

# Southern Living®

MARCH 2010

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CAROLINA  
LIVING

## Charleston's Romantic Charm

FALL IN LOVE WITH...

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Plus  
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Morning at Big Ed's

# Best Breakfasts in North Carolina

We've eaten our way across the Tar Heel State for the most important meal of the day. Here are our picks for the best breakfasts.

BY LYNN SELDON



Top Big Ed's pancakes with thick molasses.

## Big Ed's City Market Restaurant, Raleigh

"Big Ed" Watkins founded this classic capital restaurant, and current owner Sam Hobgood keeps the things Raleigh residents love: huge portions of Southern favorites (four pancakes, not the usual three-stack), friendly service, and country decor (including farm implements). All the standards are perfectly prepared here, including grilled biscuits (yes, grilled) with redeye gravy, liver mush (from Nahunta's, a local producer), country ham, and more. Big Ed still holds court several mornings a week.

**DON'T MISS:** The grilled biscuits with molasses or redeye gravy  
220 Wolfe Street; 919-836-9909



Smith's, since 1939

## Smith's Drugs, Forest City

The Fountain at this Forest City staple on Main Street has been serving up Southern cooking (and coffee) at the classic counter since 1939. Liver mush, a combination of pig liver and cornmeal, is a must here, as is a cup of joe for just 25 cents during breakfast hours (7:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m. on weekdays and until 11:30 a.m. on Saturdays). The "\$3 Special" changes daily but might include a biscuit, gravy, meat, and drink. Sit on the red swivel stools at the counter to watch Mike, Joyce, and Susan cook up your food.

**DON'T MISS:** A liver mush-and-egg sandwich or liver mush biscuit—or simply liver mush as a side dish 139 East Main Street; [smithsdrugsfc.com](http://smithsdrugsfc.com) (TURN TO PAGE 4)

PHOTOGRAPHS: CHRIS M. ROGERS, SQUIRE FOX

# A Local's Guide to Carolina Wines

Charlotte restaurateur Jim Noble picks his 5 favorite wines and the best foods to sip them with.

BY BILLY CERVENY

Jim's picks run from sparkling wine to a blended red.



## Biltmore Estate Sparkling Wine

"This is the most visited winery in the United States. Their sparkling wine [Champagne style] is world class and you can taste the Chardonnay and yeast flavors. Also, the bubbles are small, which is good for a sparkling wine, and it has a great color."

**Biltmore Estate Sparkling Wine, \$18.99**  
[biltmore.com/visit/winery](http://biltmore.com/visit/winery)

**FOOD PAIRING** With smoked salmon, cured and dried salamis and hams.

## Westbend Vineyard's Barrel Fermented Chardonnay

"This was the first wine that opened my eyes to what North Carolina wineries could produce. Barrel fermentation means that the wine was kept in a wooden keg as it matured, giving it an 'oaky' flavor. This particular Chardonnay is not overdone and complements the wine's other qualities. It is, in my opinion, wonderful."

**Westbend Vineyard Barrel Fermented Chardonnay, \$22.95**  
[westbendvineyards.com](http://westbendvineyards.com)

**FOOD PAIRING** With rich fish dishes, herb-roasted chicken, or veal tenderloin with sautéed mushrooms



Two of the state's fine vintages

## Chatham Hill Viognier

"Viognier is usually grown in France or Australia, but we find it grows well here. This wine has complexity: It demonstrates different flavors without one dominating the rest. It is spicy and has good color and clarity—all indicators of a wine's quality."

**Chatham Hill Viognier, \$18**  
[chathamhillwine.com](http://chathamhillwine.com)

**FOOD PAIRING** With white fish that's mildly seasoned

## Yadkin Valley Riesling by Shelton Vineyards

"Sweet Rieslings are often thought of as a beginner's wine, but the Yadkin Valley holds its own at any level. It is made from a wonderful grape, dry, and a good example of wines produced in North Carolina."

**Yadkin Valley Riesling, \$13.99**  
[sheltonvineyards.com](http://sheltonvineyards.com)

**FOOD PAIRING** With herb-roasted chicken, pink or white fish.

## RayLen Vineyard's Category 5

"Category 5 is a blended red wine. This means that five different grapes were used to create this one bottle. The key is that you don't want one element to overpower the others, and RayLen has struck this balance. Category 5 has a lot of different, deep flavors."

**RayLen Vineyard's Category 5, \$18**  
[raylensvineyards.com](http://raylensvineyards.com)

**FOOD PAIRING** With roasted chicken with a rich sauce, steak, fire-roasted pizza, or lamb \*