

Guide to the Charleston Area

(for Officer NNPTC Students, but likely useful for any Navy—or even non-Navy—in the Charleston Area)

I. NNPTC	2
Before you go.....	2
Directions to NNPTC.....	2
Checking in.....	3
Uniforms	3
II. The Charleston Area.....	4
Getting Around	4
Househunting	4
Settling in, Shopping.....	6
Bars and Nightlife	7
Places to Eat.....	9
Sports/Outdoors	11
Culture/History	12
Events.....	12
Out of Town.....	13
Appendix: Useful Numbers/Hours	13
Naval Weapons Station Charleston	13
Charleston Air Force Base	14

I. NNPTC

Before you go

Contact the Housing Office (800-362-2399; their very useful website is <https://chssun5.ssg.navy.mil/newhousing/>) and ask for a “Welcome Aboard” packet...it will include a map of the area and some apartment guides (although similar information is available online). [see “Househunting” under “The Charleston Area” for more info]

Check to make sure your **security clearance** is current. Lots of people were held up, unable to start nuke school until their security clearance came through...so do the work early to make sure yours is squared away. If you’re not sure, try calling the ADOD (Assistant Director of the Officer Department, pronounced “A-dahd”) office at (843) 574-8113...the best times to call are 0900-1100 or 1300-1500 (earlier tends to be busy with people checking in, and mid-day people tend to be at lunch). If, for whatever reason, your security clearance is not up to date, you must be your own advocate to get it taken care of—don’t just sit around and wait for someone else to fix it. Be the squeaky wheel to get the grease.

Directions to NNPTC

From the South, you’ll probably be heading up I-95, the main North/South Corridor. You have the choice of either switching to highway 17 near the Georgia/South Carolina border (which is less distance) or going the long way up to I-26 and taking that into Charleston. Apparently both routes take the same amount of time; it just depends on whether you want a fast, easy interstate drive or a slower, more scenic drive. If you take I-26, just follow the directions below for “From the North.”

If you’re taking 17, follow it up into Charleston, and follow the signs to go on **I-26 North** (towards North Charleston). Get off a few exits later on **I-526 East** (towards Mount Pleasant), and make a **left off the North Rhett** exit. Continue along for a mile or so, then make a **right on Red Bank Road** (it’s about the third or fourth light). Be warned of two things: near the second light, there is a speed trap where the speed limit drops to 35; also, at Remount Road, there is a sign that reads “Naval Weapons Station,” but that leads you to the opposite side of the base (near Prototype, not NNPTC). After you make a right onto Red Bank, follow the directions below...

From the North, take I-26 into Charleston. Get off on the **US-78/52 East exit #205B** towards Goose Creek; follow US-78 (University Blvd.) until you get to the highway intersection; you’ll see signs leading to “Naval Weapons Station.” Follow this **left onto NAD Road**. At the first light, take a **right onto Snake River Road**. This will turn into Red Bank Road...

On Red Bank Road, continue straight, as you’ll go through a “gate” (there isn’t any checkpoint, but there is a sign that says “Welcome to NAVWEPSTA Charleston” or something like that). **Continue past three stoplights**; the final stoplight will have a sign for “Captain Robert’s Dive,” a fast-food court. **Turn left at the next turn-in point**; there is a sign on the right reading “NNPTC.” You’ll have to show your ID (either a NNPTC badge or military ID) to the guards; they’ll generally only let in vehicles that have military stickers.

Checking in

You can “check in” to **get your orders stamped at any time**; just report to the quarterdeck, and they’ll direct you to the Master-at-Arms’ office. If the building is closed, go to the Activity Complex across the courtyard. However, your real administrative check-in should take place during normal working hours at the **ADOD office**, room P312. There, you will be printed up a green “officer student” badge, and handle the rest of your check in (travel claims, etc.). **Here’s what to bring:**

- Original orders (stamped with your departure date if you had TAD)
- PIM or Fitrep from your TAD
- Medical/dental records,
- Oath of office
- Local address and phone number

If you don’t yet have a military sticker on your car, go get one at Pass/Badge Office (right near the entrance to the Weapons Station, in the same building as PSD...they can give you directions at the ADOD’s office). Once you have a sticker, write down your sticker ID number and **visit the Master-at-Arms for a NNPTC “commuter student” sticker**. This will let you park in all of the parking lots, except for those designated as “staff” parking.

