Beyond its historic districts, Greensboro electrifies its residents with activities. The three-day, annual National Folk Festival has featured the nation’s musicians, dancers, and craftsmen for more than 75 years. Held in September, the event draws more than 130,000 people and 300 performers to celebrate the roots, richness and variety of American culture. For a more unique musical experience, check out Guilford College’s Eastern Musical Festival. This five-week summer festival and music conservatory features more than 200 student artists and 80 faculty members from across the country specializing in symphonic works, chamber music and avant-garde musical acts.

For those who prefer life to be a bit more fast-paced, check out the Greensboro Roller Derby. Founded in 2010, this sports program on wheels features four teams of women: an “All-Star” team, the Gate City Roller Girls, as well as three interleague teams — the Battleground Betties, Elm Street Nightmares and Mad Dollies. A more traditional sports fan will enjoy watching the Greensboro Grasshoppers — the city’s minor league baseball team — the Wyndham Championship, an annual PGA Tour tournament; or one of the many sports within the Atlantic Coast Conference, headquartered in Greensboro.

After the game of your choice, grab a bite at one of the 70-plus restaurants that comprise Greensboro’s three-mile-long “International Restaurant Row.” Enjoy exotic fare from more than 10 cultures including Caribbean, Israeli, Filipino and African — or go traditional American at Hops Burger Bar, named the number-one “Most Delectable Burger Joint in America” by TripAdvisor. End the evening with a cupcake from Maxie B’s or a cone from Yum Yums — or, perhaps, a home-brewed draft from one of the city’s five breweries.

As evidenced through its unique neighborhoods, higher education institutions, employers and long list of things to do, Greensboro draws families of all demographics. With a cost of living 10.4 percent lower than the U.S. average, it skews young, with a median age of 34 years old, but also draws retirees, who make up nearly 12 percent of the population. It’s a city packed with history and full of intimate, inviting neighborhoods. Oh yeah — and it just won “Best BBQ Pork Sandwich in North Carolina” (Stamey’s Barbeque) from USA Today. So there’s that.

Janet Echelman was selected to design an iconic sculpture to anchor the new LeBauer City Park in downtown Greensboro, North Carolina.

“I discovered that Greensboro was nicknamed the ‘Textile Capital of the World’ and ‘Gateway City’ because six railroad lines intersected there,” said Echelman, “so I started tracing the railway lines and marking the historic textile mills that dotted the routes. These routes brought together people from diverse cultures and races, so I wove together lines of brilliant color that meet at the center, and titled it ‘Where We Met.’” Photo: Cecelia Thompson