

Knoxville

Top Spots & Hidden Gems

Curated by Dean Jordan, *Knox Expert*, & Sarah Lamer, *Knox Novice*

Coffee shops

- Wild Love: Go for the coffee and workspace; stay for the baked goods and occasional soups. Owners also run Old City Java, a Knoxville institution.
- Honeybee: Lots of cozy seating options and fun specialty drinks. Serve kombucha and beer, if coffee is not your thing.
- Remedy: This place makes an excellent chai latte (endorsed by Sarah) and is conveniently located next to one of the best bagel spots in town (Paysan).
- Likewise Coffee: This spot just opened in East Knox using a city renovation grant. They have cozy seating, delicious breakfast sandwiches, and a great outdoor space. Even better, profits go to an organization aimed at ending human trafficking.
- K-Brew: Great place to go work for an afternoon. This place has plenty of outlets for working and – in the warmer months – is a great place to go because they have hammocks to sit in while you drink your beverage.



Things to do

- The Bottom: Founded by an UTK alumnus in a historically Black community, this is a space for "building community, celebrating culture, and engaging the creativity of Black people." Follow their instagram account (@thebottomknox) for special events, like Maggie's Fish Fry, and listen to their podcast Black in Appalachia. They also curate a book collection by Black authors, available for purchase both in-person and online.
- Summer swimming holes and short hikes in town: Both Mead's Quarry at Ijams and the quarry at Fort Dickerson are great warm-weather spots
- South Press Cafe: '50s diner meets '90s coffee shop, this recently opened, trans-owned cafe is slated to begin hosting music and poetry events post-COVID.
- Grayson Highlands State Park: There are infinite options for hiking/camping/backpacking nearby, but this one has been one of Dean's favorites for backpacking. There are wild but friendly horses and steer throughout the trails, and when the fog rolls in, it's absolutely stunning. High-desert vibes! Good for both day-hikes and backpacking.
- Art Loeb Trail in Pisgah National Forest: A bit of a drive but offers gorgeous ridge hikes with plenty of 360-degree views. Also, good for both day-hikes and backpacking.
- Market Square Farmers Market: In a normal year, the farmers market takes over downtown every Saturday with an excess of local produce, crafts, and snacks.



Restaurants

- Good Golly Tamale: This is a local favorite. Food quality is great as is the price, and there are good vegetarian and vegan options.
- Bida Saigon: Arguably the best phở in town, with a solid vegan option. Stop and get the crab rangoon from Sticky Rice Cafe on your way to get phở here. And it's right by Trader Joe's, if you're on a grocery run.
- Jackie's Dream: Black-owned family business with a southern comfort food menu.
- Yassin's Falafel House: Refugee-owned and voted ['Nicest Place in America' by Good Morning America](#) in 2018
- La Herradura: This taco-truck-turned-brick-and-mortar is quickly becoming a Knoxville staple with several locations throughout the city
- Emilia: More of a date-night or celebratory vibe; reminds Dean of Italian meals they had in Chicago. Don't skip the warm olives. Dishes can be made vegan upon request.
- A Dopo: A bit pricy on a graduate student budget, but this is a go-to pizza spot and perhaps the only place Dean has ever seen with mushroom pate on the menu.



Beers/Cocktails

- Tern Club: Hands-down the best place in Knoxville to get a cocktail right now. A couple from Portland, OR moved here specifically to open this tiki bar, and it definitely comes through with Portland-quality cocktails. Highly recommend the holiday specials they have each year, particularly the Rum Rum Reindeer - one of the best cocktails ever.
- Lonesome Dove: For a splurge, also offers incredible cocktails from celebrity chef, Tim Love, in the historic Sullivan Saloon building. Get there early to get a bar seat and skip the costly food menu.
- Crafty Bastard: Has delicious in-town brews. Don't miss the Hop Candy and the Earl Grey IPAs.
- Public House: A favorite patio in Knoxville! Eventually, you won't go here without running into someone you know.
- Last Days of Autumn: This place has great food and beer. Tacos, Cheesesteak, Nachos etc. and a great outdoor seating space.
- Barrelhouse by G*psy Circus: Despite the very questionable branding, this cidery has delicious ciders including Dean's favorite: the Vaudevillian, a tart cherry cider. They just opened a massive location in the 4th and Gill neighborhood (near Crafty Bastard).

