

# Fact Sheet

**September 12-15, 2019**  
**chowchowasheville.com**



## Overview and Mission

Asheville's new culinary spectacular, Chow Chow, welcomes everyone to the table. Named for a piquant vegetable slaw that has perked up generations of Appalachian dinner plates, this immersive festival celebrates the bounty of the ancient landscape that envelops the city. Here where food and creativity flow like the rushing streams and rivers of the surrounding Appalachian Mountains, local taste-makers prepare and share meals that nourish the soul as well as sustain the land.

A 501c3 nonprofit organization\*, Chow Chow celebrates and delves deep into the culinary ingenuity that has elevated Asheville's food scene to a national level. Meaningful programming connects attendees to the many hands and makers who create in this vibrant corner of southern Appalachia. The festival's lineup includes grand tasting events, chef demonstrations, charitable collaborations, and a unique array of hands-on experiences in and around town.

In Asheville, the table is always set—and Chow Chow invites all to feast on the abundance.

## Anticipated Demographics

- 5,000 attendees
- 40 percent out-of-town and 60 percent local
- College educated, culinary arts enthusiasts
- Disposable income of \$100,000+

## Schedule of Events

Approximately 20 signature events showcasing unique assets of the Appalachia-immersive culinary art experiences throughout Asheville and Buncombe county.

- Pickled in the Park Grand Tasting and Makers Market in Pack Square
- Demonstrations and Hands-On Classes

- Mountain Top Soiree: Opening Party Celebration
- Foraging & Feast
- Behind-the-Scenes Agriculture Tour at Biltmore Estate
- Follow the Barrel at Antidote
- Women on the Urban Trail
- Fire It Up!
- Plant All Mighty
- LaZoom: A Moveable Feast
- Brown in the South @ Chow Chow
- Sips & Sun Salutations
- Fairview Farm Trot
- Appalachian Soul Food: A Celebration of The Block
- Noble Direct: A Field-to-Fork Brunch
- Cacao, Confections, and Cocktails
- Clay Bake at East Fork
- Chow Time Closing Party

## Board of Directors

**President:** Katie Button, Chef and Owner, Cúrate and Button Co. & Bagels

**Vice President:** Jael Rattigan, Co-Founder, CEO, French Broad Chocolate

**Treasurer:** Meherwan Irani, Chai Pani Chef & Chief Chaiwalla, Chai Pani Restaurant Group

**Secretary:** Jessica Reiser, Co-Founder, Burial Beer

Aaron Grier, Owner, Gaining Ground Farm

Adrian Vassallo, DHG Wealth Advisors

Charles Hodge, Owner and Operator, Sovereign Remedies

Connie Matisse, Founder/Chief Creative Officer, East Fork Pottery

Dodie Stephens, Director of Communications, Explore Asheville, CVB

Elizabeth Sims, Owner, Elizabeth Sims Consulting

Jane Anderson, Executive Director, AIR (Asheville Independent Restaurant Association)

John Fleeer, Chef/Owner, Rhubarb and The Rhu

Kevin Barnes, Owner, Ultimate Ice Cream

Peter Pollay, Executive Chef/Co-Founder, Mandara Hospitality Group

Stephanie Brown, President and CEO, Explore Asheville, CVB

Vanessa Salomo, Director of Business Development, Corner Kitchen & Chesnut

## Goals of the Festival

### Inclusivity

Chow Chow seeks to highlight the diversity of the local culinary landscape by highlighting all aspects of the supply chain—farmers and makers, mixologists and chefs, brewers and bakers, and artists and potters.

Culinary influences here range from the recipes of our Appalachian roots to the ethnic backgrounds of generations of immigrants who have settled in these mountains. Chow Chow celebrates this delicious melting pot of culinary traditions and showcases modern takes on the region's historic foods and cultures.

Chow Chow features elite experiences designed to appeal to affluent attendees from the community and region—with the goal of building our reputation to a national level. In addition to high-end experiences, Chow Chow offers affordable programming with the express intention of making the festival widely accessible to the local community.

### Community Wellness

Chow Chow counts access to affordable and healthy food and the reduction of food waste among its top priorities for charitable giving. Through a partnership with MANNA Food Bank, the festival shines a light on these vital initiatives through educational programming, cooking demonstrations, and farmer/chef collaborations. At the close of the festival, MANNA will help gather leftover food to be redirected to local charitable organizations that serve community members in need.

### Environmental Impact

Chow Chow strives to minimize the festival's environmental footprint. In addition to alleviating food waste with the help of MANNA Food Bank, our partnerships with local waste-reduction enterprises Danny's Dumpsters and Blue Ridge Biofuels will maximize composting efforts and convert used cooking oil into biofuel.

