



Winston-Salem: A Place to Create, A Place to Learn, A Place to Be Inspired

OVERVIEW: Art and Culture

*When it comes to art and innovation, Winston-Salem is indeed a city of cultural “firsts.” From the first pieces of Moravian pottery crafted here in the mid-1700s to 1949’s launch of **the first local arts council in the country**, Winston-Salem is an arts leader and innovator.*

From its proud beginnings as a hard-working, resourceful Moravian community to its evolution into the City of Arts and Innovation, Winston-Salem has painted itself as an inspiring home for creative talent.

In 1963, Winston-Salem was chosen as the **home of the North Carolina School of the Arts**, a unique high school conservatory program. It was the first state-supported school of its kind in the country. In the early 1970s, the school became part of the 16-member University of North Carolina, and in 2008, its name changed to **University of North Carolina School of the Arts**. Throughout the school’s evolution, the mission remained the same: to train talented young people for professional careers in dance, drama, music, filmmaking, and theatrical design and production. Administrators and professors from prestigious programs ranging from Juilliard, Yale and the Joffrey Ballet, and Grammy, Tony, Emmy and Drama Desk Award-winning talent have permanently infused the institution and this workable, livable, uncrowded city with a dynamic cultural scene unlike no other. The city’s commitment to art is palpable in the air and in the vibe in downtown as individuals depart from restaurants to make show times.

Another crown jewel of the city’s art family is **Reynolda House Museum of American Art**. The historic 1917 estate of Katharine Smith Reynolds and her husband, Richard Joshua Reynolds, founder of the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, houses one of the finest collections of American art in the Southeast. Just coming off the home’s Centennial Anniversary, and 50th anniversary of the museum, Reynolda House invites visitors to explore the historic estate through their newly designed mobile app, **Reynolda Revealed**. Reynolda Revealed offers a never-before-shared look into the Reynolds family history, exciting footage and interviews, and a variety of self-guided tour options through the entire estate, including the adjacent gardens and village. The museum’s permanent collection includes works from Albert Bierstadt, Mary Cassatt, Frederic Church, John Singleton Copley, Thomas Eakins, Jacob Lawrence, Georgia O’Keeffe, and Grant Wood. Just across the street on the “Reynolda Mile,” the home of textile



industrialist James G. Hanes has been transformed into the **Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art** (SECCA). SECCA explores the best in contemporary art with challenging, thought provoking exhibits that challenge the viewer to contemplate their role in today's society.

In the heart of Winston-Salem's downtown is the **Milton Rhodes Center for the Arts**, which houses the historic **Sawtooth School for Visual Art, Associated Artists of Winston-Salem, Facilities for the Arts on Spruce** and **Coffee Park Downtown**. **Hanesbrands Theatre** was constructed adjacent to the Milton Rhodes Center and features state of the art lighting, audio and projection systems and is a performance venue for local theater, dance, film, and music.

EXPLORE WINSTON-SALEM'S ARTS AND CULTURAL DESTINATIONS

A Celebration of Art Unique to Winston-Salem: PIEDMONT CRAFTSMEN'S FAIR is an exquisite gathering and crafts show presenting works by premier fine craft artists of the Southeast and numerous workshops and presentations. Now for more than 50 years, more than 120 artists gather in Winston-Salem's downtown Benton Convention Center each November to showcase their edgier handcrafted pieces covering a variety of mediums including home goods, jewelry, pottery and furniture. The annual Piedmont Craftsmen's Fair is, to many, the unofficial kickoff to holidays in Winston-Salem.

Visual art in Winston-Salem:

Fun on Friday: **The Downtown Art District Association (DADA) hosts a First Friday Gallery Hop** on the first Friday of every month. Each hop has a different theme and is an exciting way to discover a plethora of public art installations, historic murals, and an expanding arts district that includes breweries, a distillery, and urban art park and various nightlife venues.

<https://www.dadaws.net/>.

- ❖ **Diggs Gallery at Winston-Salem State University** offers a world-class collection of public art by artists such as John Biggers, Mel Edwards, Beverly Buchanan and Tyrone Mitchell. The gallery has been identified as one of the top 10 African American galleries in the nation and was identified by the Smithsonian as one of the nation's best regional facilities for exploring contemporary African Diaspora art.
- ❖ **Art-o-mat** machines epitomize art linked to innovation. Winston-Salem-based artists and entrepreneur, Clark Whittington, decided to convert retired cigarette vending

machines into art vending machines. More than 200 machines are located throughout the country with hundreds of contributing artists from around the world. Find the highest concentration of Art-o-mat machines in Winston-Salem. Pull the knob and walk away with an original work of art.

