



North Carolina Museum of Art

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**North Carolina Museum of Art and Ashley Christensen Restaurants
Launch “ACR at the Park” Picnic Experience**

*Following four weeks of weekend pop-ups, partnership expands hours
and menu items for outdoor dining in the Museum Park*

Raleigh, N.C.—The North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA) and Ashley Christensen Restaurants (ACR) launched [ACR at the Park](#), a new partnership offering picnic food and beverage options for dining al fresco in the Ann and Jim Goodnight Museum Park or for takeaway dining at home.

Initially launched in July as a pop-up experience with limited weekend hours, ACR in the Park is expanding its hours starting Thursday, August 27. New hours are Thursday and Friday, 8 am to 2 pm, and Saturday and Sunday, 9 am to 6 pm. The service operates from the Museum’s Blue Ridge Café patio, located at the back of the brick East Building near the amphitheater stage. [Visitors must preorder online](#), beginning at 8 am each day, and select a time for contactless pickup.

“The Museum Park’s incredible works of art, rolling hills, and shaded nooks offer a one-of-a-kind setting for a picnic experience,” said Museum Director Valerie Hillings. “We’re thrilled to pair this special landscape with the iconic Southern cuisine of Ashley Christensen Restaurants.”

The menu, created by Death & Taxes chef Lauren Ivey, includes picnic boxes featuring recipes from popular downtown restaurants Poole’s Diner and Poole’side Pies; as well as artful sandwiches like heirloom tomato and malt vinegar aioli on Boulted Bakery baguette, and sliced cucumber and soppressata with dill cream cheese on Boulted bread levain; desserts like Videri chocolate brownies and corn cookie and strawberry ice cream sandwiches; and cold beverages. Breakfast options include breakfast burritos with green chili, roasted potatoes, scrambled eggs, and bacon or roasted tomato; pineapple-coconut green smoothies; toasted Boulted bread with avocado, heirloom tomatoes, and pesto butter; housemade yogurt; broccoli, caramelized onion, and Gruyère crustless quiche bites.

“We are thrilled to be partnering with the NCMA to provide food and beverages to guests who are enjoying the Museum Park,” said AC Restaurants founder and chef Ashley

(continued)

Christensen. "These grounds are one of Raleigh's treasures, and provide a peaceful and safe outing for the community always, but especially during this pandemic."

While the Museum's galleries have remained closed since March, the 164-acre Museum Park continues to welcome visitors from dawn to dusk each day. Park attendance has been surging, with almost 100,000 visitors each month of the spring and into the summer. A blooming sunflower field, spacious areas for socially distanced meet-ups, and art pieces by local, national, and international artists have made the Museum Park a valuable resource for Triangle-area families.

See the full menu [online](#) to order, starting at 8 am each day, and select a pickup time.

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About the North Carolina Museum of Art

The North Carolina Museum of Art's collection spans more than 5,000 years, from ancient Egypt to the present, making the institution one of the premier art museums in the South. The collection provides educational, aesthetic, intellectual, and cultural experiences for the citizens of North Carolina and beyond. The 164-acre Museum Park showcases the connection between art and nature through site-specific works of environmental art. The Museum offers changing national touring exhibitions, classes, lectures, family activities, films, and concerts.

The Museum opened West Building, home to the collection, in 2010. The North Carolina Museum of Art, Valerie Hillings, director, is located at 2110 Blue Ridge Road in Raleigh. It is the art museum of the State of North Carolina, Roy Cooper, governor, and an agency of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Susi Hamilton, secretary.

About AC Restaurants

Founded in 2007, AC Restaurants includes five restaurants in downtown Raleigh: Poole's Diner, Poole's Pies, Beasley's Chicken and Honey, Fox Liquor Bar, and Death & Taxes. It also is home to AC Events, which operates a catering company and events venue called Bridge Club. Chef and proprietor Ashley Christensen is a two-time winner of the James Beard Foundation Awards and has been named Eater.com's Chef of the Year and Tar Heel of the Year by the News and Observer.