



food | best of what's hot

Asheville chefs among James Beard nominees

Fleer and Moss up for Best Chef Southeast

Both John Fleer of Rhubarb and The Rhu and Elliott Moss of Buxton Hall Barbecue are semifinalists for the Best Chef Southeast James Beard Award. This is the second nomination for Moss and Fleer is a four-time finalist. Both chefs have opened their Asheville restaurants over the last three and a half years with great reception and attention.

Cúrate Expands

More Seats + Vermouth Bar

Award-winning Chef Katie Button and her team are expanding their Spanish tapas restaurant. In addition to more seating at the popular restaurant, an expanded food and beverage program will focus on the concept of vermouth bars in Spain serving small bites, Spanish vermouth, sherry and cider.



Steeped in Tea Culture

Asheville's Other Brewing Scene Expands

From Dobra Tea to afternoon tea at Biltmore to The Herbiary, Asheville's love of herbs and teas has been growing. Asheville Tea Company is brewing a beer with Twin Leaf and is helping area restaurants prepare tea flights. The company uses Yaupon - America's only native "tea" plant and the only edible caffeinated plant indigenous to the Southeast. In the cocktail world, bars like Nightbell are using sweet tea bitters. And Alchemy and Wake Foot Sanctuary enhance wellness treatments with tea service.



Brew Kids in Town

Sierra Nevada & New Belgium

NEW: New Belgium Brewing is now offering tastings and tours in their new location, next to the French Broad River. The third national brewery to open East Coast operations in Asheville, New Belgium began making beer in late 2015.

California-based Sierra Nevada opened a brewery, taproom and beautiful outdoor venues just outside of town in 2015 and Oskar Blues Brewing has a home in nearby Brevard. The brewery county is currently 25 in Asheville and 30 in Buncombe County.

New on the Brunch Scene

New Options Bar & Brewery

NEW! Food truck-turned-permanent fixture Salt & Smoke is located within Burial Beer Co.'s beautiful patio. The menu combines old world european traditions and southern roots for Sunday brunch (and beer bites Tues-Sat). Craft cocktail bar Sovereign Remedies offers Saturday and Sunday brunch in their natural light-filled bar downtown.



On the Edge of the Plate

Asheville's Newest Restaurants

Dine in a Shipping Container

Set along the French Broad River, **Smoky Park Supper Club** is made out of 19 shipping containers - making it the largest container-constructed restaurant in the U.S. Chef Michelle Bailey executes the all wood-fired menu.

Barbecue Brings James Beard Chefs Together

Two James Beard nominated chefs, Meherwan Irani and Elliott Moss, join forces to create **Buxton Hall**, a whole-hog, wood-fired barbecue joint located in an old skating rink in South Slope. Named one of the Top 10 New Restaurants in 2016 by *Bon Appetit!*

Chef Returns with Spin on Traditional Dishes

Chef Justin Burdett recently returned to Asheville to open **Local Provisions**, with a menu boasting intricately designed dishes and highlighting his love of fermenting and preserving food. Named one of the best new restaurants in the country by *Eater.com*.

Hometown Chef Glorifies Gas Station

Gàn Shǎn Station, the new Asian lunch and dinner restaurant from Patrick O'Cain, former sous chef at acclaimed Xiao Bao Biscuit in Charleston, has found its home in an old gas station. **JUST ANNOUNCED:** A second location in West Asheville's Beacham Curve - a growing food hot spot.

ALSO NEW: Red Ginger Dimsum & Tapas, OWL Bakery, Pete's Pies (savory English pies) and Golden Fleece (Mediterranean).

Also check out The Rhu's picnic menus, perfect for a scenic meal at a Blue Ridge Parkway overlook.

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Wild Edible Cooking Class

Foraging Tour Company Expands Offerings

NEW! In addition to offering a new foraging tour and a meal at the Omni Grove Park Inn in 2017, No Taste Like Home has also started a foraging walk at Hickory Nut Gap Farm. The tour pairs a cooking class and dinner at the historic farm.

Asheville's Unofficial Beer District

South Slope

Once populated with car lots and auto shops, the South Slope area is experiencing a renaissance. Nine breweries are in place - be sure to check out Green Man's new "brewtique!" Vortex Doughnuts (artisan sweets), Tasty Beverage (specialty beer and beverage shop), Ben's Tune-Up (restaurant and sake brewery) and Lexington Glassworks (glassblowing gallery and studio).

Beyond Beer City: Beverage News

Saké: The nation's fifth American owned saké company is now officially serving its own house brews. Ben's American Sake serves up its own unique take on the Japanese classic.

Mead: The newest drink in Asheville is honey wine made with Appalachian honey, local fruits and clean mountain water. Bee & Bramble offers a dry, crisp flavor made by a former engineer turned brew-hobbyist.

Hard Cider: Noble Cider, Urban Orchard, Bold Rock and Black Mountain Ciderworks have opened in the last couple of years featuring Western N.C.'s apple crop.

Moonshine: "Moonshine Mom" Troy Ball and Asheville Distilling Company released Keeper Bourbon in 2016, a remarkably smooth pure hearts bourbon. Check out Ball's new memoir Pure Heart, A Spirited Tale of Grace, Grit and Whiskey

Rum: H&H Distillery in Fairview now makes Hazel 63 Rum, the only rum produced in Western N.C. Gan Shan Station used it for their Smoky Mountain Daiquiri.

Wine: Asheville is home to a number of wineries from small family operations like Addison Farms to the most visited winery in the country at Biltmore. Recently, a tasting with American Wine Society judges found N.C. wines to stand on their own against California and European wines. French Broad Vignerons leads wine tours around the area.

Legacy of the Land

Biltmore Culinary Traditions & Experiences

Stretching back to sustainable land-use practices in place since 1895 and a commitment to serving guests culinary delights grown on the estate, Biltmore's culinary program today takes inspiration from the land and tradition. Take a farm tour via segway, sit down to an English tea service at the Inn On Biltmore, sip and learn at America's Most Visited Winery or dine at one of the estate's many restaurants serving their own pasture-raised meats and produce. **NEW:** The Village Social restaurant opened recently as part of the new Village Hotel. The bites and small plate menu has a seafood focus.

Niche Food Celebrations

Unique Food & Beverage Festivals for Every Season

Quirky festivals cover the calendar with celebrations such as Asheville Truffle Experience (Feb.), the Carolina Mountain Cheese Fest (April), Asheville Herb Festival (May) Artisan Bread Bakers Festival (May) and the Sourwood Honey Festival (Aug.). There's also a beer festival for every season, not to mention Asheville Beer Week (May). **NEW:** The Asheville Wine and Food Festival presents Cocktail Week in May with cocktail theatre, dinners, tours and plenty of tastings!

Beer BEE City USA

Asheville's Sweet Honey Scene

A city with undeniable beer-cred now has BEE-cred as the homegrown pollinator protection initiative "Bee City USA" goes national (Seattle recently joined the hive). A sweet escape could include foraging and hyper-local honey, a tasting at the downtown honey bar, sips of local mead and honey cocktails, or a honey body wrap in a world-renowned spa.



Night Scene Cuisine and Cocktails

From Pop-Ups to Petit Fours

Katie Button and Felix Meana—the El Bulli alums behind the celebrated Cúrate tapas bar—also run Nightbell, an upscale lounge concept combining craft cocktails and reimaged American bar food. Try one of their dramatic desserts like the mind-blowing petit fours served in a vintage cigar box. Additional nighttime hotspots include drink and food pop-ups at MG Road and Buxton Hall, Top of the Monk, Sovereign Remedies and The Crow & Quill (where Asheville's bartenders go for a drink).