

Area Festivals

Charlotte and surrounding communities are busy year-round with festivals, sporting events and activities that entertain young and old. Here's a brief look at some perennial favorites; keep an eye on local newspapers, radio and TV for others.

Street festivals are among the most popular events. **Festival in the Park** (704-338-1060, www.festivalinthepark.org), an arts and crafts festival around Freedom Park's lake, appears every September. Also in September, **Charlotte Shout** is a month-long celebration incorporating more than 200 visual, performing, musical and culinary arts events in over 40 venues throughout the region (www.charlotteshout.com).

Hungry? There are plenty of apples and other goodies on hand at the **Lincoln County Apple Festival** in downtown Lincolnton each September (704-736-8452). Both the international festival, **Ifest** (704-687-2410, www.uncc.edu/ifest), and the **Yiasou Greek Festival** (704-334-4771, www.greekorthodoxclt.org), are held in September. The **Loch Norman Highland Games** (704-875-3113, www.ruralhillfarm.org), near Davidson, are in April; and various other events throughout the year are sponsored by ethnic and cultural clubs.

Novello (704-336-2725, www.novellofestival.net), a library-sponsored festival in Charlotte, draws thousands in October to hear authors like novelist Tom Clancy and reporter Bob Woodward of Watergate fame. Rock Hill invites visitors to its **Come-See-Me Festival** in April (800-681-7635, www.comeseeme.rockhill.net); and in November **Yap Ye Iswa** (the Day of the Catawbas) is celebrated on the Catawba Indian reservation near Rock Hill (803-328-2427, www.ccppcrafts.com).

Holidays are prime times for fun. Fireworks and a concert spark the city's Fourth of July festivities. On Thanksgiving, the Carolinas' **Carrousel Parade** (704-332-4407, www.carrouselparade.org) salutes princesses chosen from area high schools and opens the Christmas season with Santa's arrival.

Folks who love collecting ideas for their homes will enjoy Charlotte's many home tours. The Mint Museum sponsors two of the best — the **Home and Garden Tour** in April and the **Antiques Show** in October (704-337-2000, www.mintmuseum.org). The Charlotte Symphony Guild sponsors the **ASID Designer House** each fall (704-525-0522, www.symphonyguildcharlotte.org). The Home Builders Association of Charlotte sponsors **HomeArama** (704-376-8524, www.hbacharlotte.com) each spring. Many area neighborhood groups and private companies also sponsor home tours throughout the year to display rehabilitated older homes or spectacular new ones.

Many organizations sponsor exhibits and trade shows at the Charlotte Merchandise Mart, the Charlotte Convention Center and other sites around town. Southern Shows Inc. (704-376-6594, www.southernshows.com) sponsors several Charlotte favorites, including the **Southern Spring Show** in March, the **Southern Ideal Home Show** in September and the **Southern Christmas Show** in November.