- ❖ Visit galleries that showcase multiple artists: **Artworks Gallery**, an artist-run cooperative gallery; **Associated Artists of Winston-Salem**; or the **Delta Fine Arts Center**, a gallery focusing on the contributions of African-American artists.
- ❖ **The Sawtooth School for Visual Art** has been teaching and inspiring young and old alike through the creation of visual art for more than 70 years. Come for classes in all types of mediums. All classes are open to the public; part of the Milton Rhodes Center for Arts. The Sawtooth Center also offers summer vacation packages for children.

Artisan craft traditions

- ❖ **Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts (MESDA)** (located at Old Salem Museums & Gardens) invites guests to travel through history, using pottery, furniture and other handmade decorative objects as your guide. It's one of the most comprehensive repositories of such work in the country, and what we refer to as "the Smithsonian of the South." Experience a wide range of early southern artistry (even walls of old barns and interior pieces of significant architectural structures), craftsmanship and stories found in the world-class collection of decorative arts from seven states from the early American South, 1660 – 1860. While at Old Salem, see the decorative arts of the period and shop for pottery and period pieces made by their craftspeople.
- ❖ **Piedmont Craftsman Gallery** showcases 350 fine craft artists from across the southeast. At any given time you can find work by about 200 of their exhibiting members in the shop and gallery.

Music

- ❖ **Piedmont Opera**
Piedmont Opera (previously known as Piedmont Opera Theatre) raised the curtain on its first production, Verdi's *Rigoletto*, in September 1978. Piedmont Opera is now in its 43rd year of continuous operation. The company strives to remain a nationally recognized and acclaimed regional opera company and a leader in the classical arts community.



- ❖ **Winston-Salem Symphony**
- ❖ Numerous **choral groups and music societies**, from the Fiddle & Bow Society to Piedmont Blues Preservation Society and more
- ❖ **Carolina Music Ways (CMW)** is a nonprofit organization based in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, dedicated to educating and inspiring youth living in our state’s northwest Piedmont region about the diverse musical heritage of where they live. The musical heritage of this region, a mix of three musical cultures (Appalachian, African American, and Moravian), is one of the most unique and influential in the nation.

Dance

- ❖ **Winston-Salem Festival Ballet** and Festival Dance Center (school)
- ❖ **Alban Elved Dance Company**—begun in Germany with the company now in residence at Salem College

Fine Art Performance Venues

- ❖ **The Stevens Center** was originally a 1929 silent movie theatre. Today, the magnificently restored neoclassical theatre is located downtown and is the primary performance space for the University of North Carolina School of the Arts as well as the Winston-Salem Symphony, Piedmont Opera Theatre, and several other local and state arts organizations.
- ❖ **Hanesbrands Theatre at Milton Rhodes Center for the Arts** anchors the Center and is a 300-seat black-box theatre, affording a variety of stage and seating configurations for dance, theatre, music and film productions. The Theatre has a dramatic lobby that features a mirrored cymatic paint exploration by noted international painter, Jimmy O'Neal, of Madison County, NC.

Theatre and Film

- ❖ **The Little Theatre of Winston-Salem** is the longest-running performing arts organization in Winston-Salem, having presented professional-quality community theatre for more than 80 years.
- ❖ **RiverRun International Film Festival** (May 6-16, 2021), an Academy Award-qualifying film festival, is one of the fastest-growing regional film festivals in the United States. RiverRun showcases a variety of feature-length and short films from all genres. Entering its 23rd year, the festival annually features a Master of Cinema tribute to an outstanding



actor of filmmaker. Previous recipients include Peter Bogdanovich, Andie MacDowell, Ned Beatty, and Pam Grier.

- ❖ **National Black Theatre Festival** (Aug. 2-7, 2021) is a biennial event attracting over 65,000 attendees who come to see more than 70 world-class celebrities performing in 100 theatrical productions. The 2021 festival marks the 32nd anniversary of the festival, and 42 years of organizing theater production company, **North Carolina Black Repertory Company (NCBRC)**.
- ❖ Unique film offerings are available at **Hanesbrands Theatre** as well as **a/perture cinema** an independent, locally-owned theatre screening a mix of independent, foreign, documentary, local, and festival films in three 80-seat theaters. In addition to the popcorn and soft drinks, they also offer craft beers, Yadkin Valley wines and healthy snacks from local bakeries such as **Camino Bakery**.

