



Food Tips

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One advantage of working at the School is the opportunity to learn all about North Carolina, including all of the great local food. I will return to reporting on my meetings with city and county managers in a future post. For now, however, I want to mention a couple of food discoveries for your future reference. This is important stuff.

[Zuma Coffee](#) in Marshall is terrific. The Madison County Manager, Steve Garrison, encouraged me to stop and try the Zuma Gold before leaving town. It is an intense and wonderful chocolate cookie. It has a soft espresso filling and it just melts in your mouth (but not in your hand). I also felt obligated to try their peanut butter cookie because it is my absolute favorite cookie. My grandmother used to make peanut butter cookies that were the best in the world. Zuma comes in a close second.



Zuma Coffee is a great find and I encourage you to check it out. I recommend driving north out of Asheville on the two-lane road that follows the French Broad River all the way to downtown Marshall. It is a beautiful drive (not much longer and much less traffic than the four-lane highway) and there will be a cookie at the end as a reward.



[Over Easy](#) is my favorite breakfast place in Asheville. The reason: maple pecan pancakes. Oh my. I am crazy about pancakes and these are so intensely good. They are served steaming hot and are covered with a wonderful mixture of pecans and syrup. I know nothing about cooking, but somehow the pecans and the syrup are cooked together so that the entire experience is greater than the sum of the parts. After eating a short stack of these pancakes, I feel the way a character in one of Fred Chappell's novels once described feeling after a meal: "It was an elegant sufficiency and any more would be a superfluity."

Over Easy is a tiny place with a friendly staff just up the street from the Mellow Mushroom on Broadway. I have only ordered the pancakes, but I have sampled my son's biscuits and gravy on occasion. They are the best looking biscuits I've ever seen, and they are tasty too. I was talking with the owner on an earlier visit and she told me that she could only remember one complaint about their food. A young couple had hardly touched their biscuits and she asked if something was wrong. The man answered that they didn't care for the biscuits because "they tasted homemade." The owner looked at me and said, "They were from Florida." Say no more.

Have breakfast at Over Easy the next time you are in Asheville, and then follow the French Broad to Marshall for coffee and cookies later in the day.