**Nicer restaurants:**

1. Husk <http://www.husknashville.com/>
   1. This is one of Nashville’s semi-new restaurants. It has a sister restaurant in Charleston as well. I have not been here yet, but I have heard nothing but AMAZING things about it. It’s a little bit nicer than your average restaurant in Nashville.
2. Pinewood Social <http://pinewoodsocial.com/>
   1. Also a relatively new restaurant in Nashville. Again, I have not been here yet, but apparently (according to Thrillist) this is one of the top restaurants in the country!! Aka, it must be amazing. And I am now dying to go.
3. Rolf & Daughters <http://www.rolfanddaughters.com/>
   1. One of the best restaurants for dinner in Nashville. It’s nicer than your average spot in Nashville, but it’s not fancy. It has received a lot of attention in the food world and is consistently a foodie fave. Sort of elevated southern fusion sort of fare. It’s in this neat industrial building.
4. Etch <http://etchrestaurant.com/>
   1. This is probably one of the fanciest restaurants in Nashville. I haven’t been, but I’ve heard their food is delicious. My dad took some of his business partners here and loved it.
5. Watermark <http://www.watermark-restaurant.com/>
   1. Best seafood in town. This place is pretty fancy, and if the weather is nice, they have a lovely outdoor space on their second floor. The food is great. But, it doesn’t really exude “Nasvhille” if you know what I mean. Great food, but if you’re looking for great food and a Nashville experience, you’d be better off going somewhere else.
6. City House <http://cityhousenashville.com/>
   1. Again, haven’t been here, but I’ve heard great things about both the food and the ambiance. I believe it’s rustic Italian.

**More casual restaurants:**

1. Sambuca <http://www.sambucarestaurant.com/>
   1. This restaurant is in the gulch, which is a fun, up-and-coming area. It’s located underneath Watermark – the fancy seafood restaurant I mentioned earlier. This restaurant is good, but again, I wouldn’t peg it as the ultimate Nashville experience. The food is always delicious and portions are huge, and more often than not, they have live music. But I would almost say it has a chain restaurant-like feel to it.
2. Urban Grub <http://urbangrub.net/>
   1. Urban Grub specializes in upscale southern food. If you go, definitely get the fried pork fries. It’s located on 12th Ave. South, which is a really fun area with lots of cute bars, restaurants and coffee shops.
3. Burger Up <http://www.burger-up.com/>
   1. Burger Up has been around since I was in college, but I absolutely love it. They serve gourmet burgers that are delicious and come in all sorts of varieties – salmon burger, bison burger, etc. I would sort of compare it to DMK burger bar here in Chicago if you’ve ever been there, but it’s nicer. Also, they have delicious truffle fries and fried pickles. It’s communal style seating with large wooden tables and they have a lot of driftwood paneling – a very cute place. It’s also on 12th Ave. South.
4. Virago <http://mstreetnashville.com/restaurants/virago>
   1. Best sushi in town for sure. Nashville is definitely not known for their sushi. So if you’re in the mood for sushi, go here! Their sushi is really yummy and they have really good cocktails, too. Virago is owned by a company that owns a lot of other great restaurants in Nashville like:
5. Whiskey Kitchen <http://mstreetnashville.com/restaurants/whiskey-kitchen>
   1. I would describe Whiskey Kitchen’s fare as elevated southern bar food. Everything is super yummy and the drinks are great, too – especially their whiskey sour punch which comes in pitchers! They also have a cute patio – even in the winter it’s open with little firepits. It does get pretty crowded though, so go early if you go here.
6. The Tavern <http://mstreetnashville.com/restaurants/tavern>
   1. Also owned by the same company. I’ve only been here once, and I thought it was decent. My friends really seem to like it thought. It’s a good spot for brunch.
7. Saint Añejo <http://mstreetnashville.com/restaurants/saint-anejo>
   1. Again, another restaurant owned by MStreet. This is a Mexican restaurant. I’ve been once and it was right when it opened, so I think they still had a little refinement to do. But their food is good and their drinks are pretty good, too. They also have a tequila library! And the ambiance is super cute. It’s located near The Gulch neighborhood – right by Whiskey Kitchen.
8. Taco Mamacita <http://tacomamacita.com/>
   1. Taco Mamacita is a fun, pretty casual place with delicious tacos and sides – like their street corn! You get three tacos and a side for a great price. Their margaritas are yummy, too. And they have “skinny” margaritas! Also the décor is so, so cute!
9. The Pharmacy
   1. This is the “new” burger spot in town. Now that it’s here, people don’t go to Burger Up as much. They’re very different though. The Pharmacy is more of what you think of when you think of a yummy, greasy cheeseburger. They’re delicious. It’s also a German biergarten and has a beautiful patio. It’s right next door to a cute, speak-easy bar called Holland House.
10. Josephine <http://www.josephineon12th.com/>
    1. This is a newer spot in town. It’s supposed to be outstanding and the presentation of their food is supposed to be absolutely beautiful.
11. Prima <http://www.primanashville.com/>
    1. Also rather newer, so I have not been. But have heard and read great things and it looks like a very beautiful spot!

