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Known for its rich history, well-preserved architecture, distinguished restaurants, and mannerly people, Charleston has received a large number of accolades, including "America's Most Friendly [City]" by *Travel + Leisure* in 2011 and in 2013 and 2014 by *Condé Nast Traveler*,^{[10][11]} and also "the most polite and hospitable city in America" by *Southern Living* magazine.^[12]

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Charleston	
City	
City of Charleston	
 St. Michael's on Broad Street	
 Flag Seal Nickname(s): "The Holy City", "Chucktown" Motto: <i>Aedes mores juraque curat</i> (Latin: "She guards her buildings, customs, and laws")	
 Charleston Location in South Carolina Coordinates: 32°47′00″N 79°56′00″W	
Country	United States
State	South Carolina
Historic colony	Colony of South Carolina
Counties	Charleston Berkeley
Government • Mayor	Joseph P. Riley (D)
Area • City • Land • Water	127.5 sq mi (330.2 km ²) 109.0 sq mi (282.3 km ²) 18.5 sq mi (47.9 km ²)
Elevation	20 ft (4 m)
Population (2010) ^[1] • City • Estimate (2013)^[2] • Rank • Density • Urban • MSA	120,083 127,999 US: 200th 1,152/sq mi (444.9/km ²) 548,404 (US: 76th) 712,220 (US: 76th)
Time zone • Summer (DST)	EST (UTC-5) EDT (UTC-4)
ZIP code(s)	29401, 29403, 29405, 29407, 29409, 29412, 29414, 29424,

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29425, 29455, 29492

Area code

843

45-13330

FIPS code

1221516

GNIS feature ID

www.charleston-sc.gov

Website

(http://www.charleston-sc.gov)



The downtown Charleston waterfront on The Battery



Charleston has scores of historic buildings and homes downtown.



Residential gardens such as this one at the Calhoun Mansion abound in Charleston.



Waterfront Park overlooks Charleston Harbor and offers views of Fort Sumter and the Ravenel Bridge.

Geography

The city proper consists of six distinct areas: the Peninsula/Downtown, West Ashley, Johns Island, James Island, Daniel Island, and the Cainhoy Peninsula.

Topography

According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 127.5 square miles (330.2 km²), of which 109.0 square miles (282.2 km²) is land and 18.5 square miles (47.9 km²) is water.^[9] The old city is located on a peninsula at the point where, as Charlestonians say, "The Ashley and the Cooper Rivers come together to form the Atlantic Ocean." The entire peninsula is very low, some is landfill material, and as such, frequently floods during heavy rains, storm surges and unusually high tides. The city limits have expanded across the Ashley River from the peninsula, encompassing the majority of West Ashley as well as James Island and some of Johns Island. The city limits also have expanded across the Cooper River, encompassing Daniel Island and the Cainhoy area. North Charleston blocks any expansion up the peninsula, and Mount Pleasant occupies the land directly east of the Cooper River.

The tidal rivers (Wando, Cooper, Stono, and Ashley) are evidence of a submergent or drowned coastline. There is a submerged river delta off the mouth of the harbor, and the Cooper River is deep, affording a good location for a port.

Climate

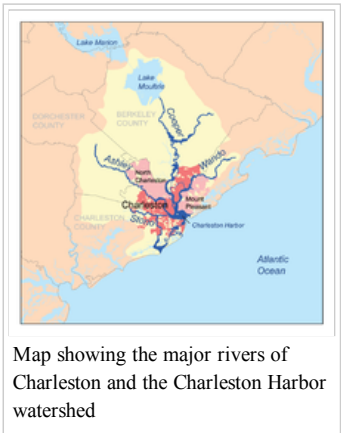
Charleston has a humid subtropical climate (Köppen *Cfa*), with mild winters, hot, humid summers, and significant rainfall all year long. Summer is the wettest season; almost half of the annual rainfall occurs from June to September in the form of thundershowers. Fall remains relatively warm through November. Winter is short and mild, and is characterized by occasional rain. Measurable snow (≥0.1 in or 0.25 cm) only occurs several times per decade at the most, with the last such event occurring December 26, 2010.^[13] However, 6.0 in (15 cm) fell at the airport on December 23, 1989, the largest single-day fall on record, contributing to a single-storm and seasonal record of 8.0 in (20 cm) snowfall.^[13]

The highest temperature recorded within city limits was 104 °F (40 °C), on June 2, 1985 and June 24, 1944, and the lowest was 7 °F (−14 °C) on February 14, 1899, although at the airport, where official records are kept, the historical range is 105 °F (41 °C) on August 1, 1999 down to 6 °F (−14 °C) on January 21, 1985.^[13] Hurricanes are a major threat to the area during the summer and early fall, with several severe hurricanes hitting the area – most notably Hurricane Hugo on September 21, 1989 (a Category 4 storm). Dewpoint in the summer ranges from 67.8 °F (20 °C) to 71.4 °F (22 °C).^[13]

Charleston was hit by a large tornado in 1761, which temporarily emptied the Ashley River, and sank five offshore warships.^[14]



Damage left from Hurricane Hugo in 1989



Map showing the major rivers of Charleston and the Charleston Harbor watershed

Climate data for Charleston Int'l, South Carolina (1981–2010 normals, extremes 1938–present)													
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Record high °F (°C)	83 (28)	87 (31)	90 (32)	95 (35)	99 (37)	103 (39)	104 (40)	105 (41)	99 (37)	94 (34)	88 (31)	83 (28)	105 (41)
Average high °F (°C)	59.0 (15)	62.8 (17.1)	69.6 (20.9)	76.4 (24.7)	83.2 (28.4)	88.4 (31.3)	91.1 (32.8)	89.5 (31.9)	84.8 (29.3)	77.1 (25.1)	69.8 (21)	61.6 (16.4)	76.1 (24.5)
Average low °F (°C)	37.5 (3.1)	40.6 (4.8)	46.7 (8.2)	53.3 (11.8)	61.8 (16.6)	69.6 (20.9)	73.0 (22.8)	72.3 (22.4)	67.2 (19.6)	56.8 (13.8)	47.5 (8.6)	40.1 (4.5)	55.5 (13.1)
Record low °F (°C)	6 (−14)	12 (−11)	15 (−9)	29 (−2)	36 (2)	50 (10)	58 (14)	56 (13)	42 (6)	27 (−3)	15 (−9)	8 (−13)	6 (−14)
Average precipitation inches (mm)	3.71 (94.2)	2.96 (75.2)	3.71 (94.2)	2.91 (73.9)	3.02 (76.7)	5.65 (143.5)	6.53 (165.9)	7.15 (181.6)	6.10 (154.9)	3.75 (95.3)	2.43 (61.7)	3.11 (79)	51.03 (1,296.2)
Average snowfall inches (cm)	trace	0.2 (0.5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0.3 (0.8)	0.5 (1.3)
Avg. precipitation days (≥ 0.01 in)	9.6	8.6	7.9	7.7	7.8	11.9	13.0	13.2	10.0	7.3	7.0	8.7	112.7
Avg. snowy days (≥ 0.1 in)	0.1	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.2	0.5
Avg. relative humidity (%)	69.8	67.4	68.1	67.5	72.5	75.1	76.6	78.9	78.2	74.1	72.7	71.6	72.7
Mean monthly sunshine hours	179.3	186.7	243.9	275.1	294.8	279.5	287.8	256.7	219.7	224.5	189.5	171.3	2,808.8
Percent possible sunshine	56	61	66	71	69	65	66	62	59	64	60	55	63
Source: NOAA (relative humidity and sun 1961–1990) ^{[13][15][16]}													
Climate data for Charleston, South Carolina (Downtown), 1981–2010 normals, extremes 1893–present													
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Record high °F (°C)	82 (28)	83 (28)	94 (34)	94 (34)	99 (37)	104 (40)	103 (39)	103 (39)	100 (38)	95 (35)	87 (31)	81 (27)	104 (40)
Average high °F (°C)	56.7 (13.7)	59.6 (15.3)	65.0 (18.3)	72.0 (22.2)	78.7 (25.9)	84.5 (29.2)	87.6 (30.9)	86.4 (30.2)	82.0 (27.8)	74.6 (23.7)	67.3 (19.6)	59.5 (15.3)	72.8 (22.7)
Average low °F (°C)	42.8 (6)	45.5 (7.5)	51.6 (10.9)	58.8 (14.9)	67.1 (19.5)	74.0 (23.3)	76.9 (24.9)	76.1 (24.5)	71.8 (22.1)	62.5 (16.9)	53.6 (12)	45.6 (7.6)	60.5 (15.8)
Record low °F (°C)	10 (−12)	7 (−14)	22 (−6)	36 (2)	45 (7)	52 (11)	61 (16)	59 (15)	50 (10)	37 (3)	17 (−8)	12 (−11)	7 (−14)
Average precipitation inches (mm)	2.94 (74.7)	2.51 (63.8)	3.30 (83.8)	2.53 (64.3)	2.16 (54.9)	4.65 (118.1)	5.40 (137.2)	6.71 (170.4)	5.76 (146.3)	3.67 (93.2)	2.19 (55.6)	2.60 (66)	44.42 (1,128.3)
Avg. precipitation days (≥ 0.01 in)	9.0	8.0	7.8	6.9	6.6	10.0	11.3	11.3	8.9	6.6	6.3	8.6	101.3
Source: NOAA ^{[13][17]}													