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Winston-Salem: Where Eating and Drinking Well Is Yet Another Form of Art

CULINARY OVERVIEW

It's only natural that the City of Arts and Innovation would elect to toast the agricultural underpinnings in its history and celebrate the food and drink of the South. Winston-Salem is one of the region's best-kept culinary secrets. But not for long. It has everything culinary travelers dream about, and spicy stories you won't find anywhere else in the country.

- ❖ **Our culinary roots dates back to 1753 with the arrival of the Moravians, hard-working** followers of a mainstream protestant religion who settled here 250 years ago. They contributed significantly to the area's rich culture. This denomination originated in the Czech Republic around 1415 from the followers of Jan Hus. These missionaries made their way from Germany to Pennsylvania, and then settled in Winston-Salem on 10,000 acres known as the Wachovia Tract. They brought what has now become the city's most iconic tastes: Moravian Sugar Cakes, the thinly sliced ginger-spiked Moravian cookies (now available in many flavors); Love Feast Buns, Moravian Chicken Pies, and assorted pickles and German-style foods.
- ❖ **Food ENTREPRENEURS Stop Here:**
 - Our city fosters invention. We're the birthplace of **Krispy Kreme Doughnuts** and **Texas Pete** products.
 - Because Winston-Salem is one of the few places in the country with strong Moravian ties, we celebrate the destination's deep Moravian food roots with our **The Moravian Culinary Trail**. A trio of virtual trails (which means you can start, stay or stop wherever you please!) with each serving up a healthy portion of our history, delectable, tried-and-true recipes and our favorite places to stop, sample, and savor these distinct (and delicious) Moravian dishes and delights. The trails journey through the history of the "world's thinnest cookie," the Moravian cookie, Moravian sugar cake, traditionally served during Easter Sunrise services and Moravian chicken pie (don't call it a pot pie).

- Three food companies are headquartered here which specialize in Moravian baked goods: **Dewey's Bakery**; **Winkler Bakery**, the inspiration for an entire line of Old Salem branded baked goods; and **Mrs. Hanes' Moravian Cookies** (both named Oprah's "favorite things" during the holidays). Mrs. Hanes' is believed to be the only remaining Moravian bakery still hand-rolling, hand-cutting, and hand-packing each cookie.

- ❖ **Lively independent restaurants** dominate the city's restaurant scene. Downtown Winston-Salem bustles with pedestrian traffic every night as the theatre lovers mix with the downtown evening crowd for a locally-inspired evening meal and drinks at **more than 100 restaurants**. During the warmer months, outdoor dining is widely requested and many restaurants make a point of providing popular spaces with excellent views. The personalities of our restaurants are as distinct as their chefs and owners.
- ❖ An abundance of local **farmers markets** tempt and excite both chefs and residents. Downtown markets including the Cobblestone Farmers Market and Winston Junction Market offer plenty of choices. The Farmers Market at the Winston-Salem Fairgrounds, established in 1974, is Forsyth County's longest-running source for local produce.
- ❖ **More than 45 wineries** wait for you the Yadkin Valley. Winston-Salem is the perfect base for weekend or multi-day wine country excursions. Meet and taste with the winemakers at our smaller wineries, and tour operations both large and small. Within a 30-minute drive, you can spread your blanket at an outdoor vineyard concert, enjoy a picnic after a tasting and tour, trek with llamas, zipline through the winery, or ride high in a hot air balloon over the vineyards!
- ❖ Craft beer beckons at **Foothills Brewing**, downtown and their Tasting Room just outside downtown. Sign up for **Beer School** held every first Saturday or simply drop by for a brew or two. One of the leaders in North Carolina's craft brewing revolution, Foothills relies on brew master Jamie Bartholomaeus and Chef Shane Moore to keep the crowds returning. Are you a beer geek? Then you might know that the brewery's famous "Sexual Chocolate," a cocoa-infused Imperial Stout that has received national attention. Winston-Salem has seen a recent surge in craft brew arrivals. **Small Batch Beer Co.** –

located just one block away from Foothills – specializes in “small batch” beers using some local ingredients, many of which are bought at our farmers markets, in their brewing process. Their most popular beer, Limónhead, goes against the grain by adding fresh lemon zest to the brew – a procedure normally seen in wheat ale brewing. Sitting on the outskirts of downtown in the historic West End District in a renovated factory is **Hoots Roller Bar & Beer Co.** The story goes, John Bryan, owner of Winston-Salem’s **Single Brothers** bar and **Krankie’s Coffee** decided to try his hands at beer brewing. He’s obviously no newbie to brewing, as Krankie’s is well-known for their all organic locally roasted coffee and is a popular morning and late-night stop for residents. Also within the downtown limits is **Wise Man Brewing** – which is the brain child of three wise men, literally! Three friends – a chemist, attorney, and accountant teamed up to open Wise Man in the Downtown Arts District early 2017, and it’s been a hit ever since.

