

# 20 Reasons to Love Lake Norman

This year we found 20 new reasons to love the lake. See what made the cut this summer.

by PIPER ANDERSON

## The View

Lake Norman is beautiful in a thousand ways. There are mornings when mist curls off the lake and the water is a sheet of glass. There are days when the water is a brilliant blue and sunlight dances over the waves. There are nights when sunsets trail fire across the sky. Lake Norman's landscape is just one of many reasons people love the lake. Looking for a good spot to catch the view? Try Davidson Island, off of Davidson College's Lake Campus.

— Relaxing —

**“My favorite part about living on Lake Norman is being able to take a nap on my paddle board in the middle of the afternoon while my wife thinks I’m paddle boarding for exercise. You can’t do that in Ballantyne.”**

—TJ from the 96.1 Ace and TJ Show



North Harbor Club



## ◀ Lakeside Restaurants

A burger by itself is pretty delicious, sure. But a burger with a side of Lake Norman is a truly singular experience. Fortunately, there are several places on the lake where you can get just that. North Harbor Club is the perfect venue for an elegant brunch while lounging on an outdoor patio. In the mood for something greasier? The Landing Restaurant at Lake Norman Motel is a fun hole in the wall with arcade games and French fries to spare, not to mention a festive Tiki Bar. And of course there's The Rusty Rudder, with plenty of fish tacos and live music to go around.

COURTESY OF VENDORS; MICHAEL GIORDANO

## Charming Main Streets >

Historic and quaint, a lovely way to spend a summer afternoon is strolling the streets of downtown Cornelius, Mooresville, or Davidson. In Cornelius, browse through vinyl and vintage furniture at an antique shop and then stop by a fashionable boutique. In Downtown Mooresville, whether you're sipping a latté at HEbrews or dining luxuriously at Epic Chophouse, you'll be sure to find something that will enchant you (and we aren't just talking about the Enchanted Olive). Lined on one side by the historic college campus and on the other by a myriad of shops and restaurants, Davidson's Main Street is the picture of an American idyll, as well as a foodie's paradise.

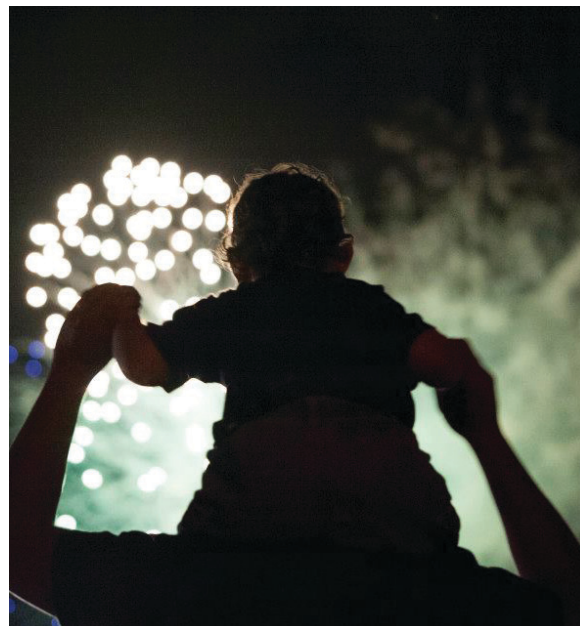


## Cruises

Whether you spend the day sightseeing on the Catawba Queen or the night dining on the Lady of the Lake, a nice way to relax and take in Lake Norman is on top of one of Queens Landing's cruise ships. You can also go on party cruises like "Old School Hip Hop" and "Dress in Summer Whites" and dance the night away with dock lights twinkling in the distance. 704-663-2628. 1459 River Hwy., Mooresville. [www.queenlanding.com](http://www.queenlanding.com)

## Fireworks >

There are a multitude of ways to celebrate Independence Day on Lake Norman. If community is your thing, the Lowe's YMCA's annual 3rd of July celebration can be hard to beat. Along with food trucks and live music, the Y puts on a dazzling fireworks display that thousands of people come see. Not to be shown up, on the 4th of July Trump National Golf Club creates a magnificent fireworks show at the club. Come nightfall, hundreds of boats anchor in the cove and visitors wait with eager anticipation for the fiery show.



## Birkdale Village >

A charming haven in Huntersville, Birkdale is a wonderful place to shop, eat, and live. With an inviting atmosphere, Birkdale has such attractions as an AMC movie theater and a Barnes & Noble mixed in with fashionable boutiques and apartments. Between Red Rocks Café, Corkscrew, and Kilwins Fudge, it's not a bad place to eat, either.