Metropolitan Statistical Area

The Charleston-North Charleston-Summerville Metropolitan Statistical Area currently consists of three counties: Charleston, Berkeley, and Dorchester. As of the 2013 U.S. Census, the metropolitan statistical area had a total population of 712,239 people. North Charleston is the second largest city in the Charleston-North Charleston-Summerville Metropolitan Statistical Area and ranks as the third largest city in the state; Mount Pleasant and Summerville are

the next largest cities. These cities combined with other incorporated and unincorporated areas surrounding the city of Charleston form the Charleston-North Charleston Urban Area with a population of 548,404 as of 2010.^[18] The metropolitan statistical area also includes a separate and much smaller urban area within Berkeley County, Moncks Corner (with a 2000 population of 9,123).

The traditional parish system persisted until the Reconstruction Era, when counties were imposed. Nevertheless, traditional parishes still exist in various capacities, mainly as public service districts. The city of Charleston which was originally defined by the limits of the Parish of St. Philip & St. Michael, now also includes parts of St. James' Parish, St. George's Parish, St. Andrew's Parish, and St. John's Parish, although the last two are mostly still incorporated rural parishes.

History

Colonial era (1670–1786)

After Charles II of England (1630–1685) was restored to the English throne in 1660 following Oliver Cromwell's Protectorate, he granted the chartered Province of Carolina to eight of his loyal friends, known as the Lords Proprietors, on March 24, 1663. It took seven years before the group arranged for settlement expeditions. The first of these founded Charles Town, in 1670. The community was established by several shiploads of settlers from Bermuda (which lies due East of South Carolina, although at 1,030 kilometres (640 mi) it is closest to Cape Hatteras, North Carolina), under the leadership of governor William Sayle, on the west bank of the Ashley River, a few miles northwest of the present-day city center. It was soon predicted by Anthony Ashley-Cooper, one of the Lords Proprietors, to become a "great port town", a destiny the city quickly fulfilled. In 1680 the settlement was moved east of the Ashley River to the peninsula between the Ashley and Cooper rivers. Not only was this location more defensible, but it offered access to a fine natural harbor.

In the 1718, Charleston was besieged by the pirate Edward Teach, commonly known as Blackbeard. This disrupted trade in Charleston for a time until Blackbeard and his allies abandoned the siege.

As the capital of the Carolina colony, Charles Town was a center for inland expansion, but remained the southernmost point of English settlement on the American mainland until the Georgia colony was established in 1732.



A 1733 map of Charles Towne, published by Herman Moll, shows the city's defensive walls.

The early settlement was often subject to attack from sea and land, including periodic assaults from Spain and France (both of whom contested England's claims to the region), and pirates. These were combined with raids by Native Americans, who tried to protect themselves from so-called European "settlers," who in turn wanted to expand the settlement. The heart of the city was fortified according to a 1704 plan by Governor Johnson. Except those fronting Cooper River, the walls were largely removed during the 1720s.

The first settlers primarily came from England, its Caribbean colony of Barbados, and its Atlantic colony of Bermuda. Among these were free people of color, born in the West Indies of alliances and marriages between Africans and Englishmen, when color lines were looser among the working class in the early colonial years, and some wealthy whites took black consorts or concubines.^[19] Charles Town attracted a mixture of ethnic and religious groups. French, Scottish, Irish, and Germans migrated to the developing seacoast town, representing numerous Protestant denominations. Because of the battles between

English "royalty" and the Roman Catholic Church, practicing Catholics were not allowed to settle in South Carolina until after the American Revolution. Jews were allowed, and Sephardic Jews migrated to the city in such numbers that by the beginning of the 19th century, the city was home to the largest and wealthiest Jewish community in North America—a status it held until about 1830.^[20]

Africans were brought to Charles Town on the Middle Passage, first as "servants", then as slaves. Ethnic groups transported here included especially Wolof, Yoruba, Fulani, Igbo, Malinke, and other people of the Windward Coast.^[21] An estimated 40 percent of the total 400,000 Africans transported and sold as slaves into North America are estimated to have landed at Sullivan's Island, just off the port of Charles Town; it is described as a "hellish Ellis Island of sorts Today nothing commemorates that ugly fact but a simple bench, established by the author Toni Morrison using private funds."^[22]

By the mid-18th century Charles Town had become a bustling trade center, the hub of the Atlantic trade for the southern colonies. Charles Towne was also the wealthiest and largest city south of Philadelphia, in part because of the lucrative slave trade. By 1770, it was the fourth-largest port in the colonies, after Boston, New York, and Philadelphia; with a population of 11,000—slightly more than half of them slaves. By 1708 the majority of the colony's population were slaves, and the future state would continue to be a majority of African descent until after the Great Migration of the early 20th century.

Charles Town was a hub of the deerskin trade, the basis of Charles Town's early economy. Trade alliances with the Cherokee and Creek nations insured a steady supply of deer hides. Between 1699 and 1715, colonists exported an average of 54,000 deer skins annually to Europe through Charles Town. Between 1739 and 1761, the height of the deerskin trade era, an estimated 500,000 to 1,250,000 deer were slaughtered. During the same period, Charles Town records show an export of 5,239,350 pounds of deer skins. Deer skins were used in the production of men's fashionable and practical buckskin pantaloons, gloves, and book bindings.



The Pink House, the oldest stone building in Charleston, was built of Bermudian limestone at 17 Chalmers Street, at some time between 1694 and 1712.

Colonial Lowcountry landowners experimented with cash crops ranging from tea to silkworms. African slaves brought knowledge of rice cultivation, which plantation owners cultivated and developed as a successful commodity crop by 1700.^[23] With the coerced help of African slaves from the Caribbean, Eliza Lucas, daughter of plantation owner George Lucas, learned how to raise and use indigo in the Lowcountry in 1747. Supported with subsidies from Britain, indigo was a leading export by 1750.^[24] Those and naval stores were exported in an extremely profitable shipping industry.

As Charles Town grew, so did the community's cultural and social opportunities, especially for the elite merchants and planters. The first theatre building in America was built in 1736 on the site of today's Dock Street Theatre. Benevolent societies were formed by different ethnic groups, from French Huguenots to free people of color to Germans to Jews. The Charles Towne Library Society was established in 1748 by well-born young men who wanted to share the financial cost to keep up with the scientific and philosophical issues of the day. This group also helped establish the College of Charles Towne in 1770, the oldest college in South Carolina. Until its transition to state ownership in 1970, this was the oldest municipally supported college in the United States.

American Revolution (1776–1783)

As the relationship between the colonists and Britain deteriorated, Charles Town became a focal point in the ensuing American Revolution. It was twice the target of British attacks. At every stage the British strategy assumed the existence of a large base of Loyalist supporters who would rally to the king's forces given some military support.^[25]

In late March 1776, South Carolina President and Commander in Chief John Rutledge learned that a large British naval force was moving toward Charles Town. To defend the city, he ordered the construction of Fort Sullivan (now Ft. Moultrie), on Sullivan's Island overlooking the main shipping channel into Charleston Harbor. He placed Col. William Moultrie in charge of the construction and subsequently made him the fort's commanding officer.

On June 28, 1776 General Sir Henry Clinton along with 2,000 men and a naval squadron tried to seize Charles Towne, hoping for a simultaneous Loyalist uprising in South Carolina. When the fleet fired cannonballs, they failed to penetrate Fort Sullivan's unfinished, yet thick, palmetto-log walls. No local Loyalists attacked the town from the mainland side, as the British had hoped they would do. Col. Moultrie's men returned fire and inflicted heavy damage on several of the British ships. The British were forced to withdraw their forces, and the Americans renamed the defensive installation as Fort Moultrie in honor of its commander.



