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Charleston

Gracious living and history galore are the heart and soul of this Southern city. By Chris Dixon

Charleston native Darius Rucker, a country-music performer who is also lead singer of rock group Hootie & the Blowfish, has a soft spot for **Peninsula Grill**, a top-rated eatery located in the deluxe **Planters Inn**. "The coconut cake is to die for," says Rucker, who lives in Mount Pleasant. "My wife and I were there with friends recently and got one for the table and another to take home."

Where to Stay

Planters Inn, 112 North Market St., 722-2345; plantersinn.com: A luxurious retreat in the heart of downtown's historic district. On the premises is Peninsula Grill, one of Charleston's most refined restaurants.

Where to Eat

Peninsula Grill, **Planters Inn**, 112 North Market St., 723-0700; peninsulagrill.com: Robert Carter's fare (oyster stew; bourbon-grilled jumbo shrimp) is justifiably praised. Ditto the 11-layer coconut cake.