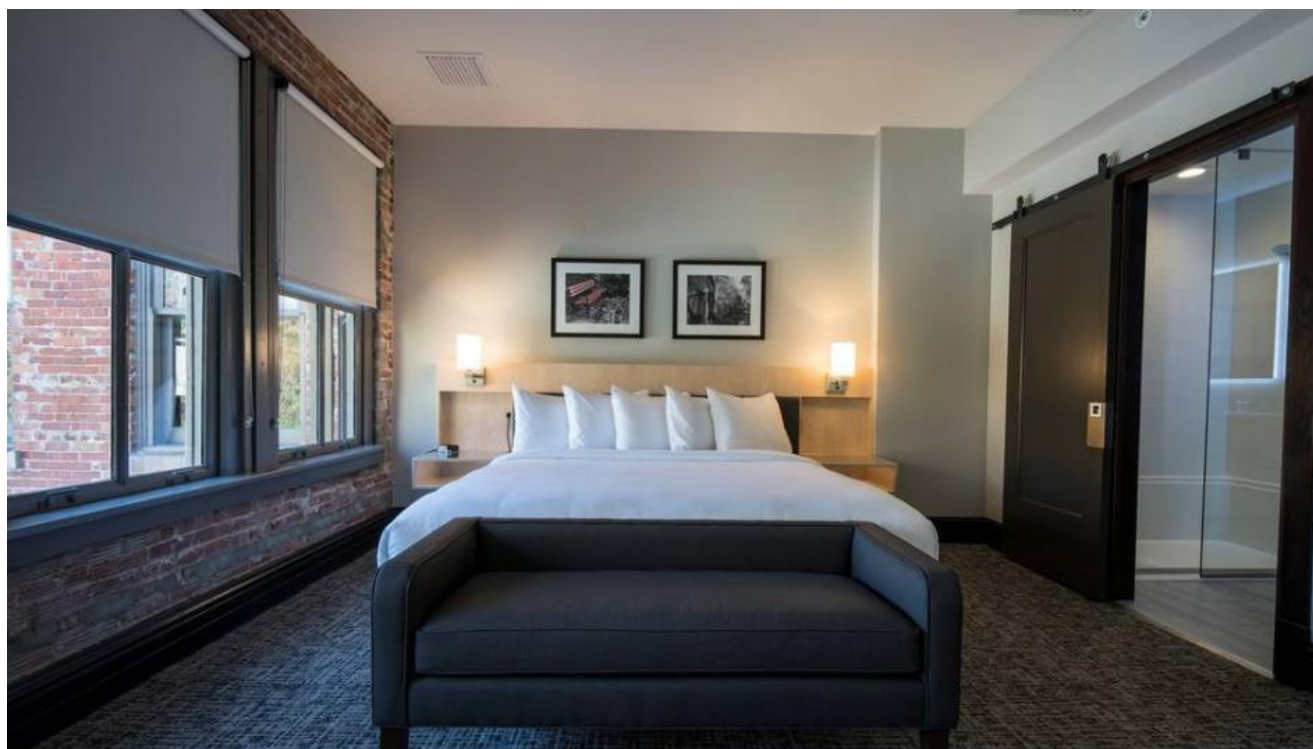


America's Best Racing

Two Great Places to Stay in Hot Springs

EVENTS / TRAVEL

March 28th, 2017 BY Sara Dacus



A room at The Waters hotel in Hot Springs, Ark. (Courtesy The Waters)

Horse racing fans heading to [Oaklawn Park](#) in Hot Springs, Ark., have two new incredible lodging options that have opened since last season: The Waters and The Hotel Hot Springs. Both hotels are located in historic downtown and are within walking distance to many great Spa City attractions, restaurants, bars and shops, and both are a short drive away from the track. I have been a guest at both establishments and can give each a hearty recommendation.

[The Waters, an Ascend Hotel Collection Member](#), is 62-room boutique hotel located across the street from Bathhouse Row. It opened at the end of February after an 18-month renovation of the 100-year-old Thompson building, which first housed medical offices. Much of the original structure has been incorporated into the modern redesign. The lobby and hallways were preserved and original marble and doors were repurposed.

The Avenue, the restaurant on the ground floor of The Waters, is named for the Central Avenue address. Chef Casey Copeland, a Le Cordon Bleu graduate, presents southern-inspired artisanal cuisine. The small plates and shareables are intended to provide patrons with an intimate experience in the space that features photographs of Central Avenue throughout the ages.



The Waters welcoming exterior shows classical inspiration. (Sara Dacus photo)

The morning of the Rebel Stakes, we saw Triple Crown-winning jockey Victor Espinoza checking out of The Waters. During our stay, we visited in the restaurant and bar with many other racing fans and insiders. I am confident the hotel will continue to grow as a hub for visitors to Oaklawn.

[The Hotel Hot Springs](#) was formerly known as The Austin. It is connected to the Hot Springs Convention Center. The new ownership completely gutted the building and started again with just the outside shell. Each of the 196 guest rooms are completely renovated and have plank flooring. The expanded bathrooms have grey granite countertops and white tile flooring.