Uniforms

You’ll wear **service khakis** (pretty much everybody wears short-sleeved CNT or Poly/Wool) Monday through Thursday, and **“dress uniform” (either whites or SDBs) on Fridays**. Note that in lieu of the SDB jacket, you can usually wear the relaxed jacket, with either the combination cover or a black garrison cover. Charleston switches from whites to blues late—about November 1st. On weekends and after 1600, you can wear appropriate civilian attire (no PT gear, flip-flops, and the like).

There is a small uniform shop on base (Bldg 771, 843-764-7735/7314), but most officer uniform items need to be ordered online (free shipping!). They do tailoring, and have a relatively slow, but convenient dry cleaning service. You can also get command ballcaps for \$12.

If you’re looking for uniforms, also check out the Thrift Shop run by the Navy Wives’ Club (Bldg 2333, near the Optical Clinic, behind the Exchange); they keep odd hours (Tues/Thurs 1000 to 1400 and Sat 0900-1400; call 843-764-7136 to confirm), but you can get some great bargains. For example, you can sometimes find peacoats for \$20! You will have to get gold buttons and shoulderboard loops sewn on (~\$15 on base, not including the cost of the buttons and shoulderboards, which one can often find at the Thrift Shop as well) to transform it into an officer reefer...but it’s still a fraction of what it would cost if you bought it new.

II. The Charleston Area

Getting Around

- Downtown Charleston is at the tip of a peninsula, between the Ashley River (on the West/South) and the Cooper River (on the East/North). Lord Ashley Cooper sure had an ego, didn't he?
- The main arteries running through the Charleston area are interstates 526 and 26. I-526 connects West Ashley, North Charleston, and Mount Pleasant. I-26 runs up the Charleston peninsula, connecting downtown with North Charleston, I-526, and the rest of the state.
- US-17 has signals throughout, and is thus slower than the interstates (26 and 526); it runs all the way from Mount Pleasant (at the far North/East, continuing on to Georgetown and Myrtle Beach) to I-95 (towards Savannah, GA).
- Be prepared for some of the joys of South Carolina driving: people often drive at or below the speed limit in the left lane; people slow way down before making turns; and nearly all of the streets have small, hard-to-read signs, if any at all.

“There's always at least one car broken down on the side of the road on the way into work...and I think they get extra points if they leave the car on the bridge.”

—CDR Brian “Hinks” Hinkley (PXO, class 0402)

Househunting

Note that “distance to base” varies a lot, since the time it takes you doesn't always correspond to the physical distance—because of traffic lights, roads, etc...for example, it's much faster to get to base from I-526 (using North Rhett Ave.) than highway 78/52 (“Rivers Ave.”), since the latter has more traffic and stoplights.

Here are the major communities people live in:

- Goose Creek



This is the area closest to base; the area immediately around the base is kind of a dump (the apartment complexes look like old motels, the shops are mostly bail bonds places and thrift stores, etc.), but northwest Goose Creek, especially the “Crowfield Plantation” area, gets nicer (a little more suburb-y, with tree-lined avenues, nicer stores, etc.), and takes about 15-20 minutes to get to base. (Coventry Green and Windsor Place are the two biggest apartment complexes in Crowfield Planation; there are also a number of houses for rent.) Atlantic Palms is also a nice apartment complex that is close to base, although in the western (not north-western) direction.

- Hanahan

Hanahan is almost as close as Goose Creek, although it has fewer apartments and houses. Beware that the bottom end (near 526) has a paper mill, which smells really bad! (Depending on the wind, you can smell the paper mill all around Charleston.) The Audubon Park apartments are technically in Hanahan, although they're right across the street (so to speak) from the Greenridge North Charleston places (FYI, the train passes right next to Audubon Park, so it's not a good place for light sleepers).

- North Charleston

A lot of people at Nuke School live in North Charleston, especially near 78/52 (also called "Rivers Avenue") and Greenridge Rd.; this area is about 15-20 minutes from the base. Rivers Ave. is basically a big, long strip mall, and thus has a lot of stores (Best Buy, Blockbuster, Bed Bath & Beyond, etc.), although it's a bit frustrating to drive on (the traffic can be bad, and there are a lot of traffic lights). One nice thing about North Charleston, however, is its location: about halfway between the base and Downtown. Northwestern North Charleston (behind the airport near "Dorchester"), however, is farther from base (at least 30 minutes) because the roads aren't that great.

- Downtown

This is where the "action" is: most of the cool bars, restaurants, etc., as well as the College of Charleston. Downtown is great if you like being able to walk to places (and not worry about cab rides back from bars). You won't have as much space as out in the suburbs, however, and parking can be a problem. There aren't really any big "apartment complexes," so you have to call up places individually. Depending on how close one lives to the freeway, one can apparently get to base in 25-30 minutes. If I had it to do over again, I would have tried to live downtown—just be forewarned that finding a place can be more difficult.