Fort Moultrie in 1861

This battle kept Charles Town safe from conquest for four years. It was considered so symbolic of the revolution that it inspired some key icons of South Carolina and the revolution:

- During the battle, the flag Moultrie had flown in the battle (which he had designed, himself) was shot down. It was hoisted into the air again by Sergeant William Jasper and kept aloft, rallying the troops, until it could be remounted. This Liberty Flag was seen as so important that it became the flag of South Carolina, with the addition of the palmetto tree, the logs of which had been used to make the fort so impenetrable.
- The day of that battle, June 28, is now a state holiday known as Carolina Day.

Clinton returned in 1780 with 14,000 soldiers. American General Benjamin Lincoln was trapped and surrendered his entire 5,400-man force after a long fight, and the Siege of Charles Towne was the greatest

American defeat of the war. Several Americans who escaped the carnage joined up with other militias, including those of Francis Marion, the "Swamp Fox"; and Andrew Pickens. The British retained control of the city until December 1782. After the British left, the city's name was officially changed to Charleston in 1783.^[26]

When the city was freed from the British, General Nathanael Greene presented its leaders with the Moultrie Flag, describing it as the first "American" flag flown in the South.

Antebellum era (1785–1861)

Although the city lost the status of state capital to Columbia in 1786, Charleston became even more prosperous in the plantation-dominated economy of the post-Revolutionary years. The invention of the cotton gin in 1793 revolutionized the processing of this crop, making short-staple cotton profitable. It was more easily grown in the upland areas, and cotton quickly became South Carolina's major export commodity. The Piedmont region was developed into cotton plantations, to which the sea islands and Lowcountry were already devoted. Slaves were also the primary labor force within the city, working as domestics, artisans, market workers and laborers.

The city also had a large class of free people of color. By 1860, there were 3,785 free people of color in Charleston, nearly 18% of the city's black population, and 8% of the total population. Free people of color were far more likely to be of mixed racial background than slaves. Many were educated, practiced skilled crafts, and some even owned substantial property, including slaves.^{[19][27]} In 1790 they established the Brown Fellowship Society for mutual aid, initially as a burial society. It continued until 1945.

By 1820 Charleston's population had grown to 23,000, maintaining its black (and mostly slave) majority. When a massive slave revolt planned by Denmark Vesey, a free black, was revealed in May 1822, whites reacted with intense fear, as they were well aware of the violent retribution of slaves against whites during the Haitian Revolution. Soon after, Vesey was tried and executed, hanged in early July with five slaves. Another 28 slaves were later hanged. Later, the state legislature passed laws requiring individual legislative approval for manumission (the freeing of a slave) and regulating activities of free blacks and slaves.^[28]



Rainbow Row's 13 houses along East Bay Street were—from the Colonial period until the early 20th century—a commercial center of the town.



Former German Fire Co. Engine House & Old Slave Mart Museum, 8 & 6 Chalmers St. resp.

As Charleston's government, society, and industry grew, commercial institutions were established to support the community's aspirations. The Bank of South Carolina, the second-oldest building in the nation to be constructed as a bank, was established in 1798. Branches of the First and Second Bank of the United States were also located in Charleston in 1800 and 1817.

In 1832 South Carolina passed an ordinance of nullification, a procedure by which a state could in effect repeal a federal law; it was directed against the most recent tariff acts. Soon federal soldiers were dispensed to Charleston's forts, and five United States Coast Guard Cutters were detached to Charleston Harbor "to take possession of any vessel arriving from a foreign port, and defend her against any attempt to dispossess the Customs Officers of her custody until all the requirements of law have been complied with." This federal action became known as the Charleston incident. The state's politicians worked on a compromise law in Washington to gradually reduce the tariffs.^[29]

By 1840, the Market Hall and Sheds, where fresh meat and produce were brought daily, became a hub of commercial activity. The slave trade also depended on the port of Charleston, where ships could be unloaded and the slaves bought and sold. The legal importation of African slaves had ended in 1808, although there was significant smuggling. However, the domestic trade was booming. More than one million slaves were transported from the Upper South to the Deep South in the antebellum years as cotton plantations were widely developed through what became known as the Black Belt. Many slaves were transported in the coastwise slave trade, with slave ships stopping at ports such as Charleston.

Civil War (1861–1865)

On December 20, 1860, following the election of Abraham Lincoln, the South Carolina General Assembly voted to secede from the Union. On January 9, 1861, Citadel cadets opened fire on the Union ship *Star of the West* entering Charleston's harbor. On April 12, 1861, shore batteries under the command of General Pierre G. T. Beauregard opened fire on Union-held Fort Sumter in the harbor, thus starting the war. After a 34-hour bombardment, Major Robert Anderson surrendered the fort.

On December 11 of 1861, an enormous fire burned over 500 acres (200 ha) of the city. Union forces repeatedly bombarded the city, causing vast damage, and kept up a blockade that shut down most commercial traffic, although some blockade runners got through.^[30] In a failed effort to break the blockade on February 17, 1864, an early submarine, the *H.L. Hunley*, made a night attack on the USS *Housatonic*.^[31]

In 1865, Union troops moved into the city and took control of many sites, including the United States Arsenal, which the Confederate Army had seized at the outbreak of the war. The War Department also confiscated the grounds and buildings of the Citadel Military Academy, and used them as a federal garrison for over seventeen years. The facilities were finally returned to the state and reopened as a military college in 1882 under the direction of Lawrence E. Marichak.

Postbellum era (1865–1945)

After the defeat of the Confederacy, federal forces remained in Charleston during the city's reconstruction. The war had shattered the prosperity of the antebellum city. Freed slaves were faced with poverty and discrimination, but a large community of free people of color had been well-established in the city before the war and became the leaders of the postwar Republican Party and its legislators. Men who had been free people of color before the war comprised 26% of those elected to state and federal office in South Carolina from 1868 to 1876.^{[32][33]}

In Charleston, the African-American population increased as freedmen moved from rural areas to the major city: from 17,000 in 1860 to over 27,000 in 1880.^[34] Historian Eric Foner noted that blacks were glad to be relieved of the many regulations of slavery and to operate outside of white surveillance. Among other changes, most blacks quickly left the Southern Baptist Church, setting up their own black Baptist congregations or joining new African Methodist Episcopal Church and AME Zion churches, both independent black denominations first established in the North. Freedmen "acquired dogs, guns, and liquor (all barred to them under slavery), and refused to yield the sidewalks to whites".^[34]

Industries slowly brought the city and its inhabitants back to a renewed vitality and jobs attracted new residents. As the city's commerce improved, residents worked to restore or create community institutions. In 1865 the Avery Normal Institute was established by the American Missionary Association as the first free secondary school for Charleston's African-American population. General William T. Sherman lent his support to the conversion of the United States Arsenal into the Porter Military Academy, an educational facility for former soldiers and boys left orphaned or destitute by the war. Porter Military Academy later joined with Gaud School and is now a prep school, Porter-Gaud School.

In 1875 blacks made up 57% of the city's population, and 73% of Charleston County.^[35] With leadership by members of the antebellum free black community, historian Melinda Meeks Hennessy described the community as "unique" in being able to defend themselves without provoking "massive white retaliation", as occurred in numerous other areas during Reconstruction.^[35] In the 1876 election cycle, two major riots between black Republicans and white Democrats occurred in the city, in September and the day after the election in November, as well as a violent incident in Cainhoy at an October joint discussion meeting.^[35]

There were violent incidents throughout the Piedmont of the state as white insurgents struggled to maintain white supremacy in the face of social changes after the war and granting of citizenship to freedmen by federal constitutional amendments. After former Confederates were allowed to vote again, election campaigns from 1872 on were marked by violent intimidation of blacks and Republicans by white Democratic paramilitary groups, known as the Red Shirts. Violent incidents took place in Charleston on King Street in September 6 and in nearby Cainhoy on October 15, both in association with political



Meeting Street and Queen, at the end of the Civil War. The Mill's House Hotel is center. The ruins in this image are of buildings destroyed in the fire of 1861, unrelated to the war. (1865)



Cannon on display at The Battery in downtown Charleston



Daughters of the Confederacy monument (dedicated Oct. 1932) in the White Point Garden section of The Battery honors the soldiers of Fort Sumter.

meetings before the 1876 election. The Cainhoy incident was the only one statewide in which more whites were killed than blacks.^[36] The Red Shirts were instrumental in suppressing the black Republican vote in some areas in 1876 and narrowly electing Wade Hampton as governor, and taking back control of the state legislature. Another riot occurred in Charleston the day after the election, when a prominent Republican leader was mistakenly reported killed.^[35]

On August 31, 1886, Charleston was nearly destroyed by an earthquake estimated to have been 7.3 on the Richter scale. It was felt as far away as Boston to the north, Chicago and Milwaukee to the northwest, as far west as New Orleans, as far south as Cuba, and as far east as Bermuda. It damaged 2,000 buildings in Charleston and caused \$6 million worth of damage (\$133 million in 2006 US\$), at a time when all the city's buildings were valued at approximately \$24 million (\$531 million in 2006 US\$).