**Casual Lunch/Brunch spots:**

1. [Biscuit love](http://www.biscuitlovebrunch.com/)
   1. This place is relatively new and has been written up in all of the food publications and food blogs around the country. They don't take reservations, and the line gets very long, so go early! The line does most pretty fast, though. They have a variety of biscuit sandwiches – their biscuits are phenomenal. Can’t go wrong with any of them, but if you want a true Nashville experience, get the Nashville hot chicken biscuit sandwich. Also, get the doughscuits. They’re – you guess it – doughnut biscuits. They come with like blueberry and lemon and ricotta, if I remember correctly. And they are SO good.
2. Fido
   1. One of my fave little spots in Nashville. It’s all dog themed ☺ And the food is just done well! Think sandwiches, salads, cookies, cakes, specialty coffee. It has a very coffee-shop esque feel to it. It’s best for breakfast or lunch – but the line gets pretty long, so it’s best to go earlier.
3. Edley’s BBQ <http://edleysbbq.com/>
   1. This is one of my favorite BBQ places in Nashville. One of their special sandwichs is called the Tuck: Loaded with brisket, pimento cheese and a fried egg! Also, their BBQ nachos are amazing. Another good BBQ place is Peg Leg Porker – it’s off the beaten path, much more local if you’re looking for that experience.
4. Jack’s BBQ <http://jacksbarbque.com/>
   1. I’ve never been here, but it’s probably the most famous BBQ place in Nashville. It’s quite touristy though, and is on the main strip of Broadway, nestled in between all of the honky-tonk bars and neon lights.
5. Peg Leg Porker <http://peglegporker.com/>
   1. This is another of my favorite BBQ spots in Nash (keep in mind, my hometown, Memphis, is the real BBQ capital of the world, so I’m never too too impressed). Peg Leg Porker is definitely more popular with the locals – it’s sort of off of the beaten path, but very yummy!
6. Arnold’s Country Kitchen <http://www.yelp.com/biz/arnolds-country-kitchen-nashville>
   1. As legit southern as you can get. It’s a homestyle kitchen serving up all the southern staples on lunch trays. Super casual.
7. Hattie B’s Hot Chicken <http://www.hattieb.com/>
   1. Nashville is famous for their hot chicken. Basically it’s chicken dipped in hot sauce then fried. It’s very famous and very delicious, if you like spicy food.
8. Two Boots Pizza <http://nashville.twoboots.com/>
   1. This is a newish pizza place, NY style pizza. They have pizza that has Hattie B’s hot chicken on it! It’s got cute décor, just a little hole in the wall and it’s open until 4 am.
9. Loveless Café <http://www.lovelesscafe.com/>
   1. Loveless Café is a very famous restaurant “in” Nashville – it’s a little outside of the city. I’ve never been, but it’s apparently a big tourist attraction. They throw rolls at you, and it’s definitely southern cooking. I’ve heard pretty good things. But again, definitely a touristy place.
10. The Pfunky Griddle <http://www.thepfunkygriddle.com/>
    1. The Pfunky Griddle is such a cute place. It’s definitely off the beaten path, in a weird part of town, but it’s worth the trek. It’s my favorite breakfast spot. Every table has a griddle in the middle of it where you cook your own pancakes! You get unlimited pancake batter and choose your toppings – things like bananas, chocolate chips, etc. There are two batters: 5-grain and unbleached white batter. The 5-grain has cinnamon in it and is delicious! You’ll probably hear a lot about (and see a long line at) Pancake Pantry. That place is the biggest tourist trap ever and I think their food is so overrated. It is not worth it in my opinion.
11. Más Tacos <https://www.facebook.com/mastacos/info/?tab=overview>
    1. I haven’t been here, but it started out as a food truck in East Nashville, and might travel to other areas – I cant remember. But it’s very famous and is supposed to have really amazing tacos.
12. Las Paletas <http://laspaletasnashville.com/>
    1. Super cute Mexican popsicle place with innovative flavors – they’re all delicious!
13. Five Daughters Nashville
    1. They have very famous doughnuts – they’re the supplier for Barista Parlor’s doughnuts. I’ve never been, but I have had one of their doughnuts – and they’re scrumptious.
14. [Barista Parlor](http://www.baristaparlor.com/)
    1. Also a great spot for brunch/coffee/just to visit. A ton of celebrity spottings here. They have a ton of specialty roast coffees, biscuit sandwiches and baked goods. They have these 100-layer doughnuts that are phenomenal.