- Mount Pleasant

This is a nice suburb; a little bit yuppie, but it has lots of nice stores, restaurants, etc. It's also the most affluent community (lowest crime rate, highest income, etc.). It's also close to the beach. If one lives close to 526 (e.g. in the River Oaks, Southampton, and Alexan Belle Hall apartment complexes), it takes as little as 25 minutes to get to base; other locations that are further from 526 can take at least 30, up to 40 minutes. Like North Charleston, Mount Pleasant is also close to Downtown (maybe about 15 minutes). It's probably one of the nicest places to live, although you do pay slightly more and it's slightly farther from base than North Charleston or Goose Creek. Oh, and in case you're wondering, there is no mount—indeed, not even a hill—in Mount Pleasant.

- West Ashley

Like Mount Pleasant, this is a nice suburb, although not quite as yuppie. It seems to be a favorite of locals (as opposed to people who recently moved to the area). Once again, if one

lives close to 526, the base can be quite close (I'm told as little as 20 minutes). Downtown is also quite close, as is Folly Beach.

- Summerville, James Island, etc.

These are all farther away, but a few people found nice houses to buy/rent that justified the extra commute. Daniel's Island, between Mount Pleasant and Hanahan, just recently started building homes and apartments, so you might also consider living there.

Some good resources for househunting:

- <https://chssun5.ssg.navy.mil/newhousing/> is the Naval Weapons Station Charleston Housing Department Home Page; check out the useful map at <https://chssun5.ssg.navy.mil/newhousing/maplocator.htm>
- <http://www.apartmentguide.com/> includes information about most of the major apartment complexes, along with quotes, photos, etc.
- <http://reslife.cofc.edu/offcampushousing/offcampushousing.html> is a College of Charleston guide to off-campus housing, which can be especially useful if you plan to live downtown
- One classmate found a great "carriage house" (what used to be a barn/servant's quarters that is now rented out) downtown on <http://www.rent.com>
- Another classmate found a great deal living in a big house in Goose Creek by finding a roommate at <http://www.roommates.com>
- To rent a house (often an economical option for groups of three or more; there are usually a lot of houses available in Crowfield Plantation in Goose Creek), try contacting the following rental companies:
 - R&B Properties, Inc., 1710 B Trolley Rd., Summerville, SC 29485, (843) 873-4911; fax (843) 851-2559, www.rbproperties.com
 - P&L Properties, 1801 Old Trolley Rd., Summerville, SC 29485, (843) 875-0444
 - Agent Owned Realty, see www.agentowned.com for a list of offices, for example, their Goose Creek office is at 100 Crowfield Blvd., Goose Creek, SC 29445 (843) 572-0004 or toll-free at (800) 664-3229.

Settling in, Shopping

Major Shopping Areas:

- There's a big mall on **Rivers Ave**, along with lots of other stores (Best Buy, Target, Wal Mart, you name it—it's on Rivers)
- **Mount Pleasant's Towne Centre** is a more hoity-toity mall, with a fake "small town" feel
- On the other side of the rivers, in West Ashley, is the **Citadel Mall**, which has much the same stores as the Rivers Mall.
- The **Exchange** on base is worth going to for good deals, as well as the Thrift Store. The **Charleston Air Force Base** also has a BX that's worth checking out.
- **Downtown**, especially King Street, has a bunch of upscale stores. Market Street has a covered market with lots of touristy stuff.

Furniture:

- Sofa Super Store: (843) 863-1211, www.sofasuperstore.com, 8551 Rivers Ave., North Charleston, SC 29406.
- Rooms to Go (843) 553-5166, 7600 Rivers Ave, North Charleston...I had a bad experience with delivery, but they have some great deals. Remember that you don't have to get the whole "room"—they'll also sell individual pieces of furniture, or let you mix-and-match. [\$79/room delivery, or \$59 for an individual sofa or bed]
- Rhodes Furniture (843) 572-0440, www.rhodesfurniture.com, 8570 Rivers Ave., North Charleston, SC 29406. [Some nice furniture, somewhat more expensive than other places...\$70 flat delivery fee]
- The Mattress Firm – a good place to get mattresses; you can usually bargain them down a bit (and they often run sales); various locations.

