Like most major American cities, Charlotte saw several craft breweries open—and then close—in the 1990s. It wasn’t until 2009, when The Olde Mecklenburg Brewery planted its roots, that the Queen City once again had a local brewery to its name. Little did Olde Meck founder John Marrino know, he’d be creating the linchpin for a craft beer scene that has furiously enveloped the city over the course of several years. As one of the fastest growing cities in the U.S., Charlotte is on the rise—and so is its craft beer scene. Here are just a few reasons Charlotte should be on your radar as one of the nation’s next major beer cities.

CRAFT BEER—BY THE NUMBERS—

From a fast-growing brewery scene to increased craft beer sales and visitation to area breweries, Charlotte’s got a lot when it comes to craft beer—and we’ve got the numbers to prove it.

From 2012 to 2019, the number of breweries in the Charlotte area has grown from seven to almost 60, which represents a 700% INCREASE.

57% of all visitors to Charlotte rate local craft beer and breweries as a motivating element for their trip to Charlotte.**

14+ breweries within the Charlotte region with more currently under construction or in planning.

40% of Millennials rate local craft beer and breweries as an important element motivating their travel to Charlotte.**

The region accounts for approximately 20 percent of the 300-plus breweries in North Carolina.

72.9% of people agree or strongly agree that Charlotte is a great city for craft beer and local breweries.*

The Charlotte region’s craft beer prowess extends well beyond Queen City limits. But these Charlotte neighborhoods truly anchor the scene.

LOSO / SOUTH CHARLOTTE

Much has changed since The Olde Mecklenburg Brewery opened its doors in Lower South End (LoSo) in 2009. Once surrounded by vacant buildings, the authentic German beer hub moved into an 8-acre biergarten in 2015 and is now nestled on a busy LoSo block that also houses Sugar Creek Brewing Company—the city’s first Belgian-inspired craft brewery. A cidery, distillery, social house and escape room also reside on the same block. Just down the street, more taprooms tick with top-notch pours, including newcomer Brewers at 4001 Yancey featuring beers from Southern Tier Brewing Company and Victory Brewing.

TOP PICKS

THE OLDE MECKLENBURG BREWERY • SUGAR CREEK BREWING COMPANY • PIRATE BREWHALL • BREWERS AT 4001 YANCEY

NODA / PLAZA MIDWOOD

The eclectic enclaves of NoDa and Plaza Midwood have been a hot bed for breweries since 2011, when three acclaimed spots opened in rapid succession: NoDa Brewing Company, known for its medal-snagging Hop, Drop ‘n Roll IPA; Birdsong Brewing Co., proclaimed for its Jalapeño Pale Ale; and Heist Brewery, heralded for its creative craft beer-cocktail combos. Since the original trio set up shop, Birdsong has expanded, and NoDa Brewing and Heist have both opened second locations. Now the area has several brew havens and bottle shops on its resume.

TOP PICKS

NODA BREWING COMPANY • HEIST BREWERY • BIRDSONG BREWING CO. • FREE RANGE BREWING • ORION BREWING • SOUTHERN TIER BREWING COMPANY

SOUTH END

A magnet for young professionals, bustling South End overflows with craft beer options and die-hards who crave them. Triple C Brewing Co. set the tone with its sunny patio and cold pours. Lenny Boy Brewing Co. followed suit, delighting patrons with perfect sours and kombuchas, and Sycamore Brewing picked up the rear, enticing crowds daily with its winning Southern Girl Blonde lager and an unbeatable outdoor space. Lenny Boy relocated to a massive locale within the neighborhood while Triple C, Sycamore and The Unknown Brewing Co. have all expanded or renovated their spaces.

TOP PICKS

TRIPLE C BREWING CO. • SUCRE BREWING • LENNY BOY BREWING CO. • WOODED ROBOT BREWERY • THE UNKNOWN BREWING CO. • THE SUFFOLK PUNCH

NEIGHBORHOOD HOPS

LOS O / SOUTH CHARLOTTE

NODA / PLAZA MIDWOOD

SOUTH END
TOURS ON TAP
As craft beer continues to dominate more and more of Charlotte’s cultural scene, the city has become a proud host of year-round brewery tours. Take a Saturday Brewery Tour with Charlotte Brews Cruise or climb aboard the Trolley Pub Charlotte to sip and pedal your way through the city’s craft draft districts. Charlotte NC Tours’ Bikes & Brews Tour is another great way to wheel around hopping neighborhoods and sample suds from several breweries.

TOP PICKS
- Brew-Ha-Ha Tours
- Charlotte Brewery Tours
- Charlotte Brews Cruise
- Charlotte NC Tours
- FEAST Food Tours
- Funny Bus Comedy City Tour
- Trolley Pub Charlotte

FOAM-FILLED FESTIVALS
New and diverse beer fests keep the taps flowing all year long. This year Bank of America Stadium is partnering with Untappd to host its first beer festival with over 160 local and national brewers will be participating. In addition to Untappd, annual favorites are returning including including Queen City Brewers Festival, Moo & Brew Craft Beer & Burger Festival, Tuck Fest at the U.S. National Whitewater Center, the North Carolina Brewers and Music Festival and more.

TOP PICKS
- Beer Me BrewFest
- Moo & Brew Craft Beer & Burger Festival
- North Carolina Brewers and Music Festival
- South End Hops Festival
- Tuck Fest
- Untappd

Naturally, beer tourism is thriving here. Visitors are adding brewery visits and tours to Charlotte itineraries, and beer fanatics are planning sole trips to the Queen City as a top destination. Quality beer is coming out of the city and people are taking notice.”
— usatoday.com

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