- ❖ Winston-Salem is home to two distilleries, **Sutler’s** (Gin and aging rum), in the West End Mill Works, and **Broad Branch Distillery** (white whiskey, and aging rum), located in the Downtown Arts District. Tours are offered at each, and you’ll find a number of Winston-Salem bartenders have these on hand as their spirit of choice for locally-themed cocktails.
- ❖ **A lively bar scene** keeps us up at night. Leading the charge is **Tate’s Craft Cocktails**, named by IMBIBE Magazine as one of the **top 100 places to drink in the South**. Their five-page craft cocktail menu changes seasonally, as do their small plates to share. A street-side patio offers excellent people-watching year-round. Infusions, syrups and mixers are all made in house. Sip on strawberry-jalapeno infused tequila, a peach-infused bourbon, homemade sweet vermouth or homemade limoncello. Or order your drink spiked with Lavender Honey or Balsamic syrups. Tate’s mixologists are sticklers for high quality spirits, and they know what should be shaken and what should be stirred.

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Historic Overview: Winston-Salem Past, Present, and Future

Winston-Salem. Rarely a day goes by that we are not asked how our famous "hyphen" came to be. The short version is we are the result of our forward-thinking and highly enterprising forefathers. And to many, it's quite surprising that we've only enjoyed our "Twin City" status since 1913.

The slightly longer version behind the "birth of the dash" began first with Moravian settlers some 260-plus years ago. In 1753, the Moravians -- a devout, religious group originally from Eastern Europe -- were attracted to the central portion of North Carolina due to its fertile soil, abundant water and temperate climate. They settled on more than 100,000 pristine acres in the heart of our current city, and called their new home the Wachovia Tract. It was on a portion of this expansive tract in 1766 that the Moravians established **Salem**.

Soon thereafter, the Moravians' handiwork established what would become another hallmark of our city that survives to this day -- a reputation for arts, culture and innovation. Their pioneering work as fine craftsmen and artisans of pottery, tannery, iron works, cloth and furniture making established the city of Salem as a thriving, sought-after trade center. Too, Salem's manufacturing prowess played a pivotal and prominent role as a supplier during the American Revolution and the Civil War.



At the same time, a similar Southern industrial center was being formed just to the north of Salem. **Winston**, a more secular city, was officially established in 1851 in honor of a prominent Revolutionary war hero and legislator, Major Joseph Winston.

But it was not until after the Civil War that the city of Winston was catapulted to national prominence as a bustling industrial center. Thanks to the entrepreneurial spirit of business tycoons such as R. J. Reynolds and the Hanes family, Winston continued to grow in popularity, industrial and financial importance, emerging as a national leader in tobacco and textile manufacturing.

So what became of these two thriving cities, both living side by side? Although each town played key pioneering roles, by 1913 it was clear there was more to be gained from uniting the region than



from remaining apart. And just as they did with the factories that fueled them, the cities merged enabling them to efficiently pool resources and streamline bureaucracy. This united spirit remains today in the emerging economies of finance, medicine and technology.

Over the years, Winston-Salem has remained true to its independent roots. Nicknamed the **City of Arts and Innovation**, Winston-Salem is synonymous with a zeal for exploration, innovation, and an entrepreneurial spirit, both in business and in culture. In fact, our ability to strike the balance between commerce and the arts is what makes us so attractive to businesses and cultural icons alike.

Our early success as an industrial center brought wealth to the community that fueled the start-up of other successful businesses, among them, *Piedmont Airlines (now US Airways)*, *Krispy Kreme Doughnut Corporation*, *T.W. Garner Food Company* (makers of Texas Pete hot sauce) and *Goody's* headache powders. The perfect storm indeed.

And, our strong connection to creativity in all its forms bears fruit in our history of artistic "firsts." As **home to the first Arts Council in the United States**, Winston-Salem paved the way for public-private support of the Arts, and created the model for Arts Councils nationwide. Before that, **the town of Salem was the first city in the United States where classical music was composed**. Winston-Salem is also the site of the first state-supported arts conservatory in the country, the internationally regarded **University of North Carolina School of the Arts**. And our numerous galleries, performing arts groups, theaters, collectives and collections continue to attract and appeal to arts lovers worldwide.

