

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

VISITORS GUIDE

FALL/WINTER 2025

DIVE
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SCENE

PG. 38

ROCK
LOBSTERS
HOCKEY

PG. 52

LOCAL
EVENTS

PG. 55

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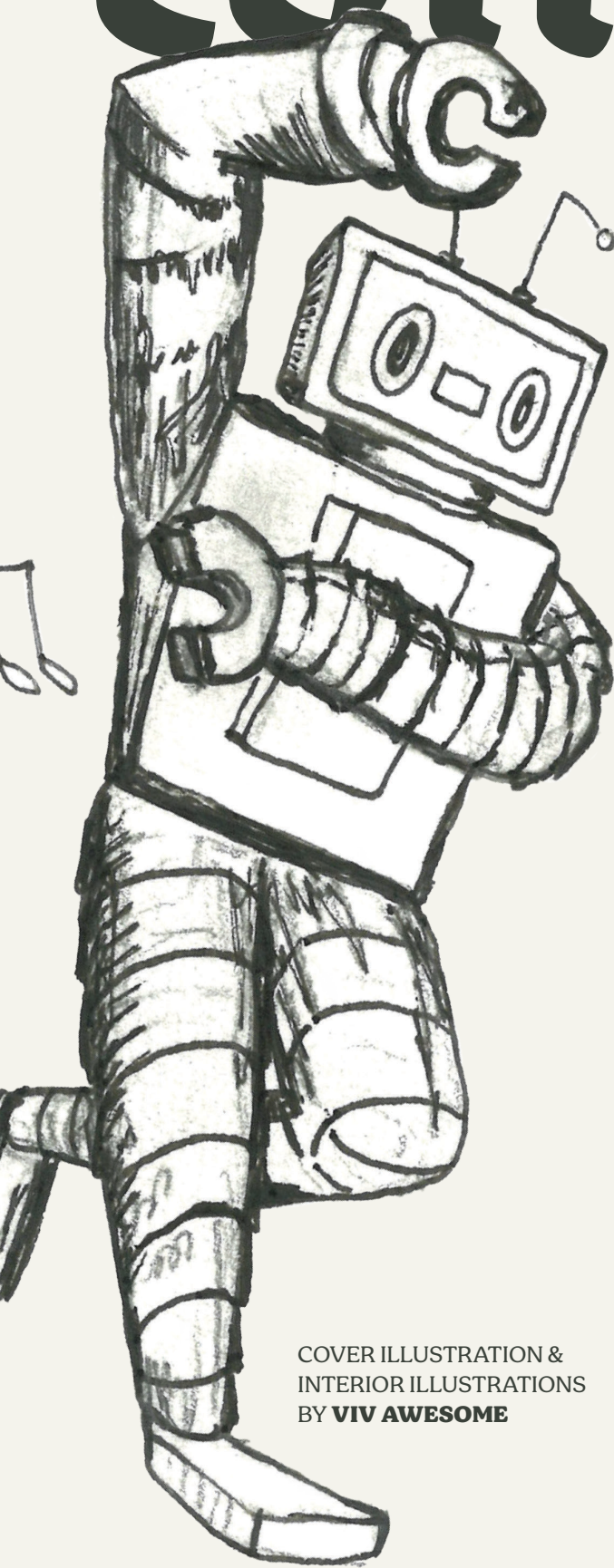
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BY **VIV AWESOME**

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UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

VISITORS GUIDE

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UGA Campus |
Sidney Chansamone

history lesson

The intertwined history of Athens and UGA

Did you know that public higher education in America has its roots here in Athens? The University of Georgia was founded in 1785 when Abraham Baldwin and members of the Georgia legislature chartered the first publicly funded institution of higher learning. The school was originally named Franklin College, in honor of Benjamin Franklin, and is considered one of the oldest public universities in the country. It was renamed the University of Georgia in 1859 after the founding of the institution's college of law.

To contribute to the building of the campus, lawmakers sold 40,000 acres of state land — rolling, riverside terrain — and received a generous donation of 633 acres from John Milledge, an early politician and a founder of the city. The campus was officially built in 1801, and the original area is now part of what's considered North Campus, a leafy hilltop quad of neo-classical buildings perched above the Oconee River.