The lobby has a bar and seating areas to accommodate a large number of people. The Inside Track and Grill Sports Lounge features 40 TVs and both indoor and outdoor seating. They serve a complimentary full breakfast each morning from 6 until 9, and then the restaurant reopens at 11 a.m. and closes at midnight. A spa, pool and fitness center will soon be added to the hotel's amenities.



Start and amazing meal at Bone's Chophouse with the crawfish cornbread. (Courtesy of Bone's Chophouse)

Racing fans heading to Hot Springs, Ark. for the Grade 1 [Arkansas Derby](#) on April 14 at [Oaklawn Park](#) have plenty of options for dining.

No matter the budget, a winning plate awaits in the Spa City.

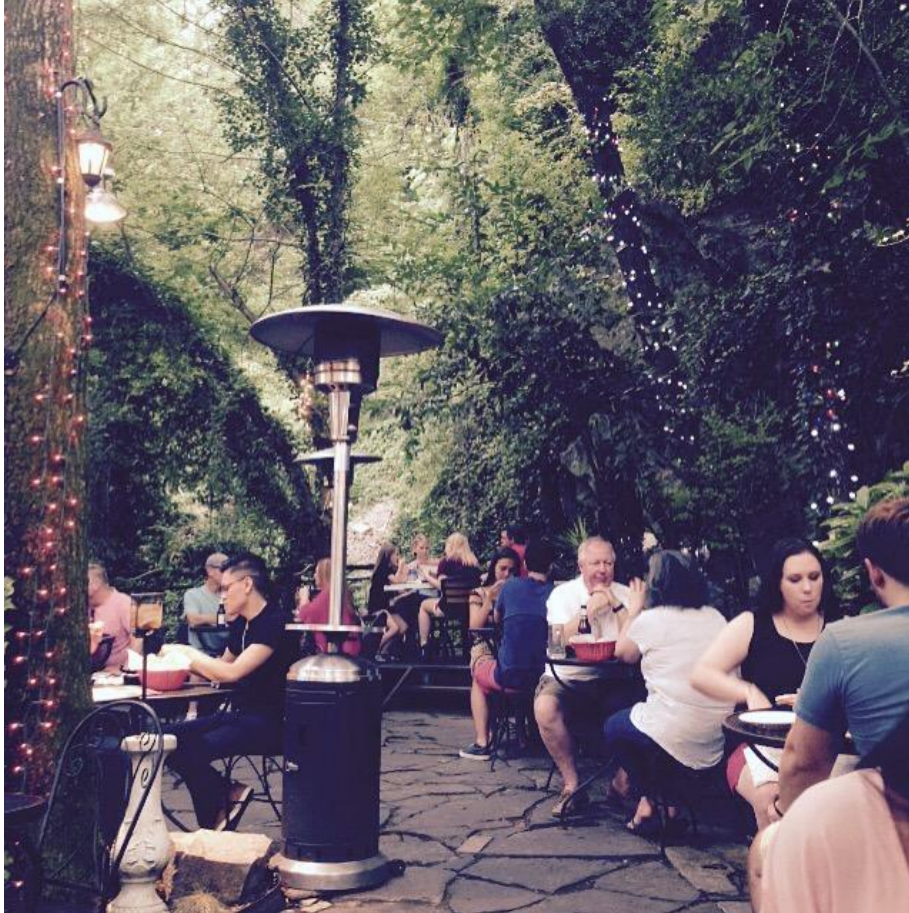


Dinner entree at Bone's Chophouse. (Courtesy of Bone's Chophouse)

WIN: [Bone's Chophouse](#)

[Bone's Chophouse](#), which opened in December, quickly became a favorite among horsemen and fans during its first live race meet. The restaurant offers unparalleled service in an elegant

environment. Begin with house favorites like crawfish cornbread or fried green tomatoes. Next, savor a signature steak or their one-of-a-kind shrimp and grits. Finish with heavenly crème brûlée. All of this can be paired with selections from a premium wine list. Bone's is a great place to celebrate your wins or forget about your losses.



Patio dining at Rolando's. (Sara Dacus photo)

PLACE: [Rolando's Nuevo Latino Restaurante](#)

Serving Ecuadorian cuisine, [Rolando's](#) is a gem in historic downtown Hot Springs. If the weather lends to dining al fresco, ask to be seated on the patio, where light-drizzled trees illuminate the miniature cliffs of the national park in a patio garden. If dining inside, ask to be seated upstairs in the speakeasy. Either location often offers live music, and both locations are great for enjoying a champagne margarita, featuring an inverted miniature bottle of Korbel, or Rolando's famous mojito. Recommended plato principal: Camorones Bohemios.

SHOW: Superior Bathhouse Brewery

[Superior Bathhouse Brewery](#), located on iconic Bathhouse Row, is the only brewery located in a national park, and it is the first to utilize thermal waters in beer. Currently, the Superior serves 12 beers on tap, and some of the beers rotate. Proprietress Rose Schweikhart gives each beer a name that invokes its story. For example, Hitchcock Springs Kolsch is named for the closest spring to the Superior, which is right outside the brewery window. Another beer name with history is Madden's No. 1. It is brewed using the same recipe New York gangster Owney Madden, who died and is buried in Hot Springs, used during prohibition. The Superior has an eclectic menu featuring paninis, brats, and salads and also serves homemade gelato.