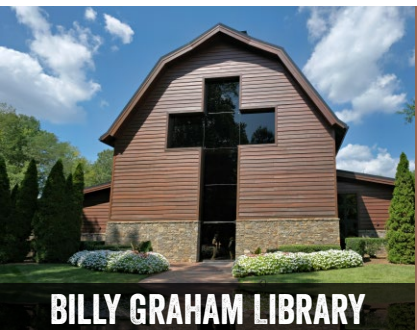




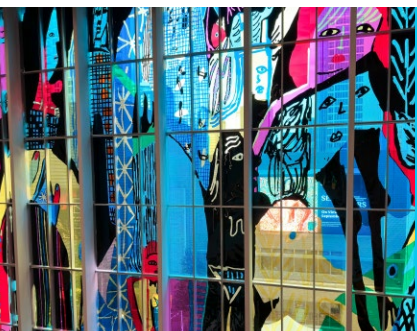
DANIEL STOWE BOTANICAL GARDEN



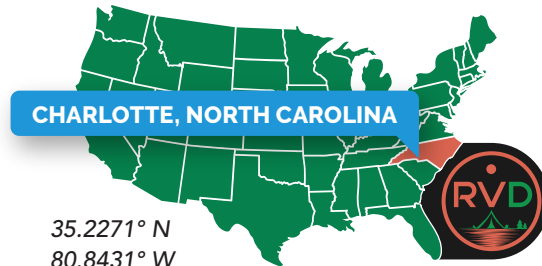
TAKE IN THE LOCAL CRAFT BREWERIES



BILLY GRAHAM LIBRARY



FREE WEDNESDAY MUSEUM NIGHTS



35.2271° N
80.8431° W

A crown jewel of the South, Charlotte is aptly named the Queen City after Queen Charlotte, the wife of King George III. The settlers were wise enough to honor Her Majesty to remain in the king's graces. Charlotte has now grown into an incredible city with many things to do. Adrenaline junkies can spend a day on the race-

track, whitewater rafting or taking in one of many professional sports games. You can find peaceful surroundings in beautiful gardens, religious settings and hiking trails. The artist has a choice of numerous museums, creating an incredible blown-glass masterpiece and enjoying the breweries. With so much to do, go down south and experience Charlotte for yourself.

10 Take a short drive south of Charlotte to Belmont and explore the incredible flowers, meadows and pathways of the Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden. With an ever-changing display of flowers and plants, each season brings a stunning display you can enjoy on a walk through the gardens. After your stroll, head indoors to the Orchid Conservatory and end your day by meandering beside Lake Wylie on the Thread Trail. You can even enjoy seasonal events throughout the year, such as Scarecrow Hollow, holiday lights and a bonsai exhibit.

9 With more than 100 breweries, you could spend your entire trip to Charlotte discovering the local brews. While I may not recommend attending them all, I suggest picking a few and learning what Charlotte offers. Each neighborhood has many choices, so you can't go wrong. However, I recommend heading to the Olde Mecklenburg Brewery, Charlotte's oldest craft brewery that boasts the Southeast's largest biergarten and an interior reminiscent of an old German Brauhaus. Pull up a chair and enjoy a pint of German-brewed beer.

8 A visit to the library and home of "America's Pastor," Christian evangelist Billy Graham, is a fascinating view into the life and dedication of one man and his family. You can take The Journey of Faith Tour, which walks you through his humble beginnings and rich legacy. You can also visit his family's home, a memorial garden where he and his wife are buried, and a gift shop to pick up a memento of your visit.