That same year, Clarke County was established and named in honor of a Revolutionary War Brigadier General Elijah Clarke, who was also a Georgia legislator. The city of Athens was officially incorporated shortly after in 1806, named by Milledge for Greece's classical city of higher learning.

As the school grew, so did the city of Athens, and it became a hub of both culture and industry, with textile mills, brickworks and the railroad as pri-

mary facets of the economy. With the university, it was able to weather the Civil War and Reconstruction and prosper again.

In the 20th century, the city was home to a thriving Black middle-class community with businesses centered around Washington and Hull streets, and came to host numerous civil rights protests in the 1960s. This period saw the integration of the university by Black students Charlayne Hunter-Gault and Hamilton Holmes in 1961, and UGA became a significant part of the Civil Rights Movement.

The local music scene hit the national stage in the 1970s and 1980s with the rise of major bands like R.E.M. and The B-52's. The Georgia Theatre and the 40 Watt Club became landmark venues, and the culture of music continues to shape and define the city. In the 1990s, downtown Athens saw a \$100 million revitalization that restored its vibrant, small-town vibe, with storefronts filled with local shops and cafes that draw visitors from all over. In 1990, the city and county unified their governments to become Athens-Clarke County.

It was during that time that UGA experienced a great increase in recognition and enrollment as the state of Georgia established the HOPE Scholarship. This encouraged Georgia high school students to stay here for college and help build up Georgia's educational system. The school, and thus Athens itself, also received national attention with the increasing success of the school's athletic program, especially its champion football team, which draws more than 90,000 fans to the town on Saturdays in the fall. But Athens remains a draw on its own, laying claim to a lively music culture, an abundance of art, activist movements, festivals, outdoor activities, restaurants and more.

uga timeline

From 1785 to today



1785

The University of Georgia becomes the birthplace of public higher education in America when Georgia charters a state-supported university.

1801

John Milledge (later the governor of Georgia) purchases and then donates 633 acres above the Oconee River for the college, now known as North Campus.

1804

The first class of students graduates from the university, which was known as Franklin College at the time.

1806

The city of Athens is officially incorporated.

1859

The law school is founded and the school is renamed the University of Georgia.

1862

Congress passes the Morrill Act to raise money for colleges to teach agriculture and mechanical arts, allowing UGA to expand its curriculum.

1892

UGA plays its first football game, against Mercer on Herty Field. (UGA won.)

1918

White women are allowed to enroll at UGA for the first time.

1929

Sanford Stadium was built, with expansions in later years.

1942

A Navy preflight training program operates on campus as part of the wartime effort.

1961

Charlayne Hunter-Gault and Hamilton Holmes become the first

Black students to attend UGA. The Holmes-Hunter Academic Building on North Campus is later named for them.

1964

Stegeman Coliseum, originally named the Georgia Coliseum, is built for basketball and agricultural events.

1980

R.E.M. plays its first show at a birthday party in the old St. Mary's Episcopal Church.

1990

Athens forms a unified government with Clarke County, creating Athens-Clarke County.

1992

The HOPE Scholarship encourages Georgia students to remain in state for college. UGA's first-year enrollment increases five-fold from 1992 to 2022.

1996

Sanford Stadium is used as a soccer venue for the Olympics. The U.S. Women's team won the gold medal between the hedges.

2012

The College of Engineering opens, bringing the total number of colleges and schools within the university to 18.

2019

The field at Sanford Stadium is named Dooley Field in honor of the late football coach and athletic director.

2020

The College of Education is named in honor of Mary Frances Early, the first Black student to graduate from UGA.

2022

The Georgia Bulldogs become College Football Playoff National Champions, beating longtime rival Alabama 33 to 18.

2023

The UGA football team wins its second consecutive national championship, the fourth in the program's history.

2024

Construction begins on UGA's School of Medicine.

