

10 perfect tastes for foodies in Delaware

The East Coast's best new Culinary Hotspot

By Stephanie Citron, Special to The Baltimore Sun



Photo by Stephanie Citron

Southern Delaware chefs source their food fresh from local farms, which often open their gates to foraging foodies. Bring a cooler to collect the local bounty. Regional culinary activities are listed on the new website visitsoutherndelaware.com/culinarycoast. If you want to go gourmet all the way, consider a stay at Hotel Rehoboth, which offers lavish breakfasts and a nightly wine and cheese reception (247 Rehoboth Ave., Rehoboth, 302-228-4300, hotelrehoboth.com).

Visit a farmers' market Shop alongside coastal Delaware's farm-to-fork chefs, like Nage's Hari Cameron, for local treasures, like Springfield Farm's lamb sausages, at Southern Delaware's fabulous farmers' markets. Pick your own Pick perfect peaches — 18 varieties — from the fields of Bennett Orchards, one of Delaware's historic "century farms" (30993 Armory Road,

Frankford, 302-732-3358, bennettorchards.com).

Spice it up No need to go to Provence to experience the edible and healing properties of fragrant, organic lavender; pick your own at Lavender Fields Farm (18864 Cool Spring Road, Milton, 302-684-1514, lavenderfieldsde.com).

Follow the trail Tour and taste at the local producers along Delaware's Wine and Ale Trail (visitdelaware.com/wineandale/trails). You'll sample the vintages at Nassau Valley Vineyards (32165 Winery Way, Lewes, nassauvalley.com), Delaware's only award-winning winery, and visit its museum chronicling the history of winemaking. Afterwards, explore the Dogfish Head microbrewery (6 Village Center Blvd, Milton, 302-684-1000 dogfish.com).

Get buttered up It's difficult to decide between the cornmeal-crust local oysters (\$9) or chunky seafood chowder with shrimp, clams and cod (\$11) at The Buttery, where the ingredients are fresh and seasonal. (102 2nd S., Lewes, 302-645-7755 butteryrestaurant.com).

Fill the cupboard Procure rare and exotic organic spices, grains, beans and specialty foods at Hamel's Gourmet Market (510 Rehoboth Ave., Rehoboth, 302-227-3386).

Sample nature Learn about and taste the Delaware shore's edible beach plants — beach plum, prickly pear and sea lettuce — at a program that costs \$6. Dates vary. (Indian River Life Saving Museum, 25039 Coastal Highway, Rehoboth, 302-227-6991, destateparks.com)

Scoop it Each chunky scoop of Hopkins Creamery's handmade Delaware Fruit ice cream contains seasonal produce and 14 percent butterfat in every lick (Green Acres Farm, 18186 Dairy Farm Road, Lewes, hopkinsfarmcreamery.com).



Eat garden fresh The just-picked ingredients and fresh meat at Salt Air Kitchen's new Farm and Table restaurant are harvested from the farm-garden out back. With just two tables, reservations are essential (28841 Lewes Georgetown Highway, Lewes, 302-227-2444).

Train your palate At the weekly Farm to Table series, local farmers bring samples and demonstrate their methods while chefs are in the kitchen preparing a special dish with the harvest. 8 p.m. Thursdays at Nage (19730 Coastal Highway, Rehoboth, 302-226-2037).

—Stephanie Citron

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