Groceries:

- West and Mid-Atlantic Coasters won't find the familiar Safeway or Albertson's here. Instead, say hello to **Food Lion**, **Harris Teeter**, **Piggly Wiggly**, and **Bi-Lo**.
- The **Commissary** is of course a great place for deals, despite their not-always-convenient hours (such as being closed on Mondays...see "Appendix"). Also check out the somewhat larger **Air Force Base Commissary**, which may actually be closer to where you live.
- If you want fancy produce, check out Earth Fare (an organic foods place), Whole Foods (in Mt. Pleasant), and Harris Teeter (which has both fancy stuff as well as ordinary groceries). Harris Teeter is pretty much the only big grocery store downtown—there's one out on East Bay St.
- **Farmers' Markets** are not only a good place to get produce, but are often a fun hangout/date, since they often have music, art, etc. Mount Pleasant's is on Tuesdays, 4 pm-dusk April-Oct at Moultrie Middle School on 645 Coleman Blvd, (843) 884-8517 ext. 578. Downtown Charleston holds one at Marion Square on Saturdays 8am to 1pm March-December, (843) 724-7305 or 7309. Goose Creek has its farmers' market on Mondays 2-6 pm at Recreation Center on Old Moncks Corner Road, (843) 572-1321 ext. 423. Other South Carolina Farmers' Markets can be found at <http://www.fruitstands.com/states/scarolin.htm>

Bars and Nightlife

As it's full of college students and other young people who want to have a good time, Chucktown is chock full of bars. Here is a list of those we visited (in no particular order), and what they are like:

- Tommy Condon's – fun, albeit tursity, Irish bar (and halfway decent restaurant) which features an Irish band on most evenings, who play Celtic folk tunes as well as rock favorites. 160 Church St, 577-3818
- Bull and Finch – 4-story British-themed bar; each level has a slightly different feel; they often have comedy shows with special military rates. 2070 Sam Rittenberg Blvd, 766-7429 (also one in Mount Pleasant Towne Centre, 884-6455).
- Charlie's Little Bar – above an abandoned church; so hip that its entrance is something of a secret (you have to go in through the back); attracts a 20 to 30-something "chill" crowd. 141 East Bay St, 723-6242.

- Meritage – tapas bar by day, and yuppie meet market by night...a slightly older, more professional crowd than most of the Charleston bars. 235 East Bay St, 723-8181
- Wet Willie’s – they have ice machines running with pretty much any frosty beverage you could imagine (a favorite is “Attitude Improvement”)...they also have pool tables and a dance floor. Attracts a mixed crowd, both in age and race. Apparently part of a small Southeast chain. 209 East Bay Street, 853-5650, www.wetwillies.com
- Village Tavern – cool little bar in Mount Pleasant, which has decent food, a pool table, sports on TV, and live bands. 1055 Johnnie Dodds Blvd., 884-6311, www.village-tavern.com
- City Bar – probably the closest thing to a “bump and grind” club you’ll find. Between the giant aquarium, the hot tub bar with a bikini-clad bartender, and the dance floor, it’s a fun, albeit not very high-brow, time. Especially beware of Thursdays (18 and over night). 5 Faber St., 577-5383
- The Brick – a no-nonsense, smallish bar tucked between the larger and more raucous 213 and Wet Willie’s; nice dart boards. 213 E Bay St, 720-7788.
- 213 (Top of the Bay) – a fun club that tends to play a lot of 80’s music; can get pretty crowded with College of Charleston students late at night. 213 E Bay St. 722-1311
- Tsunami – a somewhat pricey Japanese-themed bar and restaurant; fun for sake bombs! 215 E Bay St, 965-5281.
- Cumberland’s – a several-story bar that regularly has live bands on the first floor. 301 King St., 577-9469, www.cumberlands.net
- Southend Brewery & Smokehouse – several floors; has a big beer selection. 161 E. Bay Street, 853-4677.
- Bar 145 – a hip bar at the intersection of Calhoun and King, near Marion Square (above Millennium Music and below The Terrace restaurant). 145 Calhoun St. 937-0314, ext. 15
- Rooftop at the Vendue Inn – Like Meritage, a bit yuppie, but it has one of the best views in the city. 19 Vendue Range, 577-7970.
- The Griffon – Small British pub atmosphere, near East Bay; mostly folks in their twenties and thirties. 18 Vendue Range, 723-1700.
- Jimmy Dengates – small, local Irish bar; generally not as fun as Tommy Condon’s, although less touristy. 5 Cumberland Street, 722-1541.
- Big John’s Tavern – a tiny dive bar; they often have PBR specials and the like. It can be a very fun time, depending on the crowd. 251 E Bay St, 723-3483, www.bigjohnstavern.com
- Wild Wings – one of a chain of wings bar/restaurants; they often have live bands playing. They have the strange custom of giving out wristbands to people over 21, even though they don’t let in people under 21. Go figure. 36 North Market Street, 722-9464. Also one in North Charleston at 7618 Rivers Ave., 553-1111. www.wildwingcafe.com
- Henry’s – a large, two-story bar, which looks a little bit like Cheers. A good place to meet people. 54 N Market St, 723-4363.
- Kaminsky’s – a chill place, with awesome desserts. 78 N. Market St, 853-8270. <http://www.tbonz.com/kam.asp?catID=1837>
- Hurricane’s – a fancy restaurant by day, bar by night. 85 South Market Street, 965-8300.
- Blind Tiger – a College of Charleston hangout, a bit further downtown (i.e. south) from the other bars...nice outdoor patio, fancy without being pretentious. 36/38 Broad Street, 577-0088, www.btpub.com