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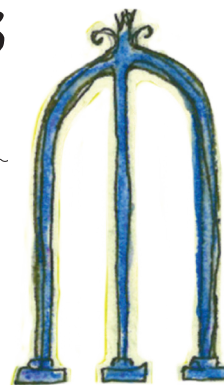
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main campus

Navigating UGA



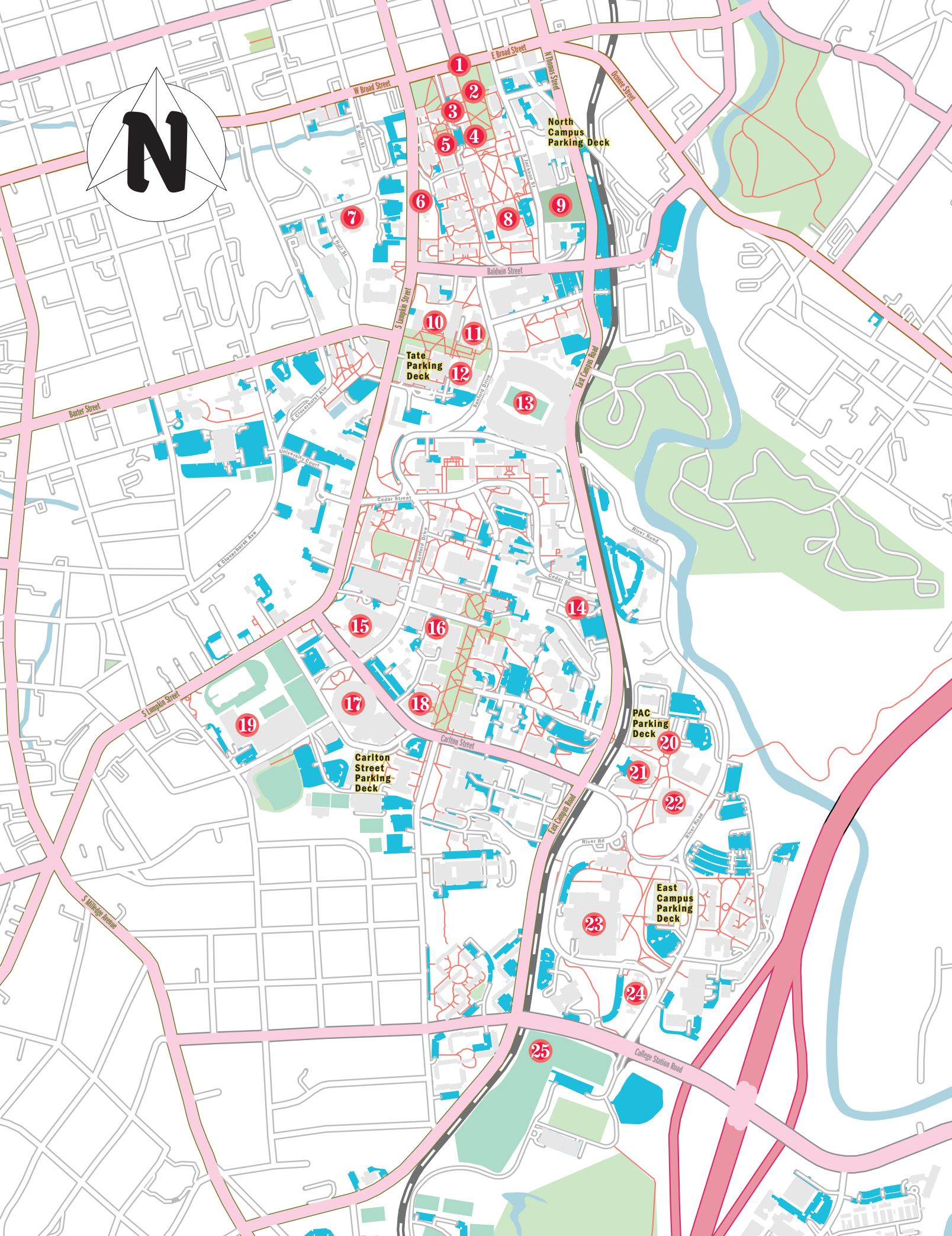
1. The Arch
2. North Campus Quad
3. The Chapel
4. Old College
5. Herty Field
6. Founders Memorial Garden
7. Special Collections Libraries
8. Main Library
9. Jackson Street Cemetery
10. Zell B. Miller Learning Center
11. Campus Bookstore
12. Tate Student Center
13. Sanford Stadium
14. Georgia Museum of Natural History
15. The University of Georgia Center
for Continuing Education and Hotel
16. UGA Trial Gardens
17. Stegeman Coliseum
18. Science Learning Center
19. Butts-Mehre Heritage Hall
20. Performing Arts Center
21. Georgia Museum of Art
22. Lamar Dodd School of Art
23. Ramsey Student Center
24. UGA Visitors Center
25. Intramural Fields Area