7 Take advantage of a free museum night and opportunities to spend time at the Mint Museum, Bechtler Museum and the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts+Culture, all of which are within walking distance of one another in the city's center known as Uptown. All three are stunning locations with very different collections, so try your best to get to each one. The Mint Museum houses American and contemporary art while also being dedicated to craft and design exhibits. You can find modern art at the Bechtler Museum, and



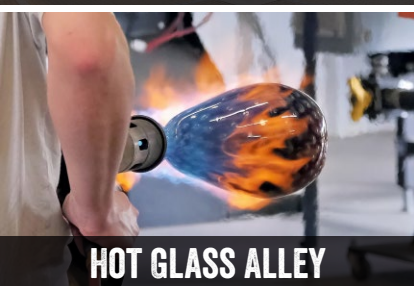
CROWDERS MOUNTAIN STATE PARK



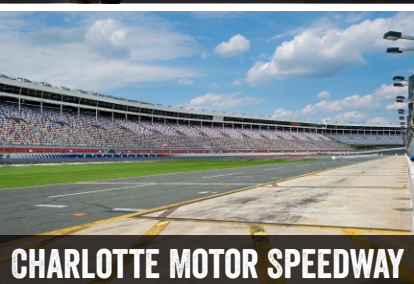
CHECK OUT A SPORTING EVENT



NASCAR HALL OF FAME



HOT GLASS ALLEY



CHARLOTTE MOTOR SPEEDWAY



U.S. NATIONAL WHITEWATER CENTER

the Harvey B. Gantt Center has an incredible collection of African-American arts and culture exhibits while offering access to their Digital Arts Studio.

6 Thirty miles west of Charlotte are two incredible rocky peaks and miles of trails for hiking, bouldering and rock climbing for outdoor and nature lovers. You can reach Crowders Mountain Peak via a few different trails, but the heart-pounding Backside Trail includes steep, 365 wooden steps at the end that lead to an incredible view of downtown Charlotte on a clear day. The 6.2-mile Ridgeline Trail will take you from Crowders Mountain State Park to South Carolina's nearby Kings Mountain National Military Park for a two-state exploration.

5 With numerous sporting venues throughout town, you must pick your favorite to attend if your time is limited. Charlotte is home to the Charlotte Hornets NBA team, the Carolina Panthers NFL team, the Charlotte FC MLS team, the Charlotte Knights Triple-A baseball team and the Charlotte Checkers minor league ice hockey team. The locals are dedicated to their teams and come out in full force to support and enjoy all the games. Deciding which to attend will be your biggest challenge when in town.

4 The NASCAR Hall of Fame is a fantastic museum and showplace to visit whether you're a race fan or not. An impressive building in downtown houses a vast array of cars, memorabilia, displays, interactive activities and history that will educate everyone on NASCAR and the people that have been involved in racings since the beginning. Opt for a tour if you want an in-depth look at artifacts and to hear fascinating stories behind those that shaped the sport or explore leisurely. View the information on those in the Hall of Fame, be part of the Pit Crew Challenge and see how fast you can change the tires or hop in a racing simulator for a heart-pounding race of your own.

3 Don't miss this fantastic local glass-blowing studio and shop in Charlotte. Their vision is for everyone to "Gather Your Imagination." They accomplish this by opening their studio for people to witness the glass-blowing process or to participate by creating pieces. The hour-long tour is impressive as they work the glass while explaining the process. Opt for a "Make Your Own" class or private lesson and walk away with a piece you created. If you don't have time for that, there are exceptional works of art for purchase to help you remember your day.

2 In the center of NASCAR country, you'll find the home to race teams, their shops and "America's Home for Racing." Driving 13 miles north of Charlotte to Concord will take you to the impressive Charlotte Motor Speedway. The large motorsport complex includes the Speedway, The Dirt Track, the zMAX Dragway and a campground. There are many ways to experience the Speedway, from various tours that put you in the winner's circle to racing schools where you can experience the thrill of the track.

1 Every adrenaline junkie must visit the Whitewater Center just outside Charlotte. People come from all over to kayak or raft the world's largest manufactured whitewater river. The facility is home to whitewater rafting, kayaking, a ropes course, ziplining, mountain biking and much more. Focused on the athlete and the community, you'll enjoy festivals, music, dining and watching racing events. Plan to spend a day enjoying the activities and the evening with food and fun.