- Charleston Beer Works – a large bar with big-screen sports, hundreds of beers, and pool tables in the back. 468 King St., 577- 5885
- Calder’s Buffalo Pub – Irish bar in Mount Pleasant near the Isle of Palms Connector. A favorite with the PXOs, who live stumbling distance away at the Long Grove Apartments. 971 Riviera Dr., 881-0049.
- Pluto Rocks – a fun piano bar downtown; features “dueling” pianos, sing-alongs...a good place to meet people. 479 King St, 722-1088
- Wings – a fun local bar (which, as the name suggests, specializes in wings) in North Charleston, near Dorchester Rd. (where a lot of people lived). Occasionally has live bands. 2110 Greenridge Rd., 824-9464
- The Windjammer – An Isle of Palms hangout, which often has cool bands (including, on occasion, Hootie and the Blowfish). Sand volleyball courts in the back. 1008 Ocean Blvd., 886-8596, www.the-windjammer.com
- Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3137 – A dirt-cheap bar for us military types, right next to the much pricier Windjammer, etc. We had our Comp Party there, which was a great deal. 1004 Ocean Blvd, 886-6840, www.vfw-iop.org
- Coconut Joe’s – another Isle of Palms spot right on the beach; often has cheesy but fun live music. 1120 Ocean Blvd, 886-0046, www.cocojoes.com
- Poe’s Tavern – Great burgers, strange beers, an indoor/outdoor bar, and more on Sullivan’s Island. Named after Edgar Allen Poe, who lived on the island. 2210 Middle St, 883-0083.
- Bert’s Bar – dive bar with pool tables and dart boards on Sullivan’s Island. 2209 Middle St, 883-3924.
- Dunleavy’s – small but fun Irish pub on Sullivan’s Island. 2213-b Middle St, 883-9646.
- Red’s Ice House – A fun bar/restaurant on Shem Creek in Mount Pleasant. 98 Church St., 388-0003
- JR’z Neighborhood Sports Grille – Ho-hum sports bar in Mount Pleasant. 545 Belle Station Blvd, 971-9072.
- J B Pivot’s – One of the few places for salsa and swing dancing in the Charleston area; in West Ashley. 1662 Savannah Hwy, 571-3668.

...for more places to hang out, just walk around downtown, check out the Charleston City Paper (available for free around town, or online at www.charlestoncitypaper.com), or surf the following:

- <http://www.digitalcity.com/charlestonsc/bars/>
- <http://www.10best.com/Charleston/Nightlife/>
- <http://www.littlepieces.com/clubs.htm>
- <http://charleston.pubcrawler.com/>
- <http://www.geocities.com/charlestonrocks/venues.html>
- <http://www.charlestoncitypaper.com/venues.php>

Places to Eat

- Dives [cheap places for good food]
 - Yo Burrito! – As the name suggests, they have all kinds of burritos...a bit better than Mo’s [another fun burrito chain]. They have trivia nights every week, which are