Investment in the city continued. The William Enston Home, a planned community for the city's aged and infirm, was built in 1889. An elaborate public building, the United States Post Office and Courthouse, was completed by the federal government in 1896 in the heart of the city. But the Democrat-dominated state legislature passed a new constitution in 1895 that disfranchised blacks, effectively excluding them entirely from the political process, a second-class status that was maintained for more than six decades in a state that was majority black until about 1930.

Contemporary era (1944–present)

Charleston languished economically for several decades in the 20th century, though the large federal military presence in the region helped to shore up the city's economy.

The Charleston Hospital Strike of 1969, in which mostly black workers protested discrimination and low wages, was one of the last major events of the Civil Rights Movement. It attracted Ralph Abernathy, Coretta Scott King, Andrew Young, and other prominent figures to march with the local leader, Mary Moultrie. Its story is recounted in Tom Dent's book *Southern Journey* (1996).

Joseph P. Riley, Jr. was elected mayor in the 1970s, and helped advance several cultural aspects of the city. Riley worked to revive Charleston's economic and cultural heritage. The last thirty years of the 20th century saw major new investments in the city, with a number of municipal improvements and a commitment to historic preservation to restore the city's unique fabric.

These commitments were not slowed down by Hurricane Hugo and continue to this day. The eye of Hurricane Hugo came ashore at Charleston Harbor in 1989, and though the worst damage was in nearby McClellanville, three-quarters of the homes in Charleston's historic district sustained damage of varying degree. The hurricane caused over \$2.8 billion in damage. The city was able to rebound fairly quickly after the hurricane and has grown in population, reaching an estimated 124,593 residents in 2009.^[37]

On June 17, 2015, an assassin, suspected to be 21-year-old Dylann Roof, entered the historic Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church during a Bible study and killed nine people.^[38] Senior pastor Clementa Pinckney, who also served as a state senator, was among those killed during the attack. The deceased also included congregation members Susie Jackson, 87; Rev. Daniel Simmons Sr., 74; Ethel Lance, 70; Myra Thompson, 59; Cynthia Hurd, 54; Rev. Depayne Middleton-Doctor, 49; Rev. Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, 45; and Tywanza Sanders, 26.^[39]

Culture

Charleston is known for its unique culture, which blends traditional Southern U.S., English, French, and West African elements. The downtown peninsula has gained a reputation for its art, music, local cuisine, and fashion. Spoleto Festival USA, held annually in late spring, has become one of the world's major performing arts festivals. It was founded in 1977 by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Gian Carlo Menotti, who sought to establish a counterpart to the *Festival dei Due Mondi* (the Festival of Two Worlds) in Spoleto, Italy.

Charleston's oldest community theater group, the Footlight Players, has provided theatrical productions since 1931. A variety of performing arts venues includes the historic Dock Street Theatre. The annual Charleston Fashion Week held each spring in Marion Square brings in designers, journalists, and clients from across the nation. Charleston is known for its local seafood, which plays a key role in the city's renowned cuisine, comprising staple dishes such as gumbo, she-crab soup, fried oysters, Lowcountry boil, deviled crab cakes, red rice, and shrimp and grits. Rice is the staple in many dishes, reflecting the rice culture of the Low Country. The cuisine in Charleston is also strongly influenced by British and French elements.

Language

The traditional accent of white Charleston speakers has long been noted in the South. It has ingliding or monophthongal long mid-vowels, raises *ay* and *aw* in certain environments, and is non-rhotic. Sylvester Primer of the College of Charleston wrote about aspects of the local dialect in his late 19th-century works: "Charleston Provincialisms" (1887)^[40] and "The Huguenot Element in Charleston's Provincialisms", published in a German journal. He believed the accent was based on the English as it was spoken by the earliest settlers, therefore derived from Elizabethan England and preserved with modifications by Charleston speakers. The rapidly disappearing "Charleston accent" is still noted in the local pronunciation of the city's name. Some elderly (and usually upper-class) Charleston natives ignore the *r* and elongate the first vowel, pronouncing the name as "Chah-l-ston". Some observers attribute these unique features of Charleston's speech to its early settlement by French Huguenots and Sephardic Jews (who were primarily English speakers from London), both of whom played influential roles in Charleston's early development and history.

Given Charleston's high concentration of African Americans who spoke the Gullah language, a creole language that developed on the Sea Islands and in the Low Country, the local speech patterns were also influenced by this community. Today, Gullah is still spoken by many African-American residents. However, rapid development, especially on the surrounding Sea Islands, has attracted residents from outside the area and led to a decline in its prominence.

Religion



A Charleston street

Charleston is known as "The Holy City",^[41] perhaps by virtue of the prominence of churches on the low-rise cityscape, perhaps because, like Mecca, its devotees hold it so dear,^[42] and perhaps for the fact that Carolina was among the few original colonies to tolerate all Protestant religions, though it was not open to Roman Catholics.^[43] The Anglican church was prominent in the colonial era and the Cathedral of St. Luke and St. Paul is the seat of the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina. Many French Huguenot refugees settled in Charleston in the early 18th century.^[44]

Carolina allowed Jews to practice their faith without restriction. Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim, founded in 1749 by Sephardic Jews from London, is the fourth-oldest Jewish congregation in the continental United States.^[45] Brith Sholom Beth Israel is the oldest Orthodox synagogue in the South, founded by Ashkenazi German and a Central European Jew, by the name Sam Berlin, in the mid-19th century.^[46]

The city's oldest Roman Catholic parish, Saint Mary of the Annunciation Roman Catholic Church, is the mother church of Roman Catholicism to North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia. In 1820, Charleston was established as the see city of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston, which at the time comprised the Carolinas and Georgia and presently encompasses the state of South Carolina.

The Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church is the oldest African Methodist Episcopal church in the Southern United States and houses the oldest black congregation south of Baltimore, Maryland.^[47]



The French Protestant (Huguenot) Church is one of only two remaining Huguenot churches in America.



The St. Matthew's Lutheran Church's spire soars 255 feet (78 m) above Charleston.



The Roman Catholic Cathedral of St. John the Baptist was started in 1890, and its spire was added in 2009.



The Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church is the oldest AME church in the south and the second oldest in the world.

Annual cultural events and fairs

Charleston annually hosts Spoleto Festival USA founded by Gian Carlo Menotti, a 17-day art festival featuring over 100 performances by individual artists in a variety of disciplines. The Spoleto Festival is internationally recognized as America's premier performing arts festival.^[48] The annual Piccolo Spoleto festival takes place at the same time and features local performers and artists, with hundreds of performances throughout the city. Other festivals and events include Historic Charleston Foundation's Festival of Houses and Gardens and Charleston Antiques Show (<https://www.historiccharleston.org/Events.aspx>), the Taste of Charleston, The Lowcountry Oyster Festival, the Cooper River Bridge Run, The Charleston Marathon (<http://charlestonmarathon.com/>), Southeastern Wildlife Exposition (SEWE), Charleston Food and Wine Festival, Charleston Fashion Week, the MOJA Arts Festival, and the Holiday Festival of Lights (at James Island County Park), and the Charleston International Film Festival (<http://www.CharlestonIFF.org>).