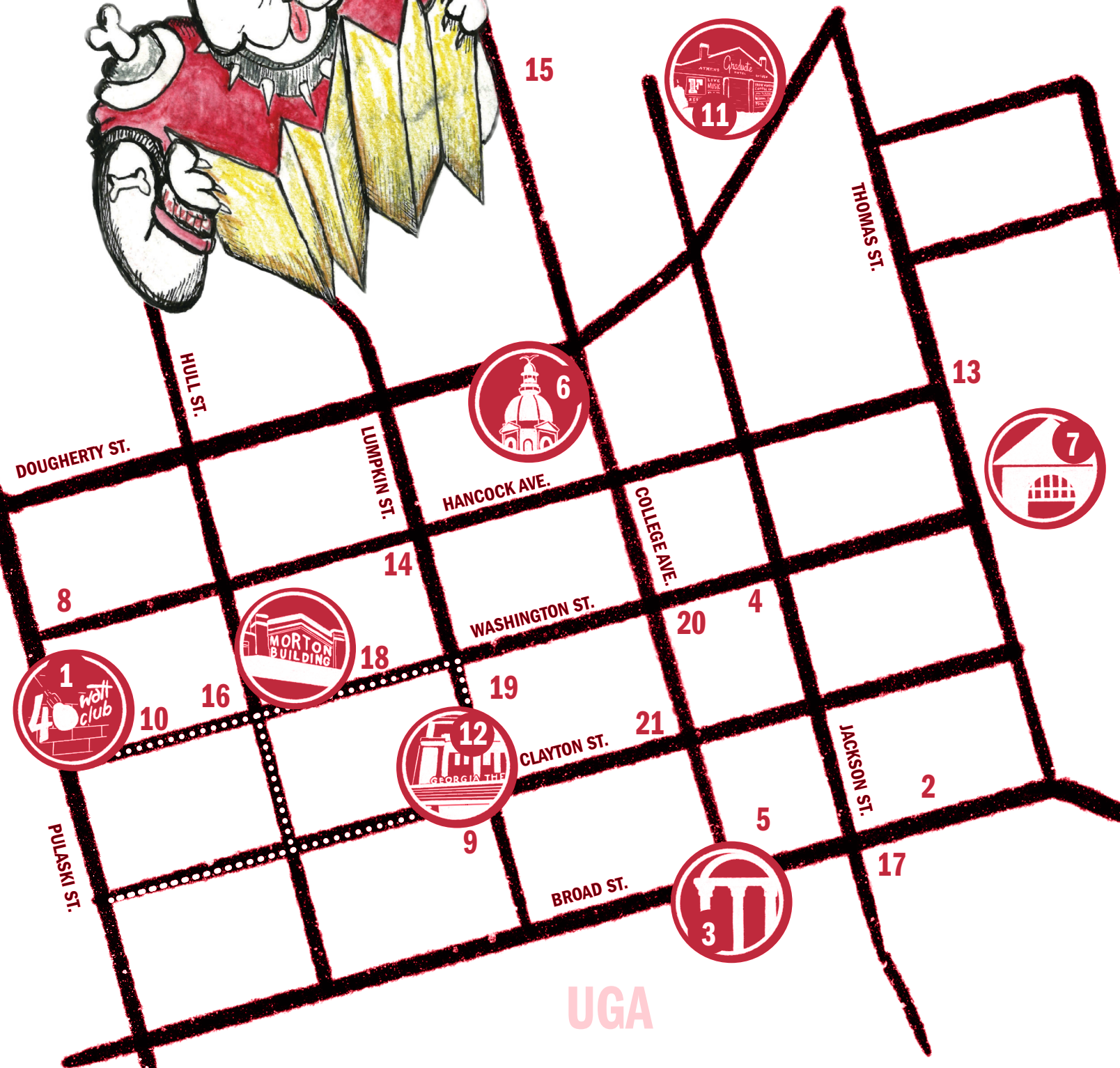
Abc visitor parking deck

 uga building

 surface parking

 footpath





MUSIC WALK OF FAME

.....