- pretty easy to win (what can we say, people don't come to the College of Charleston for the academics!). One on 86 Wentworth St. in Charleston 853-3287 and another on 675 Johnnie Dodds Blvd. in Mt. Pleasant 856-0061.
- El Progreso – authentic Mexican food...so authentic that nobody speaks English; on Remount Rd.
 - Los Arcos – a bit of a drive from base, but good Mexican food...so popular with certain instructors that it's known as “Los ARPOs”
 - Number One Kitchen – decent, cheap Chinese takeout...lunch specials are good; on Red Bank Rd., so it's close to base. They are numba one! 1316 Red Bank Road, 553-3623/5662
 - China Buffet – on Rivers Ave...a huge, all-you-can-eat buffet for good prices; 7800 Rivers Ave #1850, 572-1125
 - The Mellow Mushroom – a hippie pizza place downtown; also features a 100-beer club (different *kinds* of beer, not just chugging 100). 309 King Street, 723-7374
 - Andolini's – popular pizza chain with three locations: 82 Wentworth St. Charleston 722-7437, 414 Coleman Blvd. Mt. Pleasant 849-7437, and 1117 Savannah Hwy. West Ashley 225-5200
 - Bagel Nation Café – great, fresh-made bagels in Mt. Pleasant. 1909 N Highway 17, 881-1462
 - Kickin' Chicken – Finger-licking good! Downtown at 337 King St., 805-5020
 - ...also see the various wings places in the “bars and nightlife” section
 - Mid-Range [pricer, but fancier restaurants for having fun on the town]
 - Joe Pasta's – good Italian food, 428 King St., 965-5252
 - Basil – awesome Thai food—especially the Pad Thai; 460 King St, 724-3490
 - The Mustard Seed – a mix of American and ethnic foods, in Mount Pleasant 1220 Ben Sawyer Blvd., 849-0050 and James Island, 1978 Maybank Hwy, 762-0072
 - J. Bistro's – won “best restaurant” in Mount Pleasant several years in a row; 819 Coleman Blvd., 971-7778
 - Jistine's Kitchen – Great, relatively inexpensive Lowcountry Southern fare downtown—the best fried chicken you'll ever have! 251 Meeting St., 722-7224
 - Sette – Italian place on Shem Creek in Mount Pleasant, ran by the Mustard Seed people; 201 Coleman Blvd, 388-8808.
 - Al Di La – Great Italian place in West Ashley; a bit pricier, but still a bargain. Consistently wins “Best Italian” in the Charleston area. 25 Magnolia Rd [in a strip mall], 571-2321.
 - Normandy Farms – supposedly the best bakery in Charleston; good for a breakfast snack or light lunch. 86 Society St., 577-5763
 - The Terrace – a fancy restaurant on the roof of a building overlooking Marion Square; good brunch, make-your-own Bloody Marys, etc. 145 Calhoun St., 937-0314
 - Fancy-Shmancy [when your parents are in town or you have a hot date]
 - The Boathouse – 549 E Bay St, 577-7171; also on Isle of Palms, 101 Palm Blvd, 886-8000
 - Slightly North of Broad – 192 East Bay St. 723-3424
 - Grill 225 – 225 E. Bay St., 266-4204
 - High Cotton – 192 East Bay St, 724-3815, www.high-cotton.net

- Il Cortile Del Re – Voted “best table for romance” and “best first date restaurant”!
193-A King St., 853-1888
- Peninsula Grill – Voted “best restaurant when someone else is paying” 112 N. Market St., 723-0700
- Lots of places on Shem Creek (nice views of the shrimp boat fleet and sunset)

...for other ideas, check out

- the Charleston City Paper’s Best of Charleston guides online at <http://www.charlestoncitypaper.com/BOC2004/> (most recent), <http://www.charlestoncitypaper.com/boc03/>, <http://www.charlestoncitypaper.com/boc5/>, etc.
- (Fairly) exhaustive lists: <http://vacation.southcarolina.com/dining.html>, http://www.charlestoncitypaper.com/cuisine_list.html, and <http://www.charleston.net/dining/>
- Eclectic reviews by deep sea fishing people at http://www.aut-top-sea.com/Restaurants/restaurants_all.htm
- Fodors reviews some of the fancier restaurants at http://www.fodors.com/miniguides/mgresults.cfm?cur_section=din&destination=charleston@48
- Dating a vegetarian? Married to one? (Poor Chris Grubb... ☺) Check out <http://www.vegetarian-restaurants.net/usa/SouthCarolinaReal.htm>

