



ABSA
INTERNATIONAL
The Association for Biosafety and Biosecurity

Welcome to Raleigh, North Carolina!

Welcome to Raleigh, the "City of Oaks," a vibrant blend of southern charm, modern innovation, and cultural richness. As the host city for the **68th Annual Biosafety and Biosecurity Hybrid Conference** at the **Raleigh Convention Center**, Raleigh offers visitors a unique experience with world-class dining, historic landmarks, and opportunities to explore the best of North Carolina. Whether you are squeezing in sightseeing between sessions or planning a pre- or post-conference adventure, this guide will help you make the most of your visit.

Conference Location: Raleigh Convention Center

- 📍 **Address:** 500 S Salisbury St, Raleigh, NC 27601
 - 📍 **Highlights:** Centrally located in downtown Raleigh, the [Convention Center](#) is a state-of-the-art facility surrounded by hotels, restaurants, and attractions. Its striking public art installation, the "Shimmer Wall," is a must-see and an iconic part of the Raleigh skyline.
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Getting Around Raleigh

- 📍 **From the Airport:** Raleigh-Durham International Airport (RDU) is about 20 minutes from downtown. Taxis, rideshares (Lyft/Uber), and shuttle services are readily available.
 - 📍 **Public Transport:** GoRaleigh buses are affordable and efficient, connecting key parts of the city. Find out more information at this [link](#).
 - 📍 **Rideshares & Taxis:** Widely available throughout the city.
 - 📍 **Walkability:** Downtown Raleigh, especially around the Convention Center, is pedestrian friendly.
 - 📍 **Car Rentals:** Ideal for exploring destinations beyond Raleigh.
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Local Restaurants and Favorites

Explore the many dining choices in downtown Raleigh, from local seafood to delicious steaks. The options are endless when it comes to choosing a spot to eat. Here are some suggestions:

- 📍 **Morgan Street Food Hall** – A lively food hall that is a 10-minute walk (0.5 miles) featuring a variety of local vendors—perfect for groups or indecisive eaters. Great for casual dining with indoor and outdoor seating.

- 🍷 **Poole's Diner** – Upscale comfort food in a retro-chic diner from James Beard Award-winner Ashley Christensen just 0.2 miles away (5-minute walk). Known for the famous mac & cheese and seasonal plates.
- 🍷 **Beasley's Chicken + Honey** - Southern-style fried chicken with a honey drizzle, plus sides and chicken & waffles. A casual, welcoming spot from the Poole's Diner team. It is 0.3 miles and a 6-minute walk from the convention center.
- 🍷 **Bida Manda** - Laotian cuisine with refined flavors in a stylish, cozy space. Standouts include pork belly soup and lemongrass dishes, just an 8-minute walk (0.4 miles).
- 🍷 **Big Ed's City Market Restaurant** - A Raleigh classic for hearty Southern breakfasts and lunches in a quirky, antique-filled setting. Do not miss the biscuits and pancakes. (8-minute walk, 0.4 miles).

Breweries and more

Downtown Raleigh is known for its night life and pubs. Sip n' Stroll in the bars/breweries in the Downtown Raleigh social district, check out this [link](#) for more options.

- 🍷 **Bittersweet** – A dessert, coffee, and cocktail lounge with an all-natural, seasonal menu. Indulge in treats like their famous Derby Pie paired with craft cocktails or Counter Culture espresso drinks. Recognized as a James Beard Foundation Semifinalist in 2024. 0.3 miles | 6-minute walk.
- 🍷 **Brewery Bhavana** – A unique combination of brewery, dim sum restaurant, flower shop, and bookstore. Offers Belgian-style ales in a creative ambiance. Named one of the best new restaurants in the world by Bon Appétit. 0.4 miles | 8-minute walk.
- 🍷 **Crank Arm Brewing Company** - Bicycle-themed taproom known for its award-winning unfiltered hoppy ales. Features a vibrant atmosphere with food trucks and outdoor seating. 0.3 miles | 6-minute walk.
- 🍷 **Wye Hill Kitchen & Brewing** – Perched atop Boylan Bridge, it boasts panoramic views, small-batch craft beers, and a chef-driven menu. 0.6 miles | 12-minute walk or 5-minute drive.
- 🍷 **The Haymaker** - Cocktail bar features vintage decor inspired by legendary boxers and '90s rappers. Offers classic cocktails and unique punch bowls. 0.3 miles | 6-minute walk.

Top Attractions Near the Raleigh Convention Center

The **Red Hat Amphitheater** is located right next to the Raleigh Convention Center, making it incredibly convenient to access. You can walk there in just 2 minutes. This outdoor venue hosts concerts, events, and festivals throughout the year. Visit [Red Hat Amphitheater](#) for more info.

