

Loves, Loaves and Fishes

Explore the life of legendary movie star Ava Gardner and sample hushpuppies and North Carolina seafood on your delicious trip through coastal North Carolina. Along the way, taste award-winning wines and see the world's largest frying pan.

4-Day Itinerary

Day 1

Visit Smithfield and Selma for dining and entertainment

Day 2

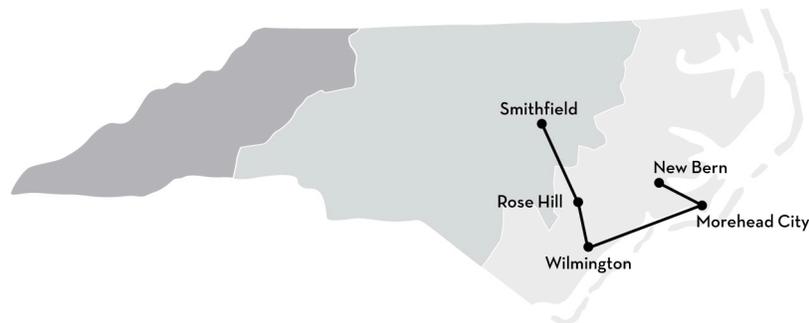
Culinary experiences, history and dining in Smithfield and Rose Hill

Day 3

Head to Wilmington and Morehead City for history and dining on the North Carolina Coast

Day 4

Culinary history and historical homes and gardens in New Bern



With so much to see and do in the area, we recommend the following 4-day itinerary. Enjoy your visit by mixing and matching events to your particular interest. Be sure to check days and hours of operation for each venue.

Day One

Smithfield:

Start in the Smithfield area, the center of activity in Johnston County. Less than four miles from downtown Smithfield, find **Selma**, established in 1867, along the North Carolina Railroad line. Enjoy a matinee (Thursday-Saturday) performed by the **American Music**

Jubilee. This Branson-style show has entertained folks from New York to Miami with musical delights from '50s rock n' roll to classic and contemporary country and gospel (Christmas show November 1 through Christmas week).

Don't miss the **Ava Gardner Museum** to learn about the life of a Hollywood legend and North Carolina native. Browse through the 6,400-square-foot museum with 16 themed exhibits showcasing Gardner's life from her humble beginnings to international stardom.

Day Two

Begin your day at **Atkinson's Mill**. Built in 1757, this water-powered gristmill has been in continuous operation for over 240 years. Visit the gift shop for hushpuppy, funnel cake, biscuit and breading mixes.

Rose Hill:

Drive an hour southeast to Rose Hill to visit **Duplin Winery**, the oldest winery in North Carolina. In 1972, Dan and David Fussell decided to try growing grapes in an attempt to diversify their farm product. Little did they know what would become of their project. At the 2002 San Diego National Wine Competition, their "Pink Magnolia" received a double gold medal and was voted "best of its class." The winery's extensive wine list includes chardonnay, merlot, fruit and sparkling wines, plus alcohol free wines. Enjoy free tasting in the winery's shop and, if you're here between 11:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., stop in at the **Bistro** for lunch.

Before leaving Rose Hill, stop and see the world's largest frying pan in the **Town Square** (2 tons, 15 feet diameter). The pan is functional and is still used to cook chicken during special events.

A short distance down the road is **Poplar Grove Plantation**, the first place in North Carolina where peanuts were grown on a large-scale basis. As you meander around the farm, learn about 1795 proprietor Joseph Mumford Foy, his family and their lifestyle. Tour the big house and tenant farmer's cabin. Visit the blacksmith's shop and craft shops.

Day Three

Wilmington:

Head south down I-40 for an hour to the city of Wilmington. Here you might visit **Thalian Hall**. The first theatre on this site was the Innes Academy Theatre which hosted performances as early as 1806. Joseph Jefferson and Edwin Booth played this theatre. It was demolished in 1855 to construct the present day Thalian Hall.

Be sure to check out the **Cotton Exchange** and **Chandler's Wharf**. The Cotton Exchange was the first downtown area in North Carolina to be adapted to use existing historic buildings to house modern-day shops and restaurants. The Cotton Exchange offers 30 specialty shops and restaurants, all exuding the style and feel of Wilmington's 19th-century river port.

Chandler's Wharf, along the Cape Fear River, is another beautiful shopping and dining area with cobblestone streets and a renovated 19th-century pier.

Later, drive to **Snead's Ferry**, settled in the 1700s because of its abundant fishing. Have lunch at one of the fine local restaurants and learn about the annual August Shrimp Festival.

Morehead City:

It's a relaxing 2-hour drive up the North Carolina Coast to Morehead City. Call ahead for reservations for an area dinner cruise – we suggest **Shrimp-a-Roo** – or dine at one of the area's seafood restaurants. Then get ready for some toe-tapping at the **Crystal Coast Jamboree**, a live country music review with bluegrass, country, gospel and comedy.

Day Four

New Bern:

Travel 35 miles up to **New Bern** and try the 90-minute **Trolley Tour**, an introduction to the history of this royal capital of North Carolina. Then visit **Tryon Palace**, built in 1770 as the home of the British royal governor and the first permanent capitol of the colony of North Carolina. Stroll through the 14 acres of gardens, catch an interpretation or two of daily life in days gone by.

For afternoon refreshment, visit the birthplace of "Brad's drink," later patented as **Pepsi-Cola**, at 256 Middle Street. Enjoy a beverage at the recreated soda fountain, and pick up some Pepsi-Cola souvenirs.

For more information:

Johnston County Visitors Bureau
www.johnstoncountync.org

Cape Fear Coast Convention and Visitors Bureau
www.cape-fear.nc.us

Duplin County Tourism
www.duplintourism.org

New Bern/Craven County Convention & Visitors Center
www.visitnewbern.com

Crystal Coast Tourism Authority
www.sunnync.com