

SPECIAL REPORT | SMART NEW WAYS TO BOOK FLIGHTS NOW & HOW TO AVOID DELAYS

TRAVEL+ LEISURE

THE
NEXT GREAT
PLACES

CHILE
SRI LANKA
UTAH
ISTANBUL
JAPAN
PLUS
THE NEW
AMERICAN
SOUTH

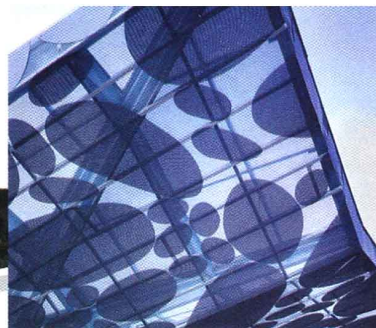
the guide



Open Shop, a combination gallery, boutique, and music venue in Birmingham, Alabama.

THE NEW NEW SOUTH

Creativity and cosmopolitanism have been sweeping through the Southern states—and not just in Nashville, Atlanta, and Charleston. Hotels, restaurants, and art centers are transforming formerly under-the-radar cities like Birmingham and Durham, and spurring old stalwarts like Savannah and Asheville to reinvent themselves. Not to mention the designers, bands, and bartenders who have helped put Dixie in the spotlight. Read on for the places and people who are making the South the most exciting region in the country right now.



CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT: The roof deck at the Durham Hotel; the exterior of CAM Raleigh; spiced, griddled amberjack from Saltbox; Andrea Reusing and Mac McCaughan.

SPOTLIGHT

DURHAM

North Carolina's "it" city is a hotbed of boutique hotels and nouveau comfort food. Chef Andrea Reusing and her musician husband, Mac McCaughan, reveal their favorite local spots.

Andrea Reusing is the James Beard Award-winning chef of Lantern, in nearby Chapel Hill. Mac McCaughan is the cofounder of the beloved indie label Merge Records, which celebrated its 25th anniversary last year. Together, they have a hand in the new Durham Hotel (thedurham.com; doubles from \$279), a 53-room property set in the former Home Savings building downtown. She runs the restaurant and rooftop bar; he created the soundtrack for all of the public spaces.

Like the couple themselves, the property is obsessively committed to its North Carolina roots: local farms provide the ingredients, Raleigh Denim custom-makes the blankets, and Durham-based Burt's Bees supplies some bath amenities. Here's where Reusing and McCaughan like to eat, drink, shop, and more.

EAT

Andrea: "Don't miss Rose's Meat Market & Sweet Shop

(rosesmeatandsweets.com), owned by a husband and wife, a whole-animal butcher and a pastry chef, respectively. She makes these amazing sea-salt caramels and elegant cream puffs. I'm also a fan of Scratch (piefantasy.com) for its amazing pies and, for lunch, the rice bowl with fried egg and kimchi."

Mac: "A downtown lunchtime favorite is Saltbox Seafood Joint (saltboxseafoodjoint.com; entrées \$9–\$17). I just see what

kind of fish Ricky has fried up. He also makes these spicy potatoes that are crispy and chewy all at once. And the radicchio salad at Pizzeria Toro (pizzeriatoro.com; entrées \$13–\$18) is unstoppable, as is their simplest pizza—the anchovy pie with tomato sauce and no cheese."

DRINK

Mac: "Alley Twenty Six (alleytwentysix.com) and Bar Lusconi (barlusconi.com) are great for

a late afternoon glass of wine or beer. In Carrboro, Orange County Social Club (orangecountysocialclub.com) has the best jukebox imaginable and outdoor seating in a garden."

SHOP

Andrea: "The owners of Vert & Vogue (vertandvogue.com) have their own line of tailored men's and women's dress shirts, plus a lot of interesting designers from the South. They recently opened a >>



Raleigh Revival

Durham's twin city is having a boom of its own, and local chefs are leading the charge. Scott Crawford recently left the Umstead Hotel & Spa in nearby Cary to launch **Standard Foods** (standardfoods.com; entrées \$20–\$28) in downtown's up-and-coming Person Street District. On the menu: seasonal Southern dishes like pork cheeks with onion jam and corn-bread pudding. An attached grocery sells ingredients that Crawford himself uses, plus produce and charcuterie from local farms. Up next for him is the casual American spot **Nash Tavern**, in Nash Square. James Beard Award winner Ashley Christensen has expanded her empire (Poole's, Beasley's Chicken & Honey, Joule Coffee & Table) with **Death & Taxes** (ac-restaurants.com; entrées \$12–\$38). Tufted leather banquettes and chandelier lighting set the stage for wood-fired dishes like marrow bones with fried capers and pickled shallots.