The **North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences** is just 0.6 miles from the Convention Center. It is an easy 12-minute walk or a 5-minute drive. This museum is a must-visit, offering free admission and fascinating exhibits on topics ranging from dinosaurs to wildlife and innovative research. Learn more at [Museum of Natural Sciences](#).

For the performing arts enthusiasts, the **Martin Marietta Center for Performing Arts** is only 0.2 miles away. You can reach it on foot in 5 minutes, so there is no need to drive. This premier venue features concerts, plays, and ballets in a stunning setting. Check out upcoming events by clicking on this [link](#)!

The **CAM Raleigh (Contemporary Art Museum)** is slightly farther at 0.7 miles from the Convention Center. It is a 15-minute walk or a quick 6-minute drive. This vibrant museum highlights contemporary art and exhibitions, making it a favorite spot for art enthusiasts. Learn more at [CAM Raleigh](#).

The **Lenovo Center**, home to the National Hockey League's Carolina Hurricanes and the North Carolina State University men's basketball team, hosts major concerts, comedy tours, and family shows. Learn more at their [website](#)! (7.5 miles away; 15-20 minutes drive)

Things to Do During Your Free Time

Arts and Culture

The **North Carolina Museum of Art** is located about 5.5 miles from the Convention Center, just a 12-minute drive away. This museum features stunning galleries displaying global art collections, alongside an outdoor sculpture park that is perfect for a peaceful stroll. For more details, visit their website at [North Carolina Museum of Art](#).

A short walk from the Convention Center, the **North Carolina Museum of History** is only 0.6 miles away, taking about 12 minutes on foot or 5 minutes by car. This museum offers interactive exhibits that explore North Carolina's rich history, from Native American artifacts to Civil Rights milestones. Learn more at [North Carolina Museum of History](#).

Outdoor Activities

For a delightful outdoor experience, **Pullen Park** is just 1.5 miles from the Convention Center, a 30-minute walk or a quick 7-minute drive. The park features paddle boats, a historic carousel, a miniature train ride, and plenty of green spaces for picnics. Additional info at [Pullen Park](#).

If you are looking for open fields, gardens, and skyline views, **Dorothea Dix Park** is an excellent choice. Located just 1.2 miles away, it is a 25-minute walk or a 5-minute drive. As Raleigh's largest park, it is an ideal spot for relaxing or enjoying a casual stroll. A highlight within the park

is the brand-new **Gipson Play Plaza**, which officially opened in June 2024. Designed to inspire creativity and movement, the plaza features whimsical play structures, water features, climbing areas, and a repurposed mid-century gymnasium. It is a vibrant space for families and kids to explore, right in the heart of Raleigh's most expansive green space. Visit [Dorothea Dix Park](#).

Shopping

For upscale shopping, trendy boutiques, and outdoor movie events, **North Hills** is located five miles from downtown. It is a 12-minute drive from the Convention Center and offers a lively mix of retail and dining options. Explore more at [North Hills](#).

If you prefer something more historic, **City Market** is a mere 0.4 miles from the Convention Center (8-minute walk or 3-minute drive). With its charming cobblestone streets and boutique shops, it is the perfect place to pick up local crafts or specialty items. More at [City Market](#).

Local Customs & Tips

- 🍷 **Hospitality:** Raleigh locals are friendly—do not hesitate to ask for recommendations.
- 🍷 **Tipping:** 15-20% for restaurant service and \$1-2 per bag for hotel bellhops.
- 🍷 **Local Weather:** Spring and fall are mild, summers are warm and humid, and winters are cool. Dress in layers for optimal comfort.

Emergency Information

- 🍷 **Emergency Number:** Dial 911 for police, fire, or medical emergencies.
- 🍷 **Closest Hospital:** WakeMed Raleigh Campus (3000 New Bern Ave, Raleigh, NC).
- 🍷 **Local Pharmacies:** CVS (201 Fayetteville St) | Walgreens (3011 New Bern Ave).

Contact Information

- 🍷 **Raleigh Convention Center:** [Website](#) | Phone: (919) 996-8500
- 🍷 **Visitor Information:** [VisitRaleigh.com](#)

Disclaimer: This guide is intended to assist conference attendees in exploring local attractions, dining, and activities for their personal enjoyment and convenience. All recommendations are provided for informational purposes only. Conference organizers do not endorse or assume responsibility for the services, experiences, or safety standards of any third-party establishments or activities listed. Attendees are encouraged to conduct their own research and exercise personal judgment before participating.