**Bars:**

1. [Pinewood social](http://pinewoodsocial.com/)
   1. Very trendy social club in Nashville. They have multiple bars, a bowling alley, karaoke and a pool. Some of the areas can be rented out for private events. Their food is supposed to be pretty good. It has been written up a lot in Thrillist.

1. The Patterson House <http://thepattersonnashville.com/>
   1. This is the sister speakeasy to the Violet Hour in Chicago. It’s super cool. It’s got an old, library sort of feel to it. There’s always a wait, but it’s fun and the drinks are delicious.
2. Holland House <http://www.hollandhousebarandrefuge.com/>
   1. This place is in East Nashville, which is like the up and coming area right now. It’s definitely coming up, so the neighborhood is not super developed yet. This bar is nice, it’s sort of speakeasy-esque. The drinks are great. And it’s next door to The Pharmacy ( the burger place). If you go to The Pharmacy for dinner, there will probably be a wait. Put your name on the list then go next door to Holland House for a drink while you wait. The executive chef from Holland House recently competed on Chopped on the Food Network.
3. Rebar <http://rebarnashville.com/wordpress/>
   1. Rebar is definitely more of a casual bar. It’s located on a strip with a bunch of bars where locals and grad students hang out. It’s fun and funky and pretty Nashville. They serve this drink called the bushwacker, which is an alcoholic milkshake. But be careful, they’re very strong.
4. Losers <http://losersbarnashville.com/>
   1. Losers is next door to Rebar. Again, it’s more of a local Nashville bar. Right next door to it is Winners. All of these spots are authentic and fun!
5. Red Door Saloon <http://www.thereddoorsaloon.com/>
   1. This is actually modeled off of a Chicago bar! They have tons of Chicago sports paraphernalia. It’s barely a block up from Winners, Losers and Rebar. It’s a fun place. If you go, go near the back by the bathrooms…there’s a teeny, tiny hole in the floor…bend down and look through it. It’s tradition. Ask about it if you can’t find it. Sounds strange, but it’s part of the experience!
6. Honky Tonk Central <http://www.honkytonkcentral.com/>
   1. If you want a Nashville, musicy, touristy experience without getting too terribly touristy, go here. I love this place. It’s three levels and on each level they have a different live band playing country music. It’s on Broadway, which is the main honky tonk strip with all of the neon lights and bars.
7. The Big Bang <http://thebigbangbar.com/>
   1. The Big Bang is one of my favorite places in Nashville. It’s a dueling piano bar, and you can request basically any song and they’ll play it. It doesn’t get as crowded as some of the other bars on Broadway, which is nice.
8. Paradise Park <http://www.paradiseparkonline.com/>
   1. This place is hilarious. It’s modeled after a trailer park. So the inside is literally like being inside of a trailer park. And they serve patty melts and tater tots ☺
9. The Stage <http://thestageonbroadway.com/theStageOn/home.php>
   1. The Stage is definitely a hot spot for Nashville tourists. It has live country bands that are pretty well known every night. It was featured in the movie Country Strong. No surprise, there is always a huge line to get inside.
10. Tootsie’s <http://www.tootsies.net/>
    1. The epitome of Nashville and all of its history all in one bar. It’s super authentic and historical and was voted best honky-tonk bar in the world. It’s a hole in the wall and super divey, but so amazing. They have bands on each level playing live country. A must-visit spot for first timers in Nashville.
11. Lonnie’s <http://lonnieswesternroom.com/>
    1. Lonny’s is the best karaoke bar in the world. It is so good, that I no longer appreciate karaoke anywhere else. Tons of famous country singers were discovered here. It’s in Printer’s Ally, which a cute part downtown. And there’s always a man selling hotdogs outside. ☺
12. Santa’s Pub <http://santaspub.com/contactus.php>
    1. Santa’s was voted number one dive bar in the world. And let me tell you, this is the diveiest bar I’ve ever, ever, ever been to. It’s called Santa’s because everything is Christmas-themed. It’s legit in a trailer, and they have crazy karaoke. It’s pretty epic. But just be prepared for super dive bar status.
13. Holland House
    1. Fun little bar next to the Pharmacy – great cocktails and very cute décor. There’s always a wait at the Pharmacy, so I like to go and put my name on the list there, then have Cocktails at Holland House while I wait.
14. [Acme](http://theacmenashville.com/calendar/)
    1. Another hot spot in Chicago right now. It’s multiple levels and always has live music. On one floor is Nashville-style honkey-tonk country music and on the second floor there is normally a DJ with EDM-like music. The food is pretty good, and they have live music at brunch.