## Davesté Vineyards ▼

Davesté Vineyards is a lovely place to sip wine on a warm summer evening. Tastings are held in a rustic on site art gallery, and the vineyard itself sprawls over rolling green hills. The Vineyard often hosts evening performances from local bands, where you can have a picnic with kids and pets and listen to smooth music. 155 Lytton Farm Road, Troutman. 704-528-3882. [www.davestevineyards.com](http://www.davestevineyards.com)



## Karaoke ▼

Let out your inner diva and sing a few songs at Rivals Grille and Tavern on karaoke night. Pull a friend into the spotlight with you and do a duet, or sit back with a steak platter and enjoy all the local talent. Karaoke nights are typically on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, so check out their Facebook page for more details. 704-980-4121. 275 N Main St., Troutman. [www.facebook.com/Rivals-Grille-Tavern](http://www.facebook.com/Rivals-Grille-Tavern)



## Lake Norman State Park ►

Trails perfect for mountain biking and hiking weave through the forest of Lake Norman State Park. Families can pitch a tent in a campground and go swimming off the park's beach. Canoes and paddleboards are rentable, picnic tables are perfect for sandwich-eating, and fishing spots wait to be discovered. [www.ncparks.gov/lake-norman-state-park](http://www.ncparks.gov/lake-norman-state-park)



## — Well Rounded —

**“I love the weather here, and the people are particularly friendly. I love the change of seasons, but yet they aren’t too dramatic so that the winters are unbearable. It just ticks a lot of boxes: it’s a growing economy, it’s a strong economy, and there’s a good mix of people from all around the country. It’s a melting pot as far as different Americans from different parts of the U.S.”**

—Lawrie Lawrence (Lawrie Lawrence Real Estate)



## Perfect Pies

Lemon Chess. Strawberry Rhubarb. Chocolate Cream. Bumbleberry. This is just a sampling of the heavenly pies at Carolina Pie Company. Baked from scratch using fresh ingredients, the crust on these delectables is pure melt-in-your-mouth perfection. If you don't want to indulge in a full pie, mini-pies are available to satisfy your sweet tooth. 136 Stutt's Road, Mooresville. 704-662-0154. [www.carolinapie.com/How-to-Buy-Pies.html](http://www.carolinapie.com/How-to-Buy-Pies.html)



## Avian Adventures

One of the largest raptor treatment centers in the U.S., Carolina Raptor Center, admits between 800 and 1,000 birds a year and releases about 70 percent of them back into the wild. In addition to being a rehabilitation center, it is also an outdoor visitor center for anyone interested in birds of prey. You can walk on their Raptor trail and see over 30 types of owls, hawks, vultures, eagles, falcons, and corvids. There are also special programs like “meet and greets” with the birds and educational opportunities. So come experience the beauty and ferocity of nature, and learn a little something about our winged friends. *Tickets are \$10 and under. 6000 Sample Road, Huntersville. 704-875-6521. [www.carolinaraptor-center.org](http://www.carolinaraptor-center.org)*

## — Community —

**“I meet people every day who tell me how much they love it here. They feel welcomed and value the quality of life the town (Mooresville) provides. Along with its Southern charm and hospitality, people are drawn to the many amenities they find here. Like so many others I cherish and embrace that sense of place we’ve come to know in Mooresville.”**

—Mayor Miles Atkins, Town of Mooresville



## ▲ Life’s a Stage

Davidson Community Players is a talented group of actors who put on wonderful shows ranging from whimsical to comedic. They have something for everyone, with not only a variety of shows but also venues at both the Duke Family Performance Hall and the intimate Armour Street Theatre. Their summer shows—*Singin’ in the Rain* and *Fox on the Fairway*—are sure to delight. The Connie Company, the theater’s youth division, lets aspiring Broadway stars have a taste of the limelight.