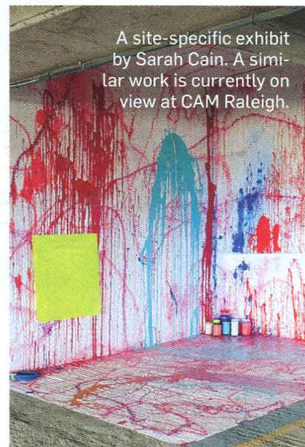
women's store, Vert & Vogue Femme. And Indio (indio.durham.com), in Brightleaf Square, is a cool shop that offers hands-on workshops like bookbinding and block printing."

DO

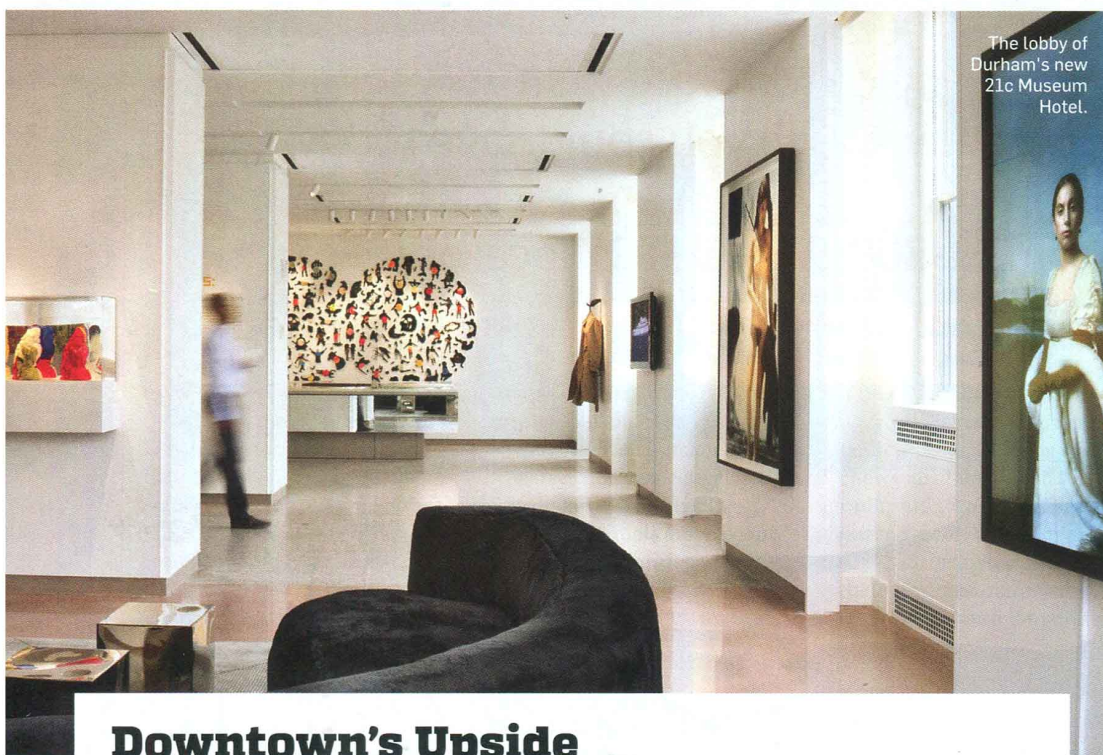
Andrea: "The Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University (nasher.duke.edu) puts on consistently mind-blowing shows. An exhibition that explores contemporary art in the American South is up until

January. I also love the CAM Raleigh (camraleigh.org). Right now, you'll find large-scale abstract paintings by Sarah Cain on display. Nearby, the Lump (teamlump.org) represents artists from North Carolina and elsewhere."

Mac: "There are a ton of great music venues. You'll likely catch me seeing a band at the venerable Cat's Cradle (catscradle.com), in Carrboro; the Pinhook (thepinhook.com), in Durham; or Kings (kingsbarcade.com), in Raleigh." +



A site-specific exhibit by Sarah Cain. A similar work is currently on view at CAM Raleigh.



The lobby of Durham's new 21c Museum Hotel.

Downtown's Upside

Downtown Durham is having a hotel boomlet: The **21c Museum Hotel** (21cmuseumhotels.com; doubles from \$199)—known for its contemporary art and innovative commissions—has launched its fourth location a few blocks away from the Durham Hotel. It, like its neighbor, is a game changer for the area, which until now only had a Marriott from the 1980s. Coming in 2016: an outpost of **Graduate** (graduatehotels.com; doubles from \$210). Just steps away from the American Tobacco historic district, it will have a coffee shop, outdoor pool, and works by local artists.



"I think the South—New Orleans, in particular—is one of those places where there's such a sense of hospitality. It's a warmth you don't often feel when you're in the hustle and bustle of a cosmopolitan city."

JON BATISTE, Louisiana-born jazz musician; bandleader on the *Late Show with Stephen Colbert*