Today, Winston-Salem is the fifth largest city in North Carolina. And it is home to six colleges and universities including **Salem College**, the longest, continuously running women's college in the U.S. as well as the prestigious **Wake Forest University** and **Winston-Salem State University**.

Winston-Salem continues to build a diverse business base, including leading in nanotechnology research, finance, manufacturing again reaffirming its time-honored tradition of forging boldly ahead. So regardless of where your historical search of Winston-Salem's roots begin -- past, present or what lies ahead -- you'll soon discover that a central theme that embraces and even rewards an explorer and entrepreneurial spirit. It started at our very roots and remains ever true to our core today. Winston-Salem, the city of arts and innovation.

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Winston-Salem: Here, “Haute Cuisine” is Just a Fancy Way to Say “Supper”

OVERVIEW: Lively independent restaurants dominate Winston-Salem’s dining scene.

Downtown Winston-Salem bustles with pedestrian traffic every night as travelers and the theatre, university and business crowds gather for an evening meal and drinks. Whether you’re nestled in the charming historic West End neighborhood, in the heart of downtown or in the Downtown Arts District, excellent choices abound at every corner. The suburbs offer up some awfully nice options, too. Here’s a sampler:

- ❖ At **Mozelle’s Fresh Southern Bistro**, pull up a chair beneath their signature yellow street-side umbrellas and try their seasonal Southern-inspired menu cooked up by a dedicated and creative culinary team. Order the Southern Spring Rolls, stuffed with pulled pork barbecue, shiitake mushrooms, Napa cabbage, collards and sesame ginger. Or, try the daily special. Ask for the Spicy Collards.
- ❖ Across the street from Mozelle’s, **Bernardin’s Restaurant at the Zevely House** is one of the city’s top fine dining destinations. Selections such as Pan-Seared North Carolina Ostrich with a Cumin-Fennel Crust, Braised Cabbage and Wild Corn Cake with Cranberry Madeira Sauce sets the stage for an evening of five-star selections. You’ll find hints of Asia and sweet notes of curry on this menu, expertly paired with a hard-working house wine list. Whether dining al fresco or in the signature home, Bernardin’s is one of Winston-Salem’s special occasion restaurants.
- ❖ North Carolina is the number one sweet potato producer in the country. Chef and cookbook author, Stephanie Tyson, and partner Vivian Joiner seized on this Southern tuber as the namesake for their soulful, upbeat **Sweet Potatoes – A Restaurant** featuring Southern fare with Gullah and Caribbean accents. Enjoy sweet potato fries, “build your own” baked sweet potatoes, and mouthwatering Sweet Potato Pie as well as Fried Green Tomato and Okra Baskets, or Drunken Pork Chops--twin center cut pork chops with sweet potato cornbread dressing and apple brandy gravy served with the vegetable of the day.
- ❖ The duo opened sister restaurant, **Miss Ora’s Kitchen**, next door to a renovated Sweet Potatoes. The restaurant honors Chef Stephanie’s grandmother and great aunts and brings heritage recipes for fried chicken and more to Trade Street.

- ❖ **Meridian Restaurant** wins rave reviews as a fine dining restaurant. Inspired by the bright flavors of the Mediterranean as well as the area’s local, organic fare, the restaurant makes almost everything in house, including sausage, mozzarella and hand-rolled pastas. Not ready for a full meal? Try their noteworthy bar and tapas menu.
- ❖ Located in another historic area of downtown Winston-Salem is restaurant that has been making great strides in the culinary world. While the **Spring House Restaurant, Kitchen & Bar** is one of Winston-Salem’s newest and most popular restaurants, it is housed in the last remaining, grand home on what was Winston-Salem’s Millionaire Mile, the historic neighborhood of R. J. and Katharine Reynolds and various members of the Hanes (hosiery/textile) family. Chef Tim Grandinetti’s menus are created “in cadence with Mother Nature,” and feature honest and responsible New American cooking inspired by seasonal ingredients, fresh from the farm and market. The Library Bar is a favorite gathering place for visitors and locals alike, with its focus on fresh artisanal cocktails, an extensive wine list, and American craft-brewed beers. Chef Tim recently launched his debut cookbook, “Soulful Harvest: Signature Recipes, Timeless Techniques & Culinary Reflections.”
- ❖ Just a block away, Chef Tim Grandinetti and co-partner Lynette Matthews Murphy opened Quanto Basta: Italian Eatery & Winery. The restaurant pays homage to Chef’s Italian heritage and serves fresh small plate, Italian fare that you’re welcome to savor in their beautifully decorated dining room or order to-go while enjoying a glass of local Raffaldini Vineyards Italian wine while seated at the bar.
- ❖ In the ‘burbs, you’ll find Milner’s American Southern Cuisine & Cocktails. Run by two young brothers, CIA-trained chefs, John and Buddy Milner, the soul of this restaurant is local. Here, Buttermilk Fried Chicken is served with Carolina Gold Rice, collard greens and tomato gravy and the salmon is encrusted with crushed Moravian ginger cookies and served with sweet potato flapjacks, spinach, a vanilla bean beurre blanc, and fennel slaw. Their “Camel City” (a nickname from Winston-Salem’s tobacco heritage) Frogmore Stew features shrimp, mussels, whitefish, and scallops with sausage, hominy, aromatics and grilled bread. They regularly receive a Wine Spectator Award of Excellence for their wine list and impressive cellar.