downtown athens

Landmarks and businesses downtown

1. 40 Watt Club
2. Allgood Lounge
3. The Arch
4. Boar's Head Lounge
5. Blue Sky Bar
6. City Hall
7. Classic Center
8. Creature Comforts
9. Cutters Pub
10. Flicker Theatre & Bar
11. The Foundry
12. Georgia Theatre
13. Hybar
14. Little Kings Shuffle Club
15. Lyndon House
16. Manhattan Cafe
17. Magnolias
18. Morton Theatre
19. Nowhere Bar
20. Wonderbar
21. Wuxtry Records



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Photo Courtesy of Hotel Indigo

suite life

Hotels near UGA



Courtyard by Marriott **0.3 miles from UGA**

This newly renovated hotel across the street from The Classic Center opened in summer 2025. There's pet-friendly rooms, business amenities, a bar and a restaurant serving breakfast and dinner.

Georgia Center for Continuing Education and Hotel **On campus at UGA**

If you want to be in the heart of campus, there's no better spot than this UGA-operated complex near Myers Quad and Stegeman Coliseum. It includes a 200-room hotel, two restaurants and a shuttle service.

Georgia Gameday Center **0.2 miles from UGA**

If you're traveling to Athens for a Georgia game or just want to be immersed in school spirit, this complex in the heart of downtown Athens has one- two- and three-bedroom condos decked out in red and black. Units include kitchens, washers and dryers, access to a fitness center, a parking garage and free Jittery Joe's coffee.

Hyatt Place **0.3 miles from UGA**

This 190-room hotel on North Thomas Street, adjacent to the Classic Center, has a variety of different suite layouts. Amenities include free breakfast, a restaurant and a rooftop bar with panoramic views of downtown Athens. Hyatt Place also offers meeting and event spaces, as well as in-house catering.

Holiday Inn Express **0.4 miles from UGA**

Just off West Broad Street, the Holiday Inn Express has single and double rooms, onsite parking, hot breakfast and a pool.

Homewood Suites by Hilton **0.3 miles from UGA**

This Broad Street hotel with larger suites offers several family-friendly features like free breakfast, connecting rooms and kitchens. You'll also find a courtyard, gym and meeting spaces.

Hotel Indigo **0.4 miles from UGA**

This upscale, environmentally friendly hotel has a wide range of suites featuring modern farmhouse furnishings. Hotel Indigo also houses a concert venue, art gallery, restaurant, courtyard and electric car charging stations. Its private event spaces host meetings, conferences and even weddings.

SpringHill Suites by Marriott **0.2 miles from UGA**

This downtown hotel offers one- and two-room suites with sleeper sofas and work areas. Enjoy free breakfast, a fitness center and a cafe.

BOOK BOUTIQUE

The Athenian **0.4 miles from UGA**

This historic inn inside a Greek Revival antebellum home opened in 2024. It features 11 rooms dressed in pastel tones and elegant furnishings all named after Greek gods and goddesses. There's also a lounge with a self-serve bar, snacks and Condor chocolates.

The Bell **0.2 miles from UGA**

The former Southern Bell Telephone & Telegraph Exchange building built in 1916 was recently transformed into a boutique hotel which opened its doors in May. The Bell features eight unique rooms and a four-bedroom suite for larger parties, as well as a lounge, bar and terrace. No space is without rich colors, art deco patterns and nods to history like the original switchboards lining the hall.

Hotel Abacus **0.6 miles from UGA**

Formerly Graduate Athens, this beautifully renovated hotel is only a 10-minute walk from The Arch. Features include an outdoor pool, Wes Anderson-level eclectic decor and The Foundry, a restaurant and venue that hosts live music and trivia. Iron Works Coffee, the lobby-level cafe, serves breakfast, lunch, coffee and tea (see page 25).