### Celebrating Asheville

Though a cadre of celebrity chefs drive interest and raise Chow Chow's profile, Asheville takes center stage as the undeniable star of the show. Taking turns in the spotlight are the city's natural beauty and outdoor pursuits, edible landscapes and

clean mountain water, and a local-first food ecosystem made up of diverse and eclectic independent businesses. In other words, Chow Chow is sure to whet the Asheville appetite of festival goers—who are sure to leave hungry for a return visit.

Chow Chow also provides a venue for residents to connect and deepen their relationships with local makers, helping to enhance the sustainability of the local creative sector.

## **Economic Impact and City Support**

The Chow Chow nonprofit organization and a volunteer board of committed and passionate local business leaders will support the festival, in collaboration with city and county governments. Chow Chow also encourages private businesses to join in support of the initiative.

Chow Chow is poised to generate a significant local economic impact. Attendee spending will provide wages, business revenue, and tax dollars for citizens. Businesses that will benefit range from farms and restaurants to event suppliers, transportation providers, rental and insurance companies, and more. Sponsorship opportunities will garner the attention of regional and national corporations, while media attention will tell the Asheville story on a national scale.

## **Community Partners**

Our signature programming will involve several community partners and organizations including but not limited to:

- ASAP
- Asheville Art Museum
- Asheville Brewer's Alliance
- Asheville Downtown Association
- Asheville Independent Restaurants (AIR)
- The Center for Craft
- Explore Asheville
- FEEDS
- Food Connection
- Green Opportunities
- Haywood Street and Welcome Table
- MANNA (2019 Signature Charity of Chow Chow)
- YMCA of Western North Carolina

Chow Chow programming will partner with local farmers, chefs, artists, beverage and culinary professionals, and more. Chow Chow's Grand Tasting Tent and Makers Market will showcase 45 makers, 20 artisan food producers, 30 beverage makers, and a variety of booths hosted by sponsors and nonprofit organizations.

## About Asheville

Cradled by one million acres of pristine forests, the highest peaks in the eastern U.S. and hundreds of family farms—including the agricultural legacy of George Vanderbilt at Biltmore—food culture in Asheville, North Carolina has gained national attention as a small but mighty hub for culinary creativity where Appalachian food traditions, global perspectives and artisan goods go together like a picnic and the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Asheville's collaborative food community has a rich legacy of living off the land. Chefs work directly with regional cheese makers, bakers, apiaries, flower farms, foragers, potters, dairies and family farms in a melting-pot food scene that is innovating cuisine, unearthing tradition and nabbing more James Beard nominations than the average small city.

Beyond the plate, Asheville offers immersive culinary adventures. Visitors enjoy guided foraging expeditions in one of the most biodiverse landscapes on the planet; they drink in mountain views atop rooftop bars; they sip Biltmore Estate-grown wines at America's most visited winery; and they sample their way across farm tours, cheese trails, chocolate factories and farmers markets. As a bonus, Asheville hosts a parade of food festivals celebrating beer, bacon, bread, cheese, truffles and cider—all of life's gastronomic pleasures.

If craft beer is your passion, Asheville is a virtual beer garden. Closing in on 50 breweries—more per capita than any other U.S. city—the Asheville area is leading the industry with homegrown brewing icons, major craft-beer brands, and colorful breweries and tasting rooms where good vibes and good beer sync up in interesting ways. Try a pint in an antique caboose, a space-invaded movie house, on a mountainside farmstead or in an art enclave along the third oldest river in the world.

Asheville's success with craft beer has naturally given rise to a burgeoning craft spirit and beverage scene. The city is now brimming with artisan moonshine, multiple cideries, rum and gin distillers and makers of saké, mead, kombucha and Appalachian-foraged amaro.

This inspired, friendly and free-spirited food scene tucked in the mountains of Appalachia has been called "Foodtopia," but the locals just call it home. Plan a trip at [ExploreAsheville.com](http://ExploreAsheville.com).

## Staff Contacts

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### Boiler Plate

*Chow Chow: An Asheville Culinary Event, set for September 12-15, 2019, celebrates the area's unique community of makers, each adding singular ingredients to the city's recipe for culinary identity. From nationally recognized chefs to multi-generational farmers to millers, bakers, potters, weavers, and brewers, Chow Chow shines a light on the ancient creative spirit of the region that continues to make the Blue Ridge Mountains a delicious place to taste, to see, to explore and to experience through immersive culinary experiences.*