Sports/Outdoors

- Golf – there are several fine golf courses in the Charleston area, but for some *cheap* golfing, check out the Red Bank Plantation course on base. Yes, you’ll have to contend with more divots than usual, but you can’t beat the rock-bottom prices. Bldg 290, 764-7802
- Fishing – there’s good fishing throughout the Charleston region; we had fun fishing at a pier not far from Prototype, behind the golf course.
- Camping, Hiking – you won’t find any great vistas in Charleston (they don’t call it the Low Country for nothing) but the Navy runs a camping center on Lake Moultrie 743-1366, 743-5608, or 800-447-2178, www.shortstay.nwschs.navy.mil
- On base sports – you can check out sports equipment (e.g. softball bases, bats, gloves) at MWR; also see below for gym hours
- Charleston River Dogs – Charleston’s minor league baseball team; Joseph Riley Jr Park, 360 Fishburn St, 577-DOGS, www.riverdogs.com
- Charleston Stingrays – Charleston’s minor league hockey team; North Charleston Coliseum, 529-5113, www.stingrayshockey.com
- Charleston Battery Soccer – Charleston’s minor league soccer team; Blackbaud Stadium, 1990 Daniel Island Dr, 971-GOAL www.charlestonbattery.com
- Beaches – the main beaches are Isle of Palms, Sullivan’s Island, and Folly Beach. Folly has a younger crowd and more consistently good waves for surfing; the other two have bars/restaurants right on the beach (such as the Windjammer—see above). See www.charlestonlowcountry.com/Beaches/ for more information.
- Running/Biking/Swimming/Triathlons...and other active stuff can be found at www.mtpleasantrec.com, www.charlestontriathlonclub.com, and www.actioncarolina.com, as well as looking at national websites like www.active.com Hard-core runners can also check out the Charleston Running Club at www.charlestonrunningclub.com

Culture/History

- Fort Sumter – the ferry ride to the island (in the middle of Charleston harbor) from Patriot’s Point or Downtown is half of the fun, so go on a nice day. Once you get there, learn about how the fort figured in the “War Between the States”; 883-3123, www.nps.gov/fosu/
- Fort Moultrie – where South Carolina got its “Palmetto State” motto in the Revolutionary War; more cannons than you would ever want to see; 883-3123, www.nps.gov/fomo/
- Patriot’s Point Maritime Museum – features an aircraft carrier, destroyer, and WW-II submarine; 40 Patriots Point Rd, 881-5931, 800-248-3508, www.patriotspoint.org
- Plantations: Charleston has a number of historic plantations, many of which are on Ashley River Road (www.byways.org/browse/byways/13794). Middleton Place has beautiful gardens that were featured in *The Patriot* (although the house tour isn’t really worth going on); they also host a concert every year with the Charleston Symphony Orchestra Pops on the lawn (bring bug spray and/or wear long sleeves!) 4300 Ashley River Rd, 556-6020 or 800-782-3608, www.middletonplace.org. Drayton Hall has the only surviving plantation mansion in the area (3380 Ashley River Rd, 769-2600, www.draytonhall.org). Boone Hall, despite being an inspiration for *Gone With the Wind*, isn’t really worth visiting unless you’re already there for an event.
- Citadel – can visit the museum, watch formation on Fridays during the school year; 171 Moultrie Street, Charleston, SC 29409, (843) 225-3294, www.citadel.edu/r3/about/visitor
- Walking around downtown can be fun; the area is full of old, historic houses, cute alleyways, and picturesque views. Just wander around, or, for a more organized experience, go on a walking tours, a romantic horse-drawn carriage ride, etc. Highlights: Rainbow Row and The Battery (both near the south-east part of the Holy City).
- While you probably won’t have time for ongoing classes, you can take a one-time class (or your significant other can learn cool stuff) through the Community Education Program at www.charlestoncoce.org

Events

- Charleston City Paper (www.charlestoncitypaper.com) has information about events, concerts, festivals, etc
- The Best Read Charleston Guide at www.bestreadguide.com/charleston/ lists touristy events and activities, as does www.sciway.net/tourism/chasfest.html
- Lowcountry Oyster Festival – all you can eat! Boone Hall Plantation, 577-4030, www.charlestonrestaurantassociation.com/oysterfestival.html (in January)
- Budweiser Lowcountry Blues Bash – annual blues festival; 577-7607 or 800-216-0639 www.bluesbash.com (in February)
- Annual Festival of Houses and Gardens 723-1623, www.historiccharleston.org/festival.html (in March/April)
- Lowcountry Cajun Festival on James Island 762-2172 (in April)
- Flowertown Festival in Summerville – flowers and lots more; 871-9622 www.summervillemca.org/flowertown/ (in April)
- Cooper River Bridge Run – 10k run or 7k walk across the Cooper River Bridge; a big deal with lots of people; 792-0345/6611, www.bridgerun.com (in April)