**Tourist attractions:**

1. Cheekwood <http://www.cheekwood.org/Gardens.aspx>
   1. Cheekwood is Nashville’s Botanic Garden and it is so beautiful.
2. Belle Meade
   1. Belle Meade is a neighborhood a little outside of the city. The houses and yards are huge and beautiful. Sometimes it’s fun to just drive through there to see them, they’re literally like mansions.
3. Franklin, TN <http://www.franklin-gov.com/>
   1. Franklin is a little “suburb” or town outside of Nashville. It’s very quaint and has it’s own little downtown area that might be worth seeing if you have time. All of the country stars live there, like Faith Hill and Tim McGraw, Nicole Kidman, etc.
4. The Country Music Hall of Fame <http://countrymusichalloffame.org/>
   1. Self explanatory. I’ve never been, but I’ve heard it’s pretty awesome!
5. Music Row <http://www.musicrow.com/>
   1. Music Row is basically behind Vanderbilt’s campus. It’s where all of the music labels are. It’s pretty cool to see, because there are hundreds of them. One of them even has a guitar-shaped swimming pool!
6. Vanderbilt <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/>
   1. If you have time, you should walk through Vandy’s campus, it really is quite beautiful.
7. Hillsboro Village
   1. Hillsboro is a cute little neighborhood right by Vanderbilt. They have lots of shops and restaurants. I would say this is the more hipstery area of Nashville. I used to live there! ☺
8. Broadway Street
   1. Broadway is the main drag downtown. It’s the spot with all of the neon lights, honky tonk bars, live music and cowboy boots shops. There are tons of boot shops. A one of the boot shops if you buy two pairs of boots, you get one free!
9. The Ryman Auditorium <http://ryman.com/>
   1. This is where the original Grand Ole Opry took place!
10. The Bluebird Café <http://bluebirdcafe.com/index.cfm>
    1. The Bluebird Café became super famous after the show Nashville aired. They have live country performances every night. It’s super intimate and very authentic. If you go, you must have tickets, or you can try to go early around 5 pm to see if you can get last-minute bench seats.
11. [Pedal pub](http://www.nashvillepedaltavern.com/)
    1. Pedal pub has been around in Nashville since I was in college and has been something I have wanted to do for a long time. This would be a really fun activity if everyone is up for it!