restaurant features American cuisine and North Carolina seasonal specialties. Somewhat fussy atmosphere but excellent food within easy walking distance of the meeting sites. Award-winning wine list. British tea service daily, 3 p.m. All ABC permits. Free parking (or valet). Outdoor dining (weather permitting).

China Chef

1800 East Franklin St (Eastgate)

Chapel Hill, NC 27514

phone (919) 942-2688

Open for lunch Mon-Fri, 11am-2:30pm; Sat-Sun from noon; for dinner Mon-Thu, 5-9:30pm; Fri, 5-10:30pm; Sat, 5-10pm.

Traditional Chinese cuisine in a strip mall setting a short (walking) distance from the meeting hotels. Chapel Hill doesn't have especially good Mom & Pop Chinese restaurants; this one is typical. Beer & wine only. Smoke-free.

Crook's Corner

<http://www.crookscorner.com/>

610 West Franklin St (Downtown)

Chapel Hill, NC 27516

phone (919) 929-7643

Open Tue-Sun, 5:30 until; Sun brunch, 10:30am-2pm.

A shrine for southern regional cooking where many of the most important regional chefs got their start. It is located on the western end of Franklin Street so it is a hike from the meeting sites. But it is easily accessible by Chapel Hill's free buses. Seasonal Southern dining and fresh seafood specialties, inside and outdoors (weather permitting). Menu changes daily. Home of shrimp and grits and vegetarian jambalaya. Lively, casual atmosphere. All ABC permits.

Elaine's on Franklin

<http://www.elainesonfranklin.com/>

454 West Franklin St (Downtown)

Chapel Hill, NC 27516

phone (919) 960-2770

Open Tue-Thu, 6-9:30pm; Fri-Sat, 6-10pm; closed Sun & Mon.

Close to the downtown and distinguished by an eclectic menu, Chef and owner Bret Jennings's

Elaine's uses North Carolina ingredients and fresh seafood. Wine Spectator Award of Excellence. Elegant, yet lively, atmosphere. Great bar. Accommodating to diets and vegetarians. Smoke-free.

Elmo's Diner

200 North Greensboro St (Carr Mill Mall)

Carrboro, NC 27510

phone (919) 929-2909

Open Sun-Thu, 6:30am-10pm; Fri-Sat, 6:30am-11pm.

Located in Carrboro, Elmo's chief selling point is food that has all of the comforts of a diner—low prices, lots of high chairs, homemade food (updated with vegetarian choices), daily specials and friendly service. Beer & wine only Kids menu. Smoke-free. Good food at a reasonable price.

Four Eleven (411) West

<http://www.411west.com/>

411 West Franklin St (Downtown)

Chapel Hill, NC 27516

phone (919) 967-2782

Open for lunch Tue-Fri, 11:30am-2:30pm (Sat, till 3:30pm); for dinner Sun-Mon, 5-9:30pm; Tue-Thu, 5-10pm; Fri-Sat, 5-10:30pm.

411 is perhaps the most popular restaurant on Franklin Street. The reason is that it is lively, modestly priced, with an attractive atmosphere and good Italian and Mediterranean food. Their pizza cooked in a wood-burning oven. Desserts and cappuccino bar. All ABC permits. Kids menu. Smoke-free. It is not too far from the meeting sites so you could walk there.

Jujube Restaurant

<http://www.jujuberestaurant.com/>

1201 Raleigh Rd (Glen Lennox)

Chapel Hill, NC 27514

phone (919) 960-0555

Open for lunch Mon-Fri, 11:30am-2:30pm; for dinner Mon-Sat, 5-10pm.

A favorite of mine, Jujube offers contemporary Asian cuisine, especially Vietnamese, including noodle and dim sum dishes, plus carry-out service. It has a stylish decor despite its strip mall location. It is a short drive from the meeting hotels.

Lantern Restaurant

<http://www.lanternrestaurant.com/>

423 West Franklin St (Downtown)

Chapel Hill, NC 27516

phone (919) 969-8846

Open for dinner Mon-Sat, 5:30-10pm; late-night menu, till midnight; bar till 2am.

Perhaps the most acclaimed new restaurant in Chapel Hill, the Lantern serves Pan-Asian food in a relaxed, urban setting. Highly recommended but do make reservations. All ABC permits. This restaurant is a modest trek from the meeting sites but well worth it.

Mama Dip's

<http://www.mamadips.com/>

408 West Rosemary St (Downtown)

Chapel Hill, NC 27516

phone (919) 942-5837

Open Mon-Sat, 8am-10pm; Sun, 8am-9pm.

Cookbook author 'Mama Dip' has been cooking 'down-home' Southern food for decades. Her restaurant offers traditional American food, especially vegetables (the most popular menu item). If fried okra, etc. is what you want, then head to Mama Dip's. The restaurant is located at the far west end of Rosemary Street so it is a 20 minute walk from the meeting sites. Front-porch dining. Beer & wine only. Free parking. Kids menu. Smoke-free.

Mediterranean Deli & Catering

<http://www.mediterraneandeli.com/>

410 West Franklin St (Downtown)

Chapel Hill, NC 27516

phone (919) 967-2666

Open Mon-Sat, 11am-10pm; Sun, 11am-9pm.

The Mediterranean Deli has the charm of a food court, but the food makes up for the atmosphere. A huge array of Greek and Middle Eastern food, including gyros, souvlaki, falafel, hummus, Greek salad and more. A great place for lunch, it is about a 20 minute walk from the meeting sites. Indoor and sidewalk seating. Smoke-free.

