

10 Places to Explore African-American History

Whether during Black History Month or throughout the year, plan a visit to one of these intriguing North Carolina sites that reflect African-American history and heritage.

- **African-American Heritage Walking Tour, New Bern**
New Bern free blacks exerted cultural, economic and political influence – and also owned slaves. This walking tour takes in historical homes, churches and businesses with rich legacies from Colonial times to the modern era.

- **Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum at Historic Palmer Memorial Institute, Sedalia**
North Carolina's only state-supported historic site recognizing a woman is also one of the first to honor an African-American. The site is the location of the former Palmer Memorial Institute, an African-American preparatory school established by Brown in 1902.

- **Chicamacomico Life-Saving Station, Rodanthe**
The Pea Island Life-Saving Station, the only U.S. Life-Saving Service station with a crew of African-Americans, performed many heroics. A century after their 1896 rescue of all nine passengers on schooner E.S. Newman during a hurricane earned them a posthumous Gold Lifesaving Medal. Plan a visit between April and October, the Cape Hatteras National Seashore's season.

- **Harriet Jacobs Trail, Edenton**
To commemorate the bicentennial of her birth, Harriet Jacobs' memoir, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, will be used as the framework for a program on February 9 at Edenton United Methodist Church Family Life Center. Beyond this one-day event, visitors can follow a self-guided tour of Edenton sites that relate to Jacobs' life.



- **Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture, Charlotte**
Charlotte's destination for African-American art, history and culture, the center celebrates the cultural contributions of Africans and African-Americans, and serves

as an epicenter for music, dance, theater, visual art, film, arts education programs, literature and community outreach.

- **International Civil Rights Center & Museum (ICRCM), Greensboro**

This museum is located in the former F.W. Woolworth retail store, the site where, in 1960, four freshmen from N.C. A&T State University sat down at the "whites only" lunch counter and challenged the laws of segregation. Their courageous actions reignited the quest for all Americans to stand up for freedom, justice and equality. ICRCM brings history to life with permanent installation, exhibits, photography, artifacts, video re-enactments and interactive galleries.

- **Nina Simone Plaza, Tryon**

The Eunice Waymon Nina Simone Memorial Project honors the remarkable life and legacy of a native daughter who achieved international recognition for her unique talent and her formidable contribution to the musical arts.

- **Oliver Nestus Freeman Round House Museum, Wilson**

A museum featuring artifacts that depict the culture and contributions of African-Americans to Wilson's history and development. The 1946 house is one of several built by Freeman, an African-American stonemason, to help alleviate the housing shortage for GIs returning from the war. Though the house is said to be made of stone, the materials included bottles, tree saplings and string.

- **St. Philips Moravian Church, Winston-Salem**

Built in 1861, this is the oldest standing African-American church in the state. It stands adjacent to the newly-reconstructed 1823 log church with exhibitions conveying the African-American experience in the Moravian community. Today, the church is part of Old Salem.

- **YMI Cultural Center, Asheville**

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the center has served Asheville's minority residents since 1893, when it was established as the Young Men's Institute. The center houses numerous exhibits, many dealing with the history of African-Americans in western North Carolina, and sponsors such cultural events as Asheville's Goombay! festival, a Kwanzaa celebration and the Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration.