



Summerville History

A Summer Sanctuary with a Glass of Sweet Tea

Summerville originated as a seasonal sanctuary for the Lowcountry plantation families who sought relief in the shade of the Summerville pines.

Originally inhabited only May to November, the town was first permanently settled in the 1830s. Not long after, industrialization rode into town in the form of a railroad. New Summerville, now known as Downtown Summerville, was purchased by the railroad to bring commercialization in the form of Charleston commuters to the town.

To relocate commercial centers near the tracks, land was cleared, stripping Summerville of its greatest asset during the summer months: the pine trees. To stop the destruction of the town's greatest natural resource, the village officially transitioned into a town in 1847 and passed its first law, prohibiting the cutting of trees of a certain size without permission.

Years later, while recovering from the toll the Civil War took on the South, an earthquake struck the town in 1886, causing extensive destruction. The town was on its way to ruin when good fortune struck from Paris, France. The International Congress of Physicians, otherwise known as the "Tuberculosis Congress," declared Summerville "one of the two healthiest places in the world" for the treatment and recovery of lung and throat disorders. Believing the turpentine scent of the town's pine trees contained healing powers, Northerners and Europeans flocked to Summerville during the winter months for their health, many of them staying for the mild climate and hunting season.

Today Summerville is a thriving community known for its Southern hospitality.

Sweet Tea



Please Sip Responsibly

Summerville, SC is quickly becoming known for more than its outstanding flora and pigskin. The town lays claim to the fact that Summerville is the Birthplace of Sweet Tea.

It's true – In 1888 Dr. Shepard established the Pinehurst Tea Plantation, which was the first **successful** commercially-grown tea in the U.S. Right here in Sweet Summerville. Today those tea plants live on at the Charleston Tea Plantation, more than 100 years after Dr. Shepard won "Best Tea" at the World Fair in 1904.

Join us for the Sweet Life and enjoy a glass of ice cold tea in Summerville...the front porch of Southern hospitality.

While the town continues to grow, Summerville maintains the quaint, small-town ambiance and dedication to hospitality that was the foundation on which it was built.