Hungry, yet? Just ask us for more.

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Winston-Salem: The Gateway to the Yadkin Valley and North Carolina's Wine Country

OVERVIEW

The Yadkin Valley, the first American Viticultural Area (AVA) in North Carolina, was established in 2003. It's the most densely populated wine region in the state. With North Carolina now at more than 100 wineries and ninth in the country in wine production, more than 45 of those vineyards are located in the Yadkin Valley.

The AVA is shaped like a boomerang, bordering Virginia with Mt. Airy as its northernmost city and extending south past Lexington and west to North Wilkesboro. Winston-Salem sits in the "heart" of the AVA and the center of the boomerang. A thriving, artsy city of 250,000-plus people with independent restaurants and a Moravian food tradition dating back to 1753, Winston-Salem is the perfect destination base from which to explore the Yadkin Valley.

What to expect on a tasting vacation: Within a 30-minute drive, you'll see vineyards only after you veer off Interstate 77 or Interstate 85. North of Winston-Salem, enjoy the birds-eye view of the Blue Ridge Mountains and Pilot Mountain, known as "Mount Pilot" in the Andy Griffith Show. Head southwest to see the Brushy Mountains dominate the view in the Swan Creek AVA (the state's second, established in 2008). Part of Swan Creek is in the Yadkin Valley, and a portion of it rests outside the Yadkin Valley.

Unlike Napa, our **winery tasting rooms** are sometimes 15 to 45 minutes apart from each other, depending on your route. Our visitors tell us that exploring the countryside and enjoying the scenery is a welcome surprise to their visit. You'll find the tasting rooms as individual as the wineries. At **RagApple Lassie Vineyards**, you'll walk onto an industrial style catwalk above huge steel tanks and then past their labs before entering their tasting room flanked by walls of their signature black and white "cow print" wine cases. At **Shelton Vineyards, the largest estate winery in North Carolina**, the elegant tasting room and gift shop can handle a hundred guests at a time, and you can tour the winemaking facilities. A visit to **Raffaldini Vineyards** transports you into the Tuscany countryside. The popular Italian winery is home to a stunning Tuscan-style tasting room where patrons sip, swirl and savor bold Montepulciano and crisp Pinot Grigio. Most of the wineries give tours, and at our smaller, family-owned and -operated wineries, the winemaker or owner guides you.



From tobacco to grapes: Several of our vineyards sit on land once used for tobacco production. The wine industry has offered an alternative, profitable way for families to save their farms and spare their farmland from developers. Travelers new to this area wonder why there are so many barns with seemingly loose, open construction. These are actually old tobacco barns, designed to allow air inside the barns to dry the tobacco. The “shabby” construction was quite intentional at the time the barns were built. Today, during our growing season, visitors see commercial tobacco, soybeans, and corn growing in this area...as well lots of family vegetable gardens. This is a place where home canning, gardening, home cooking and living off the land never went out of style.

What you'll taste: The Yadkin Valley grows European-vinifera varietals such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Chardonnay, Viognier, Merlot, and Syrah. You'll find Traminette at a few wineries, and at Raffaldini Vineyards in Ronda, you'll find Italian varietals such as Vermentino, Pinot Grigio, Sangiovese, Montepulciano, Malbec, Petit Verdot and others. The sweet, native muscadine grape with its thick skin and intense fruity aroma also grows naturally here. A few vintners in the Yadkin Valley market this grape, but the region is best-known for its European-vinifera stock.

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