

# Crafty Corridors

Unique handmade gifts can be found along North Carolina's craft trails.

A TRIP down one of North Carolina's many craft trails promises one-of-a-kind treasures that make perfect holiday gifts. Handmade pottery, jewelry, paintings, sculptures and more are offered at off-the-beaten-path studios and galleries, seasonal holiday festivals and family shops, where creative hands shape everyday material into objets d'art.

There are more than 100 potteries around Seagrove, North Carolina, as well as some in the Robbins and Sanford areas. Here you'll find handmade pitchers, bowls, mugs, plates, face jugs and other items, each sporting a unique shape and/or glaze and signed with names like Owen, Teague, Morgan and Cole. During the first weekend in December, many area shops hold a Christmas open house.

If you want to see an array of pottery in one setting, plan to attend the 26th Annual Seagrove Pottery Festival at the Seagrove School, November 17–18. The even larger Sanford Pottery Festival, May 5–6, 2008, attracts more than 120 artists from throughout the Southeast.

"North Carolina has the largest grouping of potteries in the country," notes potter Kenneth Neilsen of D.K. Clay Pottery in Sanford.



North Carolina Pottery Center

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"People have been making pottery in the Seagrove area since the 1700s and here in the Sanford area since the 1920s."

East of Seagrove and north of Sanford lies Chapel Hill/Orange County, where approximately 800 artists work in a variety of mediums. Works by more than 60 of the artists will be featured at the 13th Orange County Artists Guild Annual Open Studio Tour, planned for November 3–4 and November

10–11. This tour is patterned after a slightly older annual event, the Chatham Studio Tour, in neighboring Chatham County. Now in its 15th year and scheduled for December 1–2 and December 8–9, the Chatham tour will include more than 50 Chatham County artists.

Art takes on a nautical character at galleries in Beaufort, New Bern, Morehead City, Manteo, Nags Head and other towns on the North Carolina Coast. One of the best places to see hand-carved duck decoys and meet their creators is the 20th Annual Core Sound Decoy Festival, December 1–2, on Harkers Island. Sponsored by the Core Sound Decoy Carvers Guild, the event will feature more than 100 carvers and artists. At the same time, the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum hosts its Waterfowl Weekend, featuring decoy carvers, artists and model boat builders.

—Carol Timblin

## Touring the Trails

- Seagrove Pottery Festival: 336/873-7887, [seagrovetteryheritage.com](http://seagrovetteryheritage.com).
- Seagrove-area potteries maps: [VisitSeagroveNC.com](http://VisitSeagroveNC.com), [HeartofNorthCarolina.com](http://HeartofNorthCarolina.com)
- Sanford Pottery Festival: 919/708-5788, [sanfordpottery.com](http://sanfordpottery.com)
- Orange County tour maps: 919/932-3438, [orangecountyartistsguild.com](http://orangecountyartistsguild.com)
- Chatham County tour maps: 336/581-3763, [chathamartistsguild.com](http://chathamartistsguild.com)
- Core Sound Decoy Festival: 252/838-8818, [decoyguild.com](http://decoyguild.com)
- Waterfowl Weekend: 252/728-1500, [coresound.com](http://coresound.com)