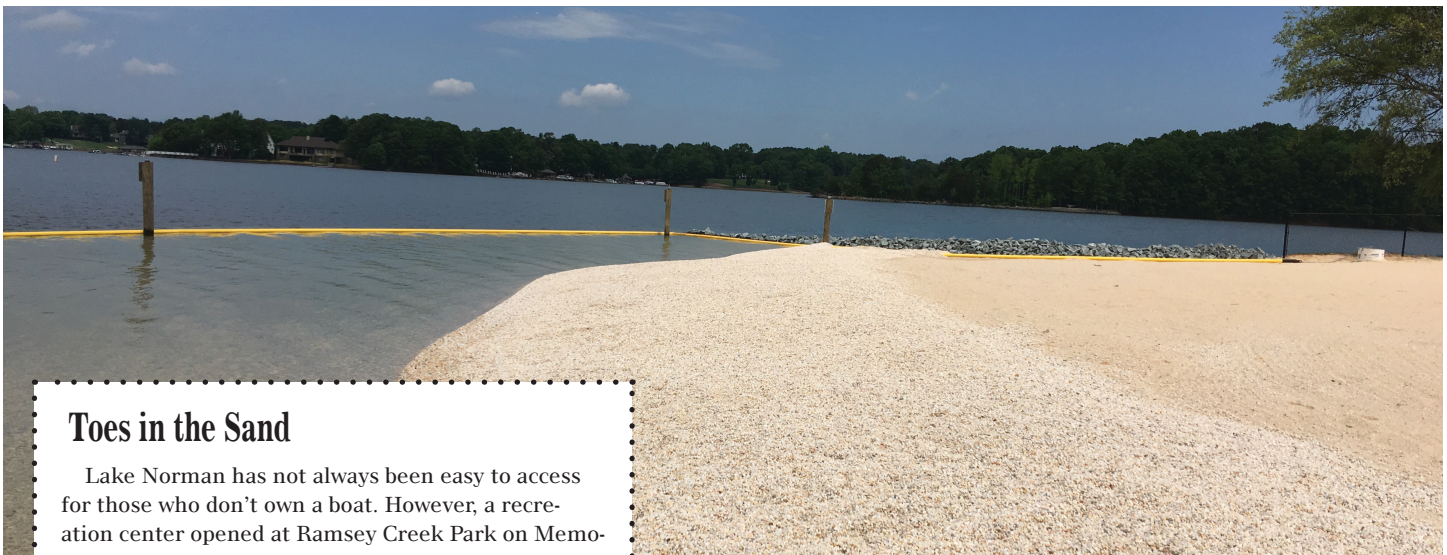
## Stand Up Paddle Boarding ▼

Gliding over water on a sleek paddle board is an exhilarating and freeing way to spend a Saturday morning. My Aloha and Lake Norman Paddle Board Co. are local companies that sell and rent paddle boards in addition to offering unique experiences like “yoga on the water,” sunset paddle tours, and night excursions with LED lights. Paddle boarding is healthy for the mind and body—and doing Savasana on a board while the moon rises over the lake? Even better. *My Aloha: 17505 W. Catawba Ave., Cornelius. 704-412-2999. [www.standuplkn.com](http://www.standuplkn.com) LKN Paddle: 704-966-9688. [www.lakenormanboard.com](http://www.lakenormanboard.com)*



## Ike's Dog Pub ▶

Enjoy a beer with your dog at Ike's Dog Pub. Your canines can sit with you or play off-the-leash with other pals in the indoor and outdoor enclosures. The pub offers craft and domestic beer, wine, specialty drinks, and non-alcoholic beverages. Although there isn't food at the bar, feel free to bring in all manner of takeout to enjoy while you watch the game. The pub also doubles as a doggy daycare, boarding center, and dog spa. 142 Consumer Square Drive, Mooresville. 980-444-0020. [www.ikes-dog-pub.com](http://www.ikes-dog-pub.com)



## Toes in the Sand

Lake Norman has not always been easy to access for those who don't own a boat. However, a recreation center opened at Ramsey Creek Park on Memorial Day weekend, complete with a sandy beach, clean bathrooms, lifeguards, and picnic areas. For those who live in Mecklenburg County, this swimming beach will make lake days much easier to come by.

## Race City ▼

For NASCAR lovers, there is no better place to live than Lake Norman. Immerse yourself in motorsports history at the NC Auto Racing Hall of Fame, or visit Memory Lane Museum and peruse vintage race cars. If your family has a need for speed, go to The Pit for indoor go-kart racing and spin zone bumper cars.



## ▲ Sweet Tooth

Life is sweeter with a pocketful of candy. Fortunately, SugarPop's in downtown Mooresville has you covered with over 300 types of candy and 100 types of fizzy sodas. From fun novelty candy to nostalgic classics and all the chocolate you can dream of, SugarPop's will satisfy any sweet tooth. The shop also creates personalized gifts, throws themed parties for kids complete with crafts and candy bingo, and caters s'mores, popcorn, chocolate, candy, and wedding buffets. Still can't get enough? Check out their blog for gift ideas. 704-799-0959. 248 North Main St., Mooresville. [www.sugarpopscandy.com](http://www.sugarpopscandy.com) **LNM**