

What to Know About Winston-Salem



What's the story with Winston-Salem? There isn't just one.

It's a city that celebrates its past while feeling fully alive in the present. Cobblestone streets and centuries-old Moravian buildings remain part of the landscape, while former tobacco factories and industrial spaces have found new lives as restaurants, breweries, galleries, tech labs, and gathering places.

Add a walkable downtown area, a nationally recognized arts scene, nearby Yadkin Valley Wine Country, and scenic mountain trails within easy reach, and the story keeps expanding.

Others are taking notice, too.

Winston-Salem was one of just 22 cities worldwide to receive a 2026 Travel Award from *Good Housekeeping*, while *Travel + Leisure* recently called us the "South's most underrated city."

History, food, wine, arts, outdoors — it's all part of the story. You just have to decide where to start.



Above: The Katharine Brasserie & Bar

Right: Serre Vineyards, part of the Yadkin Valley Wine Region



YOUR NEW SOUTHERN TABLE

Winston-Salem has a flavor all its own, blending Moravian and Southern roots with chef-driven creativity and a restaurant scene that feels inventive without feeling fussy. Longtime favorites share the table with standout bakeries, neighborhood gems, and cocktail bars that keep the scene feeling fresh.

It's a new Southern table, grounded in tradition, open to reinvention, and always ready to pull up another chair.

Downtown makes it easy to explore the food scene, with locally owned restaurants, eight breweries across the walkable core, and plenty of places putting their own spin on Southern classics. Beyond downtown, barbecue joints, award-winning bakeries, and hometown originals like Texas Pete and Krispy Kreme add to the mix.

Then there's wine country. Winston-Salem serves as a gateway to the Yadkin Valley, with 30-plus wineries within 30 minutes and more than 45 across the region. *Wine Enthusiast* recently named the Yadkin Valley one of the world's top up-and-coming wine regions.

Holiday Wonders Winston-Salem Style



SEASONAL SIGNATURES

Looking for holiday traditions unlike anywhere else? Start here.

Winston-Salem's deeply rooted Moravian traditions give the season a character all its own. In **Old Salem**, 18th-century holiday customs come to life through Salem Saturdays festivities and lantern-lit evening tours. Moravian stars glow throughout the district — especially along Old Salem's iconic covered bridge — while sugar cake and Moravian cookies add a distinctly local taste.

The city's performing-arts scene stays busy, highlighted by UNCSA's acclaimed production of **The Nutcracker**, Dec. 3-6 at historic Reynolds Auditorium. The show brings together exceptional student dancers, musicians, and designers from one of the country's leading arts conservatories.

At nearby Tanglewood Park, the **Festival of Lights** (Nov. 14-Jan. 1) stretches across a five-mile drive-through route, with more than a million lights and 80-plus displays illuminating the park. One drive through, and you'll see why *Travel + Leisure* has repeatedly named it the Carolinas' top holiday light show.

Even the **hotels** join in, from Graylyn Estate's themed trees and elaborate gingerbread display to the Art Deco glitz of the Kimpton Cardinal and the cozy charm and fully decorated holiday suites at the Historic Brookstown Inn.



WHAT'S NEW & COMING SOON

The East Coast's largest mural by wall area was recently unveiled in Winston-Salem, spanning 33,000 sq. ft. — roughly two football fields. Local artists Leo Rucker and Joey Allen spent more than 15 months creating the work, which traces the history of Reynolds Tobacco Co. alongside the city's evolution. Find it at 1133 Reynolds Blvd., near Allegacy Stadium.

Graylyn Estate was just named the nation's No. 1 boutique hotel by USA TODAY, fresh off hosting Team Germany during the 2026 World Cup. Built in 1929, the castle-like estate features 85 guest rooms across 55 rolling acres along the Reynolda Mile. Graylyn was the only hotel in the state to make the list.

Salem Bottleworks continues to take shape inside a restored 1929 Coca-Cola bottling plant just south of downtown. The complex is anchored by James Beard semifinalist Bobby Boy Bakeshop and now includes Dale's Revision, an upscale, wood-fired restaurant with a hyper-local, seasonal menu. A pizzeria and ramen counter round out the current lineup, with more concepts still to come.

NCMA Downtown opened on Fourth Street this summer, giving NC Museum of Art a new exhibit space in the heart of downtown. The compact gallery showcases bold contemporary art through rotating exhibits and also includes a museum shop, lounge areas, and a steady calendar of programs and events. It serves as the museum's downtown base while its historic main campus undergoes a \$15 million renovation.

MUSE (opening early 2027): A new history museum is coming downtown, telling the "Winston" side of the city's story beyond Old Salem. Interactive, tech-forward exhibits will cover everything from the 1913 city merger and 20th-century growth to music, transportation, and Civil Rights triumphs, pairing artifacts with immersive experiences and rotating exhibits.

Downtown Amphitheater (opening spring 2027): A new 5,000-plus-seat venue is set to bring major concerts and large-scale performances to the heart of downtown. The privately funded, \$26 million amphitheater is expected to host 25-30 events annually, with plans for large concession areas, a food truck court, plaza space, and upper-level party decks.

The Grounds (opening fall 2027): This 100-acre development near Wake Forest will be highlighted by a pedestrian-friendly Retail & Dining Village featuring dozens of tenants, including chef-driven restaurants, boutiques, and fitness studios. The broader project also includes parks, residences, offices, and a greenway linking to campus, with additional phases still to come.

Keep up with the latest openings, accolades, and local headlines by visiting our online Media Hub or subscribing to our monthly e-newsletter, [What's New in Winston-Salem](#).



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