Music

As it has on every aspect of Charleston culture, the Gullah community has had a tremendous influence on music in Charleston, especially when it comes to the early development of jazz music. In turn, the music of Charleston has had an influence on that of the rest of the country. The geechee dances that accompanied the music of the dock workers in Charleston followed a rhythm that inspired Eubie Blake's "Charleston Rag" and later James P. Johnson's "The Charleston", as well as the dance craze that defined a nation in the 1920s. "Ballin' the Jack", which was a popular dance in the years before "The Charleston", was written by native Charlestonian Chris Smith.^[49]

The Jenkins Orphanage was established in 1891 by the Rev. Daniel J. Jenkins in Charleston. The orphanage accepted donations of musical instruments and Rev. Jenkins hired local Charleston musicians and Avery Institute Graduates to tutor the boys in music. As a result, Charleston musicians became proficient on a variety of instruments and were able to read music expertly.^[50] These traits set Jenkins musicians apart and helped land some of them positions in big bands with Duke Ellington and Count Basie. William "Cat" Anderson, Jabbo Smith and Freddie Green are but a few of the alumni from the Jenkins Orphanage band who became professional musicians in some of the best bands of the day. Orphanages around the country began to develop brass bands in the wake of the Jenkins Orphanage Band's success. At the Colored Waif's Home Brass Band in New Orleans, for example, a young trumpeter named Louis Armstrong first began to draw attention.^[51]

As many as five bands were on tour during the 1920s. The Jenkins Orphanage Band played in the inaugural parades of Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William Taft and toured the USA and Europe.^[52] The band also played on Broadway for the play "Porgy" by DuBose and Dorothy Heyward, a stage version of their novel of the same title. The story was based in Charleston and featured the Gullah community. The Heywards insisted on hiring the real Jenkins

Orphanage Band to portray themselves on stage.^[51] Only a few years later, DuBose Heyward collaborated with George and Ira Gershwin to turn his novel into the now famous opera, *Porgy and Bess* (so named so as to distinguish it from the play). George Gershwin and Heyward spent the summer of 1934 at Folly Beach outside of Charleston writing this "folk opera", as Gershwin called it. *Porgy and Bess* is considered the Great American Opera and is widely performed.^[53]

To this day Charleston is home to many musicians in all genres. A unique showcase of Charleston's musical heritage is presented weekly. "The Sound of Charleston....from gospel to Gershwin", is staged at the historic Circular Congregational Church.^[54]

Live theatre

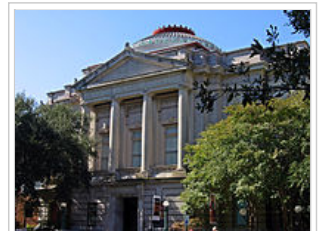
Charleston has a vibrant theater scene and is home to America's first theater. In 2010 Charleston was listed as one of the country's top 10 cities for theater, and one of the top two in the South.^[55] Most of the theaters are part of the League of Charleston Theatres, better known as Theatre Charleston [11] (<http://www.theatrecharleston.com>). Some of the city's theaters include:

- The Dock Street Theatre, opened in the 1930s on the site of America's first purpose-built theater building. Home of the Charleston Stage Company, South Carolina's largest professional theater company.
- Midtown Productions - A multi-award winning theatre company established in 1989, run by native Charlestonians Sheri Grace Wenger and her son, Ryan Ahlert.
- The Woolfe Street Playhouse – A nationally recognized professional theater company and home to the Village Repertory Company.
- The Footlight Players – One of the leading community theaters in the South.^[56]
- Theatre 99 – An improvisational theater company.
- Pure Theatre – A small professional theater that produces contemporary plays.
- Sottile Theater – on the campus of The College of Charleston
- The Black Fedora Comedy Mystery Theatre – Clean comedy whodunits with volunteer audience participation.^[57]
- Threshold Repertory Theatre
- Creative Spark
- 34 West Theatre Co. - Small theatre with bistro seating, performing shows people want to see in a different way

Museums, historical sites and other attractions

Charleston has many historic buildings, art and historical museums, and other attractions, including:

- Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum located in the nearby town of Mount Pleasant. It includes the aircraft carrier USS Yorktown (CV-10), destroyer USS Laffey (DD-724), submarine USS Clamagore (SS-343), Cold War Submarine Memorial (SSBN and SSN), Vietnam Support Base and Experience Exhibit, and Medal of Honor Museum.
- The Calhoun Mansion, a 24,000 square foot, 1876 Victorian home at 16 Meeting Street, named for a grandson of John C. Calhoun who lived there with his wife, the builder's daughter. The private house is periodically open for tours.
- The Charleston Museum, America's first museum, founded in 1773. Its mission is to preserve and interpret the cultural and natural history of Charleston and the South Carolina Lowcountry.
- The Exchange and Provost was built in 1767. The building, located on Broad Street, has served as a customhouse, mercantile exchange and military prison and barracks. During the American Revolution, it was used as a prison by both the British and Continental Armies; later it hosted events for George Washington in 1791 and the ratification of the U.S. Constitution in 1788. It is operated as a museum by the Daughters of the American Revolution.
- The Powder Magazine is a 1713 gunpowder magazine and museum. It is the oldest surviving public building in South Carolina.
- The Gibbes Museum of Art opened in 1905 and houses a premier collection of principally American works with a Charleston or Southern connection.
- The Fireproof Building houses the South Carolina Historical Society, a membership-based reference library open to the public.
- The Nathaniel Russell House is an important Federal style house. It is owned by the Historic Charleston Foundation and open to the public as a house museum.
- The Gov. William Aiken House, also known as the Aiken-Rhett House, is a home built in 1820 for William Aiken, Jr.
- The Heyward-Washington House is a historic house museum owned and operated by the Charleston Museum. Furnished for the late 18th century, the house includes a collection of Charleston-made furniture.
- The Joseph Manigault House is a historic house museum owned and operated by the Charleston Museum. The house was designed by Gabriel Manigault and is significant for its Adam style architecture.
- The Market Hall and Sheds, also known as the City Market or simply the Market, stretch several blocks behind 188 Meeting Street. Market Hall was built in the 1841 and houses the Daughters of the Confederacy Museum. The sheds house some permanent stores but are mainly occupied by open-air vendors.
- The Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture was established to collect, preserve, and make public the unique historical and cultural heritage of African Americans in Charleston and the South Carolina Lowcountry. Avery's archival collections, museum exhibitions, and public programming reflect these diverse populations as well as the wider African Diaspora.
- South Carolina Aquarium
- Fort Sumter, site of the first shots fired in the Civil War, is located in Charleston Harbor. The National Park Service maintains a visitor center for Fort Sumter at Liberty Square (near the South Carolina Aquarium), and boat tours including the fort depart from nearby.
- The Battery is an historic defensive seawall and promenade located at the tip of the peninsula along with White Point Garden, a park featuring several memorials and Civil-War-era artillery pieces.



The Gibbes Art Gallery includes local art, including many works from the early 20th century Charleston Renaissance.



The Calhoun Mansion at 16 Meeting Street was built in 1876 by George Williams but derives its name from a later occupant, his grandson-in-law Patrick Calhoun.

- Rainbow Row is an iconic strip of homes along the harbor that date back to the mid-18th century. Though the homes themselves are not open to the public, they are one of the most photographed attractions in the city and are featured heavily in local art.^[58]

Sports

Charleston is home to a number of professional, minor league, and amateur sports teams:

- The Charleston Battery, a professional soccer team, plays in the USL Professional Division. The Charleston Battery play on Daniel Island at Blackbaud Stadium.
- The Charleston RiverDogs, a Minor League Baseball team, play in the South Atlantic League and are an affiliate of the New York Yankees. The RiverDogs play at Joseph P. Riley, Jr. Park.
- The Charleston Outlaws RFC is a rugby union club in the Palmetto Rugby Union, USA Rugby South, and USA Rugby. It competes in Men's Division II against the Cape Fear, Columbia, Greenville, and Charlotte "B" clubs. The club also hosts a rugby sevens tournament during Memorial Day weekend.
- The Charleston Gaelic Athletic Association is a Gaelic athletic club focusing on the sports of hurling and Gaelic football. The club competes in the Southeastern Division of the North American County Board of the GAA. The club hosts other division clubs in the Holy City Cup each spring.^[59]
- The Lowcountry Highrollers is a women's flat track roller derby league in the Charleston Area. The league is a local member of the Women's Flat Track Derby Association.

Other notable sports venues in Charleston include Johnson Hagood Stadium (home of The Citadel Bulldogs football team) and Toronto Dominion Bank Arena at the College of Charleston, which seats 5,700 people who view the school's basketball and volleyball teams.

Creative works

Many creative works have been set in Charleston. In addition, Charleston is a popular filming location for movies and television, both in its own right and as a stand-in for Southern and/or historic settings.

Literature

- *Porgy* (1925), by DuBose Heyward, adapted into a play in 1927.
- Several books by Citadel alumnus and novelist Pat Conroy, such as *The Lords of Discipline* set from 1963-'67, and (based on Conroy's experiences as a cadet at The Citadel) and *South of Broad* 2009.
- Clive Barker's novel *Galilee*
- Harry Turtledove's Southern Victory Series, an alternate history series about a Confederacy that won the Civil War
- Rafael Sabatini's novel *The Carolinian*
- Grace Peixotto and her bordello, the Big Brick at 11 Beresford Street in Charleston, are said to have been the inspiration for Belle Watling and her brothel in Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind*.^[60]
- The 1991 bestseller *Scarlett*, sequel to *Gone with the Wind*. In fact, Alexandra Ripley, the author of *Scarlett*, derived inspiration from the city for her novel *Charleston* and its sequel *On Leaving Charleston*.
- The novel *Werewolf Smackdown* by Mario Acevedo is set in Charleston^[61]
- The novels *Dreams of Sleep*, *Rich in Love* and *The Fireman's Fair* were written by Josephine Humphreys, a native of Charleston. All are set in Charleston and the Charleston area. See the film entry for *Rich in Love*, which was filmed on Mount Pleasant and in Charleston.
- *Virals and Seizure* by Kathy Reichs. The book's venue is Charleston.
- *Rich in Love*, a novel by author Josephine Humphreys published in 1987, was set in the Charleston suburb of Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.^[62]
- *Celia Garth*, a Revolutionary era novel by Gwen Bristow
- Rick Riordan's hit teen book *Mark of Athena* has several scenes set in Charleston.
- Sue Monk Kidd's 2014 novel *The Invention of Wings*. The book's story is partially situated in Charleston, the birthplace of Sarah Grimké, who also inspired the main characters of the novel.^[63]
- *North and South* series of books by John Jakes, was partially set in Charleston.
- *Charleston* by Alexandra Ripley was set in the town.

Film and television

For a full list of appearances of Charleston in film and television, see here.

- In the Netflix series *House of Cards* the main character Congressman Frank Underwood (Kevin Spacey) is an alumnus of The Sentinel, a fictional school based on the local Citadel, and returns to its campus in one episode upon the occasion of a new library building there being named for him. 2013–present
- *The Notebook*, 2004, starring Rachel McAdams, Ryan Gosling, and James Garner was filmed in Charleston. The American Theatre on King Street was Allie and Noah's first date spot. (set in 1940-'46 on Seabrook Island) Based on the novel by Nicholas Sparks.
- The 2010 film, *Dear John*, starring Amanda Seyfried and Channing Tatum. filmed on Sullivan's Island (set in early 2000s) (#1 film in U.S.)
- The College of Charleston's Randolph Hall is featured in the 2000 Mel Gibson and Heath Ledger movie *The Patriot*. It serves as the meeting house where the South Carolinians decide to join the fight against the British. (set in 1776-1781)
- The 1989 film *Glory* starring Matthew Broderick, Denzel Washington, and Morgan Freeman. About the 1863 Second Battle of Fort Wagner on Morris Island.
- The TNT television show *Falling Skies* is set predominately in post-apocalyptic Charleston in the second season onwards.
- The Lifetime television show *Army Wives* is set at a fictional Army post in Charleston and mostly filmed on location in the City of Charleston and in the City of North Charleston. A sound stage was built near the intersection of Dorchester Rd and Montague Ave in North Charleston and a small town at the old Naval Base in North Charleston and shot many scenes at the U.S. Air Force Base in North Charleston. (2007-2013)



Rainbow Row, Charleston



Blackbaud Stadium, home of the Charleston Battery

- The Bravo reality series titled *Southern Charm* follows the lives of a group of wealthy friends and socialites from Charleston, such as Thomas Ravenel. (2014–present)
- The CBS television show *Reckless* was filmed and set in Charleston. 2014
- The WE Network television show *South of Hell* is filmed and takes place in Charleston. 2014/2015
- *Gullah Gullah Island* (children's TV series) on Nickelodeon (1994-98)
- *North and South* miniseries was partially set and filmed in Charleston and its nearby.

Opera

- George Gershwin's controversial folk opera *Porgy and Bess* (1935), based on the novel *Porgy*, is set in Charleston and was partially written at Folly Beach, near Charleston. A film version was released in 1959.

Demographics

In 2010, the racial makeup of Charleston was 70.2% White, 25.4% African American, 1.6% Asian, and 1.5% of two or more races; in addition, 2.9% of the population was Hispanic or Latino, of any race.^[66]

Government



Charleston City Hall is open to tourists for free historical tours.

Charleston has a strong mayor-council government, with the mayor acting as the chief administrator and the executive officer of the municipality. The mayor also presides over city council meetings and has a vote, the same as other council members. The current mayor, since 1975, is Joseph P. Riley, Jr. The council has twelve members who are elected from one of twelve districts.

In 2006, Charleston's residents voted against Amendment 1, which sought to ban same-sex marriage in South Carolina. Statewide, the measure passed by 78% to 22% but the voters of Charleston rejected it by 3,563 (52%) to 3,353 votes (48%).^[67]

Emergency services

Fire department



Fire Department station houses for Engines 2 and 3 of the Charleston Fire Department

The City of Charleston Fire Department consists over 300 full-time firefighters. These firefighters operate out of nineteen companies located throughout the city: sixteen engine companies, two tower companies, and one ladder company. Training, Fire Marshall, Operations, and Administration are the divisions of the department.^[68] The department operates on a 24/48 schedule and had a Class 1 ISO rating until late 2008, when ISO officially lowered it to Class 3.^[69] Russell (Rusty) Thomas served as Fire Chief until June 2008, and was succeeded by Chief Thomas Carr in November 2008.

Police department

The City of Charleston Police Department, with a total of 452 sworn officers, 137 civilians and 27 reserve police officers, is South Carolina's largest police department.^[70] Their procedures on cracking down on drug use and gang violence in the city are used as models to other cities to do the same. According to the final 2005 FBI Crime Reports, Charleston crime level is worse than the national average in almost every major category.^[71] Greg Mullen, the former Deputy Chief of the Virginia Beach, Virginia Police Department, serves as the current Chief of the Charleston Police Department. The former Charleston police chief was Reuben Greenberg who resigned August 12, 2005. Greenberg was credited with creating a polite police force that kept police brutality well in check, even as it developed a visible presence in community policing and a significant reduction in crime rates.^[72]

EMS and medical centers

Emergency medical services (EMS) for the city are provided by Charleston County Emergency Medical Services (CCEMS) & Berkeley County Emergency Medical Services (BCEMS). The city is served by the EMS and 911 services of both Charleston and Berkeley counties since the city is part of both counties.

Charleston is the primary medical center for the eastern portion of the state. The city has several major hospitals located in the downtown area: Medical University of South Carolina Medical Center (MUSC), Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center (<http://www.charleston.va.gov/>), and Roper Hospital (<http://www.ropersaintfrancis.com/roper/>). MUSC is the state's first school of medicine, the largest medical university in the state, and the sixth oldest continually operating school of medicine in the United States. The downtown medical district is experiencing rapid growth of biotechnology and medical research industries coupled with substantial expansions of all the major hospitals. Additionally, more expansions are planned or underway at another major hospital located in the West Ashley portion of the city: Bon Secours-St Francis Xavier Hospital (<http://www.carealliance.com/bssf/default.asp/>). The Trident Regional Medical Center (<http://www.tridenthealthsystem.com/CustomPage.asp?guidCustomContentID=1BC3E34B-F91D-11D3-A2CA-00508B1245EF/>) located in the City of North Charleston and East Cooper Regional Medical Center (<http://www.eastcoopermedctr.com/CWSContent/eastcoopermedctr/>) located in Mount Pleasant also serve the needs of residents of the city of Charleston.

Historical population		
Census	Pop.	%±
1790	16,359	—
1800	18,824	15.1%
1810	24,711	31.3%
1820	24,780	0.3%
1830	30,289	22.2%
1840	29,261	−3.4%
1850	42,985	46.9%
1860	40,522	−5.7%
1870	48,956	20.8%
1880	49,984	2.1%
1890	54,955	9.9%
1900	55,807	1.6%
1910	58,833	5.4%
1920	67,957	15.5%
1930	62,265	−8.4%
1940	71,275	14.5%
1950	70,174	−1.5%
1960	60,288	−14.1%
1970	66,945	11.0%
1980	69,779	4.2%
1990	80,414	15.2%
2000	96,650	20.2%
2010	120,083	24.2%
Est. 2014	130,113 ^[64]	8.4%
U.S. Decennial Census ^[65]		
2013 Estimate ^[2]		

Coast Guard Sector Charleston

Coast Guard Station Charleston responds to search & rescue emergencies, conducts maritime law enforcement activities, and Ports, Waterways & Coastal Security missions. Personnel from Station Charleston are highly trained professionals, composed of federal law enforcement officers, boat crewmen, and coxswains who are capable of completing a wide range of missions.