Panzanella Restaurant & Bakery

<http://www.panzanella.com/>

200 North Greensboro St (Carr Mill Mall)

Carrboro, NC 27510

phone (919) 929-6626

Open for lunch Tue-Sat, 11:30am-2pm; Sun brunch, 11am-2pm; for dinner Tue-Thu, 5:30-9pm; Fri-Sat, 5:30-10pm; Sun, 5:30-9pm; closed Mon.

Although the most distant restaurant from the meeting sites and hotels, Panzanella is a lively modestly priced eatery that is worth the trip. It serves Italian and Mediterranean specialties and appetizers, built around fresh vegetables and breads, pastas, pizza, polenta and rice, with microbrews on tap and an excellent selection of wines by the glass and bottle. Outdoor dining. All ABC permits. Free parking. Smoke-free.

Penang Malaysian & Thai

<http://www.penangnc.com/>
431 West Franklin St (The Courtyard)
Chapel Hill, NC 27516
phone (919) 933-2288
Open daily, 11am-10:30pm.

Another of Chapel Hill's burgeoning Pan-Asian restaurants, Penang offers an extensive menu featuring sushi, a large selection of noodle and rice dishes, authentic curries and seafood. Not the best of the Pan Asian restaurants in the town, but conveniently located on the west end of Franklin Street.

Red Lotus Asian Kitchen & Bar

<http://www.redlotusasiankitchen.com/>
239 South Elliott Rd (Village Plaza)
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
phone (919) 968-7778

Open for lunch Sun-Fri, 11am-2:30pm; for dinner Sun-Thu, 5-10pm; Fri-Sat, 5-10:30pm.

A relatively new Pan-Asian restaurant that is located a short (walking) distance from the meeting hotels. The Red Lotus is my favorite for casual Asian; it is especially good for vegetarians because every dish can be prepared with tofu or soy chicken. It offers a wide choice of traditional and new dishes, including appetizers, soup, salad, entrees, Asian noodles, rice lo mein and other courses. Daily specials. All ABC permits.

Sal's Pizza & Italian Ristorante

<http://www.salsristorante.com/>
1800 East Franklin St (Eastgate)
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
phone (919) 968-4641

Open Mon-Thu, 11am-10pm; Fri-Sat, 11am-10:30pm; Sun, 4pm-9:30pm.

A classic Italian American restaurant (with the obligatory tacky decor, Sal's offers what I think is the best N. Y. Style pizza in town. It is a short (walking) distance from the meeting hotels. In addition to pizza, Sal's offers pastas, calzone and sandwiches. Lunch buffet Mon-Fri; dinner buffet Mon & Thu, 5:30-8:30pm. Smoke-free.

Spanky's Restaurant & Bar

<http://www.spankysrestaurant.com/>
101 East Franklin St (Downtown)
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
phone (919) 967-2678

Open for lunch, Mon-Thu, 11am-2:30pm; Fri-Sat, 11am-3:30pm; Sun, 11:30am-4pm; for dinner,

Mon, 5-9pm; Tue-Wed, 5-9:30pm; Thu, 5-10pm; Fri-Sat, 5-10:30

Spanky's is conveniently located in the heart of downtown Chapel Hill. Its menu is casual American food, featuring a variety of burgers, brown-sugar baby back ribs, garden-fresh salads and daily specials. All ABC permits. Kids menu.

Spice Street

<http://www.ghgrestaurants.com/spice/spicestreet.html>

201 South Estes Dr (University Mall)

Chapel Hill, NC 27514

phone (919) 928-8200

Market open daily for lunch buffet, 11am-3pm. Market Grille open for dinner daily, 5:30-10pm (Fri-Sat, till 10:30).

A very short drive from the meeting hotels, Spice Street is a very eclectic restaurant that features cuisines from around the world, mainly Moroccan, Asian and Latin. It also has a sushi bar. All ABC permits. Outdoor dining. Entertainment.

Squid's Restaurant & Oyster Bar

<http://www.squidsrestaurant.com/>

1201 North Fordham Blvd (US Highway 15-501)

Chapel Hill, NC 27514

phone (919) 942-8757

Open Tue-Thu, 5-9:30pm; Fri-Sat, 5-10pm; Sun-Mon, 5-9pm.

Within walking distance of the meeting hotels, Squid's specializes in the fresh seafood, prepared simply—mesquite grilled, broiled, blackened and fried. Oyster bar also features clams and shrimp. All ABC permits. Free parking. Kids menu. Outdoor dining. Smoke-free.

Top of the Hill Restaurant

<http://www.topofthehillrestaurant.com/>

100 East Franklin St (Downtown)

Chapel Hill, NC 27514

phone (919) 929-8676

Open daily, 11am-2am.

This microbrewery overlooks downtown Chapel Hill and offers traditional American bar food. I'm not a beer drinker so I can't comment on the quality of beers, but the Top of the Hill has won several dozen Best Microbrew in the Triangle awards. All ABC permits. Kids menu. Smoke-free

The Weathervane

<http://www.southernseason.com/cafe.asp>

201 South Estes Dr (University Mall in A Southern Season)

Chapel Hill, NC 27514

phone (919) 929-9466

Open Mon-Thu, 7am-9pm; Fri-Sat, 7am-10pm; Sun, 10:30am-6pm.

Within a short drive of the meeting hotels, the Weathervane is the restaurant associated with A Southern Season, a landmark gourmet market. (If you've never been in A Southern Season and you are a foodie, by all means visit the store.) Fresh regional fare, specialties from the shop and a rotating seasonal menu. All ABC permits. Credit cards. Free parking. Kids menu. Outdoor dining. Smoke-free.