

want more great features? visit goqnotes.com/to/qliving

Vacate, or staycate!

Best bets for fun and downtime this summer

compiled by qnotes staff

Hot fun in the summertime! Thank goodness. It's finally here. Warm weather, sunny skies and late evenings out on the town (thank you for staying up late, Mr. Sun!) If you haven't done so already, now's the time to start planning for your summer vacations. After last issue's few travel pieces, *qnotes* staff got to thinking about other ways to have some fun this sunny season. So, we scoured the websites of visitors' bureaus across the South and found six sure-fire best bets for summer travel this year.

Elvis at 75

This year marks the King of Rock-n-Roll's 75th birthday. The caretaker of Elvis' legend, Graceland, is celebrating it big. This year, they've unveiled the first-ever Elvis fashion exhibit and the special "From Tupelo to Memphis," an exhibit following young Elvis' path from childhood to international music sensation. Dates vary Memphis, Tenn. elvis.com

Key West Pridefest

We can barely think of anywhere gayer. Well, maybe San Francisco. But, here on the East Coast, Key West is the place to be! Hot fun, hot guys and gals and all the Pride you can handle. Key West's Pridefest kicks off with a reception at the nationally-renowned Island House resort and ends with a fabulous parade. June 9-13 Key West, Fla. pridefestkeywest.com
Bonus: See our full list of Pride festivals across the Carolinas and nation!

Big Apple RaUnch

If Country Western dancing is your thing, and you happened to miss the Carolinas' Queen City Stomp, head up to New York City for the Big Apple RaUnch. And, while you're in the Big City you might as well enjoy NYC Pride! June 26 bigappleranch.com

Highland Games

For more than 50 years, Grandfather Mountain has played host to North Carolina's most well-known Scottish Highland games. Bagpipes and music, dancing and heritage, contests and sport. It's all there. And, its all within a day's drive. July 8-11 Grandfather Mountain (near Linville, N.C.) gmhg.org

Bele Chere

Arts and crafts, food and drink, activities for the kiddies and adults alike, homegrown and diverse entertainment. Downtown Asheville's Bele Chere festival brings out more than 300,000 visitors each year. It's a perfect and affordable getaway. July 23-25 Asheville, N.C. belecherefestival.com

Satchmo Summerfest

The sweet, seducing sounds of Jazz. New Orleans: there's no better a place to experience it first-hand. For lovers of Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong, the French Quarter's Satchmo Summerfest offers everything you love: life, music, food, entertainment. Relax and submerge yourself in the culture of Satchmo's New Orleans. Aug. 5-8 New Orleans, La. fqfi.org/satchmosummerfest/
[Ed. Note — Slated to appear online with our May 15 print edition content, this article's publication was delayed due to several technical difficulties. It was published online May 18 and reprinted in this issue as well. We regret any inconveniences.]

Travel with Pride

Capital Pride
Washington, D.C.
June 4-13
capitalpride.org

Los Angeles Pride
June 12-13
Los Angeles
lapride.org
SF Pride
June 27
San Francisco
sfpride.org

Chicago Pride
June 27
Chicago
chicagopridecalendar.org
NYC Pride
June, various dates
New York City
hopinc.org

Atlanta Pride
Oct. 9-10
Atlanta
atlantapride.org

— See our full list of upcoming Carolinas Prides and events at goqnotes.com/qguide/events/.



The Bele Chere Festival annually draws more than 300,000 visitors to the cute and quaint downtown of Asheville. Within days drive from anywhere in the Carolinas, it's best bet for fun on a budget.

Photo Credit: Zen, via Flickr. Licensed under Creative Commons.

Caption of the team

Ten years ago Brian Sims made history. Yet, most folks didn't know it until recently. Sims, the first openly gay football team captain in the history of the NCAA, made waves when he gave his first interview about his college football days in 2009. Today, Sims finds himself in Philadelphia. He's attorney and president of the Equality Pennsylvania board of directors. Catch our interview with Sims and learn more about his football past, his LGBT advocacy work and his thoughts on pop culture, politics and current events. Only online at goqnotes.com.



online only
at goqnotes.com

Str8 acting

Masculinity is in. Or, at least, acting like it is. Has "str8 acting masculinity" become a gay fetish? *qnotes'* spring intern Nathan James addresses the question, only at goqnotes.com.