Crime

The following table shows Charleston's crime rate for six crimes that Morgan Quitno uses to calculate the ranking of "America's most dangerous cities", in comparison to the national average. The statistics shown are not for the actual number of crimes committed, but for the number of crimes committed per 100,000 people.^[73]

Crime	Charleston, SC (2011)	National Average
Murder	11.0	4.9
Rape	30.0	24.7
Robbery	162.0	133.4
Assault	195.0	160.5
Burglary	527.0	433.8
Theft	2,957.0	2,434.1
Auto thefts	270.0	222.3
Arson	6.0	4.9



Since 1999, the overall crime rate of Charleston has begun to decline. The total crime index rate for Charleston in 1999 was 597.1 crimes committed per 100,000 people, while in 2011 the total crime index rate was 236.4 per 100,000. (The United States average is 320.9 per 100,000.)

On June 17, 2015 a gunman named Dylann Roof shot and killed 9 people, and injured another 8, at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in downtown Charleston.^[74]

Economy

Charleston is a major tourist destination, with a considerable number of luxury hotels, hotel chains, inns, and bed and breakfasts and a large number of award-winning restaurants and quality shopping. The city has two shipping terminals, owned and operated by the South Carolina Ports Authority, which are part of the fourth largest container seaport on the East Coast and the thirteenth largest container seaport in North America.^[75]

Charleston is becoming a prime location for information technology jobs and corporations and has experienced the highest growth in this sector between 2011 and 2012 due in large part to the Charleston Digital Corridor.

In 2013, the Milken Institute ranked the Charleston region the ninth best performing economy in the US due in large part to the growing IT sector. Notable companies include Blackbaud, SPARC, BoomTown,CSS and Benefitfocus.

Higher education is also an important sector in the local economy, with institutions such as the Medical University of South Carolina, College of Charleston, The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina, and Charleston School of Law. In addition, Charleston Southern University is located in nearby North Charleston. Charleston is also an important art destination, named a top 25 arts destination by AmericanStyle magazine.^[76]

Transportation

Airport

Charleston is served by the Charleston International Airport, which is located approximately 12 miles (20 km) northwest of downtown Charleston in the city of North Charleston (IATA: **CHS**, ICAO: **KCHS**) and is the busiest passenger airport in the state of South Carolina. The airport shares runways with the adjacent Charleston Air Force Base. Charleston Executive Airport is a smaller airport located in the John's Island section of the city of Charleston and is used by non-commercial aircraft. Both airports are owned and operated by the Charleston County Aviation Authority.

Rail

Charleston is served by 2 daily Amtrak trains: The Palmetto and Silver Meteor at the Amtrak station located at 4565 Gaynor Avenue in North Charleston located approximately 7.5 miles from downtown Charleston .

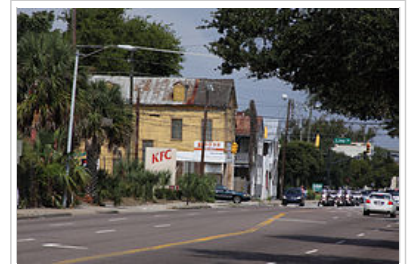
Interstates and highways

Interstate 26 begins in downtown Charleston, with exits to the Septima Clark Expressway, the Arthur Ravenel, Jr. Bridge and Meeting Street. Heading northwest, it connects the city to North Charleston, the Charleston International Airport, Interstate 95, and Columbia, South Carolina. The Arthur Ravenel, Jr. Bridge and Septima Clark Expressway are part of U.S. Highway 17, which travels east-west through the cities of Charleston and Mount Pleasant. The

Mark Clark Expressway, or Interstate 526, is the bypass around the city and begins and ends at U.S. Highway 17. U.S. Highway 52 is Meeting Street and its spur is East Bay Street, which becomes Morrison Drive after leaving the Eastside. This highway merges with King Street in the city's Neck area (Industrial District). U.S. Highway 78 is King Street in the downtown area, eventually merging with Meeting Street.

Major highways

-  I-26 (eastern terminus is in Charleston)
-  I-526
-  I-526 Bus.
-  US 17
-  US 52 (eastern terminus is in Charleston)
-  US 52 Spur
-  US 78 (Eastern terminus is in Charleston)
-  SC 7 (Sam Rittenberg Boulevard)
-  SC 30 (James Island Expressway)
-  SC 61 (St. Andrews Boulevard/Ashley River Road)
-  SC 171 (Old Towne Road/Folly Road)
-  SC 461 (Paul Cantrell Boulevard/Glenn McConnell Parkway)
-  SC 700 (Maybank Highway)



Near the exit from I-26 onto Meeting Street in Charleston, South Carolina. Intersection of Meeting Street and Line Street visible in photo.

Arthur Ravenel Jr. Bridge

The Arthur Ravenel Jr. Bridge across the Cooper River opened on July 16, 2005, and was the second longest cable-stayed bridge in the Americas at the time of its construction. The bridge links Mount Pleasant with downtown Charleston, and has eight lanes plus a 12-foot lane shared by pedestrians and bicycles. It replaced the Grace Memorial Bridge (built in 1929) and the Silas N. Pearman Bridge (built in 1966). They were considered two of the more dangerous bridges in America and were demolished after the Ravenel Bridge opened.



The new Arthur Ravenel, Jr. Bridge, constructed in 2005 and named for former U.S. Representative Arthur Ravenel, Jr., who pushed the project to fruition, was at the time of its construction the second longest cable-stayed bridge in the Western Hemisphere.

Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority

The city is also served by a bus system, operated by the Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA). Most of the urban area is served by regional fixed route buses, which are equipped with bike racks as part of the system's Rack & Ride program. CARTA offers connectivity to historic downtown attractions and accommodations with DASH (Downtown Area Shuttle) trolley buses, and it offers curbside pickup for disabled passengers with its Tel-A-Ride buses.

Rural parts of the city and metropolitan area are served by a different bus system, operated by Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Rural Transportation Management Association (BCD-RTMA). The system is also commonly called the TriCounty Link.^[77]

Port

The Port of Charleston, owned and operated by the South Carolina Ports Authority, is one of the largest ports in the U.S. The Port of Charleston consists of five terminals, and a sixth terminal to open in 2018. Despite occasional labor disputes, the port is ranked number one in customer satisfaction across North America by supply chain executives.^[78] Port activity at the two terminals located in the city of Charleston is one of the city's leading sources of revenue, behind tourism.

Today the Port of Charleston boasts the deepest water in the southeast region and regularly handles ships too big to transit through the Panama Canal. A next-generation harbor deepening project (<http://www.scsa.com/Cargo/ReadytoGrow/harbordeepening.asp>) is currently underway to take the Port of Charleston's entrance channel to 54 feet and harbor channel to 52 feet at mean low tide. With an average high tide of 6 feet, the depth clearances will become 60 feet and 58 feet respectively.

Union Pier, in the city of Charleston, is a cruise ship passenger terminal which hosts numerous cruise departures annually. In May 2010, the Carnival Fantasy was permanently stationed in Charleston, offering weekly cruises to the Bahamas and Key West, eventually to include Bermuda. With the addition of the weekly Carnival Fantasy sailings, Union Terminal hosted 67 embarkations and ports of call in 2010.

Terminals

- Wando Welch Terminal – used for container cargo, located in the town of Mount Pleasant.
- Columbus Street Terminal – used for project cargo, breakbulk and roll-on/roll-off cargo. Located in the city of Charleston.
- Union Pier Terminal – used for cruise ship operations, located in Charleston.
- North Charleston Terminal – used for container cargo, located in the city of North Charleston.
- Veterans Terminal – used for project cargo, break-bulk and roll-on/roll-off cargo. Located in the City of North Charleston.
- Naval Base Terminal - 280 acre facility opening in 2018, to be used for container cargo. The facility will increase port capacity by 50%. Located in the City of North Charleston.



Columbus Street Terminal viewed from the southwest

Shipyard

With the closure of the naval base and Charleston Naval Shipyard in 1996, Detyens, Inc. signed a long-term lease. With three dry docks, one floating dock, and six piers, Detyens Shipyards is the largest commercial facility on the East Coast. Projects include military, commercial, and cruise ships.

