

## Dave's Hot Chicken Will Spice Up NC's Chicken Sandwich appetite with 10 new sites

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Fried chicken chain Dave's Hot Chicken will open 10 North Carolina locations, with most planned for the Triangle. *WONHO FRANK LEE*

A new Los Angeles chain will turn up the heat on the fried chicken arms race when it moves into the Triangle later this year.

The fast casual chain Dave's Hot Chicken announced it will open 10 locations in North Carolina, including the Triangle, Fayetteville, Wilmington and Jacksonville. The majority will open in the Triangle, said Katie Winegard, the operating partner of the local franchise group, which also owns multiple Blaze Pizza locations in North Carolina.

Popularized in Nashville and beloved for its searing spice, hot chicken eased its way into the mainstream over the past decade.

Dave's Hot Chicken began as a pop-up in Los Angeles in 2017 and grew to seven brick and mortar shops in California. The company's entry into North Carolina is part of a larger franchising blitz, as Dave's puts locations in Canada, Chicago and Texas.

The chicken at Dave's is boneless, served as tenders or sandwiches. Seven spice levels escalate from the tepid "no spice" to the glowing red "reaper." Sides include fries, mac and cheese and kale slaw. Beer and wine will be served, as well.



The heat at Dave's Hot Chicken ranges from "no spice" to "reaper," as the LA-based chain moves into North Carolina. *DAVE'S HOT CHICKEN*

## THE CHICKEN SANDWICH WARS

The chicken sandwich world hasn't been the same since [Popeye's debuted its new sandwich in 2019](#), selling out of a two-month supply in two weeks and challenging Chick-fil-A's strangle-hold on the fried-chicken-between-a-bun market.

Locally, Raleigh's Ashley Christensen announced last year plans to open a new fast casual restaurant devoted to sandwiches, BB's Crispy Chicken.

Currently, Dave's is still scouting the Triangle for locations, Winegard said, with an aim to open the first restaurant this fall.

"We don't have any leases signed yet, but we're actively trying to find the right spot," Winegard said. "We're looking anywhere in the Triangle, somewhere that's going to pop."

Due to COVID, Winegard said she hadn't ventured out to California to try Dave's in person, but that the company shipped her ingredients to recreate the hot chicken at home. Winegard said fans of spice will find a lot to love.

"I'm not afraid of spice, but I'll tell you, it's hot," Winegard said.

Link: <http://bit.ly/39U0UrM>