

August. September 2014

# Mud & Magnolias



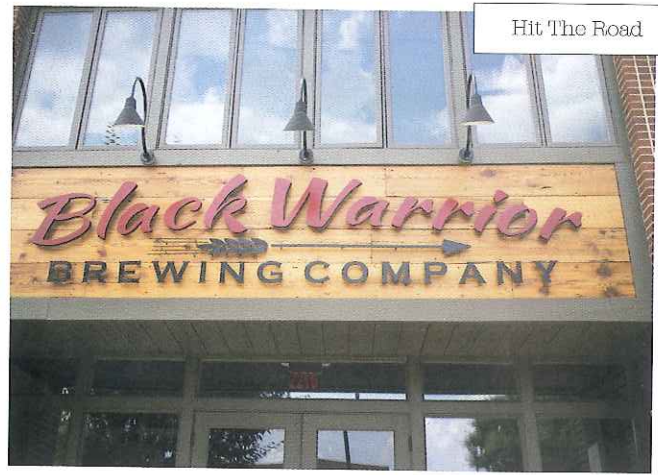
## Gameday Eats

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# TUSCALOOSA

*Tuscaloosa, Alabama is a town that drips crimson, white and houndstooth. Football is the city's heart, but outside the University of Alabama and all it offers, is a thriving small town with lots of places to have a good time. Visiting in the fall is a great time to experience Tuscaloosa and neighboring Northport at its best. The air is crisp and the excitement of football fills the air with electricity.*

By Lindsay Mott





If you're visiting on a game day, be sure to stop by the Quad in the center of campus for an outdoor barbecue, tailgating, pep rally, Alabama royalty and more. Watch the Million Dollar Band warm up on the steps of the Gorgas Library before they lead the crowd to the stadium for on-field competition.

Game day or not, no visit to Tuscaloosa is complete without a trip to the original Dreamland Café. Tucked out of the way in an area called Jerusalem Heights, the barbecue restaurant, which opened in 1958 (the same year Paul "Bear" Bryant started coaching at Alabama), sticks to the basics of barbecue: white bread, ribs served as a slab, plate or sandwich, hickory smoked sausage, baked beans, potato salad, coleslaw and banana pudding. The restaurant is warm and inviting with a big bar, a few tables and booths, and a potbelly stove, all making it feel as if you were attending a family picnic indoors.

### Downtown

Downtown Tuscaloosa is a quaint spot away from hectic campus life and offers tons of great food and drinks in a walkable area.

For Italian dining, visit DePalma's Italian Café. They have a hardwood bar with a full selection of beer, wine and more. The menu includes salads, pastas, pizzas, calzones, and some amazing desserts like chocolate molten cake and tiramisu. The pizza crust is the perfect middle ground between thin and thick with a great crunch, and pasta dishes like spaghetti marinara and shells florentine are rounded out with fresh daily specials.

Right around the corner from DePalma's, you'll find FIVE restaurant, which aims to simplify. After a day full of choices, FIVE limits their's to five dinners, five red wines and five white wines to choose from. The bar is "stocked with everything you need and nothing

more" and beer groupings come in five. They offer five standard meals such as Gulf fried shrimp (don't skimp on the tartar sauce) and cheeseburgers, and nightly specials like spaghetti and meatballs, and fresh fish two nights a week that comes from their wholesale seafood market in Destin, Florida. The meals FIVE prepares are made from scratch, and they offer local products from local sources when available.

Black Warrior Brewing Company is a brewery and taproom in downtown Tuscaloosa across from City Hall. Their mission is to bring the taste of craft beer to Tuscaloosa with a brewery on site that brews a variety of beer types and flavors and also offers seasonal brew.

The Alcove is the best-kept secret in town and a great place to get really good beer with a wide selection at a classic shotgun bar. They offer more than 100 types of beer and more than 30 high-gravity craft beers with a rotating and seasonal menu. They also offer high-end cocktails with only medium to top-shelf liquor, wine, mixed drinks they've deemed as house favorites, and even non-alcoholic beverages.

### College Life

For a taste of the college scene, Innisfree Irish Pub is closer to campus and often crowded. They serve lunch and dinner, including Irish favorites like Reuben and Corned Beef Club sandwiches and traditional Irish Shepherd's Pie as a special. They also serve Bangers and Mash, which is a Guinness-poached sausage with mashed potatoes and sautéed cabbage.

### The Arts

Fall in Tuscaloosa, along with the city of Northport just across the Black Warrior River, offers unique art offerings as well.

Beginning in September and running the first Sunday of each

month through December, the 5th Street Vintage Market offers a one-of-a-kind shopping experience. The area's only all-vintage day market is curated by This Ol' Thing Vintage, Grace Aberdeen Habitat Alchemy and DJ Tom Kat Kitten and other vendors to bring a bit of nostalgia to the farmer's market pavilion. With vintage clothing, furnishings, books and toys, more are there for browsing and classic vinyl records steal the show in popularity.

The Kentuck Art Center in historic downtown Northport is open year round, offering exhibitions, classes and shopping and is situated around the Courtyard of Wonders, which features shady retreats and fantastical sculptures. But, the center's big even is the Kentuck Festival of the Arts held the third weekend of October. This is "one of the nation's best-respected and most-loved arts gatherings" and showcases more than 270 artists with various kinds of exciting art and crafts. Interactive live demonstrations by expert craftspeople, including basket makers, blacksmiths, woodworkers, traditional potters, fiber and fabric artists, quilters, jewelers and glassblowers showcase their trades also. The festival boasts live music, story telling, food and fellowship as well.

These are just a sample of all Tuscaloosa and Northport have to offer besides football. You can live the college life in a college bar or find a laid back table to have a drink or quiet dinner. The decision is yours, but whatever you decide, don't forget the common way to address just about anyone in the town: "Roll Tide!"

### On the Road

First page, clockwise: Bag 101, Black Warrior Brewery, FIVE, Lucca, Innisfree, DePalma's // This page: Dreamland. Photos by Austin Bigoney