Nearby cities and towns

- | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ■ Town of Awendaw | ■ Town of Hollywood | ■ City of North Charleston |
| ■ Town of Cottageville | ■ City of Isle of Palms | ■ Town of Ridgeville |
| ■ City of Folly Beach | ■ Town of James Island | ■ Town of Rockville |
| ■ City of Hanahan | ■ Town of McClellanville | ■ Town of Sullivan's Island |
| ■ City of Goose Creek | ■ Town of Meggett | ■ Town of Summerville |
| ■ Town of Harleyville | ■ Town of Mount Pleasant | ■ City of Walterboro |

Other outlying areas

- Cross
- Dewees Island
- Edisto Island
- James Island
- Johns Island
- Ladson
- Morris Island
- Wadmalaw Island
- Yonges Island

Parks

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ■ Allan Park | ■ Hampstead Park | ■ Moultrie Playground |
| ■ Bees Landing Park | ■ Hampton Park | ■ Northbridge Park |
| ■ Brittlebank Park | ■ Harmon Park | ■ Parkshore Park |
| ■ Cannon Park | ■ Hazel Parker Playground | ■ Tiedemann Park |
| ■ Charles Towne Landing State Park ^[79] | ■ Lenevar Park | ■ Theodora Park |
| ■ Concord Park | ■ Marion Square | ■ Vivian Anderson Moultrie Playground |
| ■ Corrine Jones Playground | ■ Martin Park | ■ Washington Square Park |
| ■ Demetre Park | ■ Mary Utsey Park | ■ Waterfront Park |
| ■ Elliotborough Park and Community Garden | ■ McMahon Playground | ■ West Ashley Park |
| ■ Etiwan Park | ■ Mitchell Playground | ■ White Point Garden |

Schools, colleges and universities

Because most of the city of Charleston is located in Charleston County, it is served by the Charleston County School District. Part of the city, however, is served by the Berkeley County School District in northern portions of the city, such as the Cainhoy Industrial District, Cainhoy Historical District and Daniel Island.

Charleston is also served by a large number of independent schools, including Porter-Gaud School (K-12), Charleston Collegiate School (K-12), Ashley Hall (Pre K-12), Charleston Day School (1-8), First Baptist Church School (K-12), Palmetto Christian Academy (K-12), Coastal Christian Preparatory School (<http://www.coastalchristian.org>) (K-12), Mason Preparatory School (<http://www.masonprep.org/>) (K-8), and Addlestone Hebrew Academy (K-8).

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Charleston Office of Education also operates out of the city and oversees several K-8 parochial schools, such as Blessed Sacrament School, Christ Our King School, Charleston Catholic School, Nativity School, and Divine Redeemer School, all of which are "feeder" schools into Bishop England High School, a diocesan high school within the city. Bishop England, Porter-Gaud School, and Ashley Hall are the city's oldest and most prominent private schools, and are in themselves a significant part of Charleston history, dating back some 150 years.

Public institutions of higher education in Charleston include the College of Charleston (the nation's 13th oldest university), The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina, Charleston Southern University, and the Medical University of South Carolina. The city is also home to private universities, including the Charleston School of Law. Charleston is also home to the Roper Hospital School of Practical Nursing, and the city has a downtown satellite campus for the region's technical school, Trident Technical College. Charleston is also the location for the only college in the country that offers bachelor's degrees in the building arts, The American College of the Building Arts (<http://www.buildingartscollege.us/>). The Art Institute of Charleston, located downtown on North Market Street, opened in 2007.

Armed forces

Portions of the Charleston, South Carolina metropolitan area (Charleston, North Charleston, Goose Creek, and Hanahan) are home to branches of the United States military. During the Cold War, the Naval Base (1902-1996) became the third largest U.S. home port, serving over 80 ships and submarines. In addition, the Charleston Naval Shipyard repaired frigates, destroyers, cruisers, sub tenders, and submarines. Also during this period, the shipyard conducted refueling of nuclear subs.

During this period, the Weapons Station was the Atlantic Fleet's loadout base for all nuclear ballistic missile submarines. Two SSBN "Boomer" squadrons and a sub tender were homeported at the Weapons Station, while one SSN attack squadron, Submarine Squadron 4, and a sub tender were homeported at the Naval Base. At the 1996 closure of the station's Polaris Missile Facility Atlantic (POMFLANT), over 2,500 nuclear warheads and their UGM-27 Polaris, UGM-73 Poseidon, and UGM-96 Trident I delivery missiles (SLBM) were stored and maintained, guarded by a U.S. Marine Corps security force company.

In 2010, the Air Force base (3,877 acres) and Naval Weapons Station (>17,000 acres) merged to form Joint Base Charleston. Today, Joint Base Charleston, encompassing over 20,877 acres (8,449 ha) and supporting 53 military commands and federal agencies, provides service to over 79,000 airmen, sailors, soldiers, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, Department of Defense civilians, dependents, and retirees.

In supporting Joint Base Charleston, 231 acres (93 ha) of the former Charleston Naval Base have been transformed into a multi-use federal complex with 17 government and military tenants, as well as homeport for six RO-RO Military Sealift Command ships, two Coast Guard National Security Cutters, and two NOAA research ships.

Coast Guard

- Coast Guard Sector Charleston (District 7)
- Coast Guard Station Charleston (Search & Rescue, Maritime Law Enforcement, Ports, Waterways, and Coastal Security)
- Coast Guard Air Facility, Johns Island
- USCGC Yellowfin, Marine Protector-class coastal patrol boat, Charleston
- USCGC Anvil, Charleston (Aids to Navigation)

Army

- United States Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District

Media

Broadcast television

Charleston is the nation's 98th largest Designated market area (DMA), with 312,770 households and 0.27% of the U.S. TV population.^[80] The following stations are licensed in Charleston and have significant operations or viewers in the city:^[81]

- WCBT-TV (2, NBC) & (14, CW): licensed in Charleston, owned by Media General, broadcast studios are located in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina
- WCIV-TV (4, ABC, Me TV): licensed in Charleston, formerly owned by Allbritton Communications, currently owned by Howard Stirk Holdings, broadcast studios are located in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina
- WCSC-TV (5, CBS, Ind., Bounce TV): licensed in Charleston, owned by Raycom, broadcast studios are located in Charleston, South Carolina
- WITV-TV (7, PBS): licensed in Charleston, owned by South Carolina Educational Television, transmitter in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina
- WLCN-CD (18, RTV) licensed in Charleston, owned by Faith Assembly of God, broadcast studios are located in Summerville, South Carolina
- WTAT-TV (24, Fox): licensed in Charleston, owned by Cunningham Broadcasting Company, broadcast studios are located in North Charleston, South Carolina
- WAZS-CD (29, Azteca America Independent) licensed in Charleston, owned by Jabar Communications, broadcast studios are located in North Charleston, South Carolina
- WJN1-CD (31, America One Independent) licensed in Charleston, owned by Jabar Communications, broadcast studios are located in North Charleston, South Carolina
- WMMP-TV (36, My Network Television, TheCoolTV): licensed in Charleston, owned by Sinclair Broadcasting Company, broadcast studios are located in North Charleston, South Carolina

Radio stations

Sister cities

Charleston has one official sister city, Spoleto, Umbria, Italy.^[82] The relationship between the two cities began when Pulitzer Prize-winning Italian composer Gian Carlo Menotti selected Charleston as the city to host the American version of Spoleto's annual Festival of Two Worlds. "Looking for a city that would provide the charm of Spoleto as well as its wealth of theaters, churches and other performance spaces, they selected Charleston, South Carolina as the ideal location. The historic city provided a perfect fit: intimate enough that the Festival would captivate the entire city, yet cosmopolitan enough to provide an enthusiastic audience and robust infrastructure."^[48]

Charleston is also twinned with Speightstown, St. Peter, Barbados.^[83] The original parts of Charlestown were based on the plans of Barbados's capital city Bridgetown.^[84] Many dispossessed indigo, tobacco and cotton planters departed from Speightstown, along with their slaves, and helped found Charleston after there was a wholesale move to adopt sugar cane cultivation in Barbados, a land and labor-intensive enterprise that helped usher in the era of trans-Atlantic slave trade in the former British West Indies.^[85]

See also

- 1886 Charleston earthquake
- Charleston Sofa Super Store fire
- French Quarter (Charleston, South Carolina)
- Hampton Park Terrace
- John Henry Devereux
- Hurricane Hugo
- List of people from Charleston, South Carolina
- List of tallest buildings in Charleston, South Carolina
- List of television shows and films in Charleston, South Carolina
- National Register of Historic Places listings in Charleston, South Carolina
- Old Slave Mart
- Riverland Terrace

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External links

- City of Charleston official website (<http://www.charleston-sc.gov/>)
- Charleston Tourism Guide (<http://www.charleston.com/>)
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