- Party at the Point – bands and fun on Fridays at Patriot’s Point; www.oldies1025.com/common/common-chs/CHS-IP/party.html (May thru October)
- Spoleto Festival – a big arts festival that draws in people from around the world; 722-2764, 579-3100, www.spoletousa.org (in May; also check out Piccolo Spoleto, which runs around the same time; 724-7305, www.piccolospoleto.com)
- Charleston Air Expo – on the air force base 963-6341 (in May/June)
- Taste of Charleston – Charleston restaurants peddle their wares; Boone Hall Plantation, 577-4030, www.charlestonrestaurantassociation.com/tasteofcharleston.html (in October)

Out of Town

- Savannah, GA – has a similar, historic feel to Charleston
- Myrtle Beach – a fun beach resort community; really big during Spring Break
- Hilton Head Island – famous golfing, nice bicycle paths, and pleasant beaches (an older crowd than Myrtle Beach)
- Georgetown – up highway 17 past Mount Pleasant; they have a nice river walk, but it’s not really worth driving to. Nevertheless, a nice stop on the way to Myrtle Beach.

Appendix: Useful Numbers/Hours

[numbers and hours current as of 6/04]

Naval Weapons Station Charleston

Also see http://www.nwschs.navy.mil/Phone_Numbers.htm (linked from the main Naval Weapons Station Charleston website at <http://www.nwschs.navy.mil/>)

- NWSC Base Information Line 764-7000
- Fleet & Family Support: 764-7294
- Pass & Badge Office: 764-4231/4232
- Personal Property Office: 764-7575
- Personnel Support Detachment: 764-7014
- Optometry (remember to pick up your medical records before an appointment) 743-7843
- Medical (must check in during sick call hours OR call ahead for an appointment with a doctor) 574-8282
- Dental (these guys have perhaps the worst possible schedule...they didn’t examine us until very late in the game) 764-7944 ext 100 or 175.
- MWR Office: 764-7601
- Auto Hobby Shop: 764-7752
- Auto Service Center (U-haul rental, auto repair, gas...): 764-7573/7808
- Bowling Center: 764-7235
- Cap’n Robert’s Dive (a food court near NNPTC): 764-4153
- Chaplain: 764-7207
- Child Development Center: 764-7408
- Cinema One Theater (free movies on Saturdays, mostly for enlisted students): 764-7601
- Family Child Care: 764-7984
- Frame Shop: 764-4107

Commissary [Bldg 764, 1797 Redbank Rd, 764-2020, www.commissaries.com]
Sun 1000-1700
M closed
T-Fri 1000-1900
Sat 1000-1800

Exchange [Bldg 706, 764-7042/7580, www.navy-nex.com; 764-7755 for barber shop; there's also a barber shop in the Nuke School complex]
M-Sat 0900-1900
except: Th 0900-2100
Sun 1000-1700

Activity Center Gym (free weights, machines, basketball court) [at the Rickover Center]
M-F 0500-2300
S/S/Holidays 1100-2300

"Sam's Gym" Fitness & Racquetball Center (free weights, machines, basketball and racquetball courts) [Bldg 708, 764-4173]
M-F 0530-2030
S/S 0800-1800
Holidays 1000-1600 (closed New Years, July 4, Thanksgiving, Xmas)

Galley ("Refueling Center") [at the Rickover Center; menus: 574-8888]
M-F 0500-0700, 1020-1300, 1630-1830
S/S/Holidays 0830-1130, 1630-1800

McDonald's (near Exchange)
M-Th 0545-2300
F/Sat 0545-2400
Sun 0700-2300

Base Pool ("New Wave Aquatic Center")
764-7033, \$2 or \$55 season pass
May 29 - Aug 6: M-F 1200-1730
S/S/Holidays 1200-1900
Military Lap Swim M-F 0530-0730

Charleston Air Force Base

CAFB Temporary Lodging [Bldg 362, 963-3806/552-9900]
Nice rooms for cheap—good for when you're househunting, etc.

CAFB BX [552-5000]
M-Sat 0900-2000
Sun 1100-1800
[sandwich shop 1100-1800, except 1000-1700 on Sunday]

CAFB Commissary [963-5694]
S/M 1100-1800
T-Sat 1000-1800
(open til 1900 on Thurs)

CAFB Dining Facility (i.e. Galley) [963-3590]

0530-0830, 1030-1300, 1630-1900
CAFB Charleston Club [Bldg 325, 963-3914]
Lunch: M-F 1100-1300
Dinner: W, Th 1700-1900
Wings Bar/Cafe (officers): F 1700-2100
Stone Willy's Pizza: Sat-Thurs 1700-2000, F 1700-2100

CAFB Fitness Center [963-3347]
S/S 0600-1900
M-F 0400-0100