

Top 10 Reasons to Visit Charlotte

1. Mild climate year-round
2. Excellent hotel packages
3. Easy air access
4. Mid-Atlantic location
5. Great value
6. Fantastic restaurants
7. New attractions in the center city
8. Walkable city for conventioners
9. Premier facility choices
10. Cosmopolitan city with southern charm

2006 ERA Show Slated for Charlotte, North Carolina

The Electrical Rebuilder's Association (ERA) has announced its 2006 trade show will be held in Charlotte, N.C., March 23 to 26, at the Charlotte Convention Center.

Charlotte is a truly dynamic city where vision and planning ensures smart and positive growth. Where a walk along a sidewalk can still be warmed by the sun hitting your face. And though the city has a thriving historic-preservation movement, the Carolina air continually buzzes with the excitement of change.

White, sandy beaches, gorgeous mountain peaks, and some of the country's prized golf resorts are all just an easy drive from Charlotte.

Every year, more than 50,000 new residents move to the Charlotte area from across the nation and around the world. There are nearly 615,000 people living in Charlotte—the 21st largest city in the country—and nearly 1.5 million in the greater Charlotte region. Charlotte is the largest city between Washington, D.C. and Atlanta, Ga., and is the center of the nation's fifth largest urban region.

The city had earned many distinctions:

- Voted the U.S. Conference of Mayors "Most Livable City."
- Declared one of four of "America's Most Livable" cities of the decade by Partners for Livable Communities.
- Ranked first as a city with the "Pro-Business Attitude" in America by *Fortune* magazine. (More than 300 of the Fortune 500 businesses have

18TH ANNUAL ERA TRADE SHOW

for the electrical rebuilding industry

Southern Exchange '06

Charlotte NORTH CAROLINA

March 23-26

Charlotte Convention Center
The one designed just for you!

an office in Charlotte.)

The convention center, built in 1995, features state-of-the-art design and engineering with multi-purpose accommodations for regional, national and international conventions, trade shows and other special events. (North Carolina is a right-to-work state.)

With more than 4,100 hotel rooms within walking distance of the Charlotte Convention Center, guests find themselves a stone's throw from business, dining and entertainment. Other local options include the newly refurbished Charlotte trolley line, an excellent public bus system (CATS), van and limousine services, and numerous taxi companies.



Located in uptown Charlotte, the center is only a 15-minute drive from Charlotte/Douglas International Airport, which provides 540 flights daily, with non-stop service to more than 160 cities.

Charlotte is a national hub, with service provided by nine major airlines and seven regional carriers. The airport ranks 14th nationwide in total operations and 19th nationwide in total passengers. Top destinations from Charlotte are LaGuardia (NY), O'Hare (Chicago), Newark (NJ) and Atlanta (GA).

In addition, the center is easily accessible by the John Belk Freeway, I-277 loop, I-85, I-77, I-40, I-26 and I-485.

Activities Galore

Charlotte is a sports enthusiasts's dream. World-class professional sporting events are held in Charlotte throughout the year, many of which call Charlotte home: NASCAR's Coca-Cola 600 and NEXTEL All-Star, the NBA Charlotte Bobcats, WNBA Charlotte Sting, NFL Carolina Panthers, AAA Charlotte Knights and even their own ice hockey and soccer teams, the ECHL Charlotte Checkers and AW Charlotte Eagles.

More than \$970 billion in financial assets are managed in the Charlotte region, home to the headquarters of the largest (Bank of America) and fourth largest (Wachovia) bank holding companies in the country.

Visitors can experience Charlotte's Center City by riding the Gold Rush rubber-wheeled trolley service, or ride the rails and take a relaxing guided tour of the city aboard Streetcar No. 85—an electric streetcar built in the Queen City

in 1927.

During this two-mile jaunt through Historic South End and Center City, hear about Charlotte's rise as an industrial and financial center and note the many historic landmarks along the route. Hop off to enjoy antique shopping and fine dining. The trolley showcases Charlotte's growing, diverse community and introduces many to smart city planning and transit.

On the heels of trolley service, Charlotte's new rapid transit system, scheduled for completion in 2006, will provide light rail service along a ten-mile corridor from Center City Charlotte south to I-485, north of Pineville. A unique feature is the plan to share a length of track with the Charlotte Trolley. The South Corridor Light Rail Transit line is projected to attract approximately 16,100 riders per day, and will require 15 light rail vehicles.

Steeped in History

North Carolina is taken from "Carolus," the Latin word for Charles, and was named after England's King Charles I. Nicknamed the "Old North State" and "Tarheel State," North Carolina was given statehood in 1789 and is one of the original 13 colonies. It is the 28th largest state in the union in terms of square miles and total area, and it ranks 11th in population as one of the nation's fastest growing areas.

Charlotte is a city that is rich in history and tradition, represented by excellent museums, historic homes, plantations, and battlefields.

About 250 years ago, Scot-Irish settlers traveled the Great Wagon Road from Philadelphia. They stopped at the crossroads of two Indian trading paths east of the Catawba River and built a settlement. As friends and neighbors joined them, the community grew to several hundred residents.

In 1768, the town was incorporated and named in honor of the wife of King George III, the reigning English monarch. Local citizens also honored Queen Charlotte when they named their new county Mecklenburg after her German homeland. That's why Charlotte is called the "Queen City."

British army occupied Charlotte and its environs. They called the area a "Hornet's Nest" of rebellion because of the opposition to British rule among the local Scots-Irish settlers.

The discovery of a 17-pound gold nugget in 1799 began a proliferation of mines and an influx of prospectors. A Charlotte branch of the U.S. Mint was established in 1837. The boom was short-lived, however, as strike-it-richers and other opportunists followed the call to California a few years later.

After gold's boom and bust, the cotton industry brought prosperity to the region, and with it came the railroads, followed by the interstate highway system and the airport.

Courtesy Charlotte Convention & Visitors Bureau. For more information on air travel arrangements or special services for international visitors (translators, tour guides and currency exchange), contact Visit Charlotte at (800) 722-1994 or www.visitcharlotte.com.