Rivet House **2 miles from UGA**

A 10-minute drive from campus, this luxury hotel in the Southern Mill complex opened in 2024. It offers a variety of stylish suites a little further from downtown, but you can always catch the shuttle to Sanford Stadium on game days. Enjoy the luxury spa, eat at Osteria Olio or Puma Yu's and explore the surrounding historic Boulevard neighborhood.

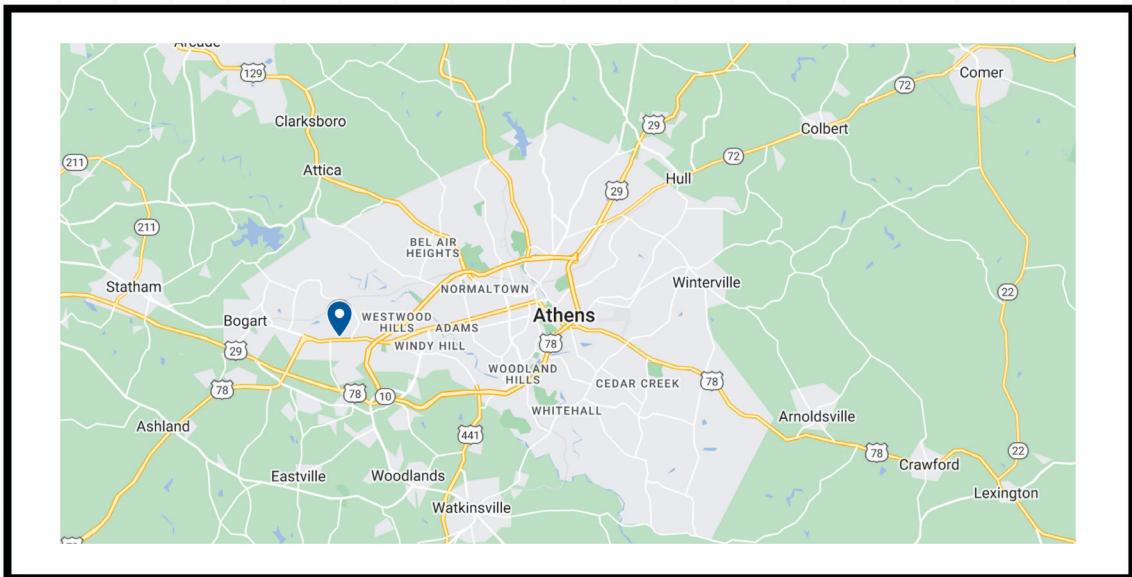
The Rushmore **0.7 miles from UGA**

If you're wanting to stay closer to Five Points or have a student involved in Greek Life on Milledge Avenue, you might opt for this luxury bed and breakfast from ATH | BNB. It features 14 unique suites and all-inclusive amenities.

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transportation guide

How to navigate Athens

getting here

While most visitors drive to Athens, many flying in from out of state arrive at Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, 70 miles away, then rent a car or hop on a shuttle. Flights to the local Athens-Ben Epps airport, a few miles east of downtown, are available through charter service only.

Charter Flights

If you're planning on flying private, Aero Center Atlanta, Wheels Up, Georgia Jet and AirStar Charter all service Athens-Ben Epps airport. Visit accgov.com/airport for more information.

Groome Transportation

This airport shuttle service runs multiple times a day from Hartsfield-Jackson to Athens and back. There are several pick-up and drop-off spots around town, including the Georgia Center and The Classic Center. Fares range from \$25 to \$59, and one pet is allowed to travel with you for an additional \$15 fee. Online booking discounts are available.

getting around

Campus Transit

The UGA bus system can save you the time and expense of looking for parking, and it travels far beyond campus. Regular bus services do not run during home football games, when the university is closed or the weekend immediately before or after a holiday. Download the UGA app for route information.

Athens-Clarke County Transit

Athens Transit is a free city bus with 20 different routes. Hours of operation end at 9:45 p.m. during the week and at 6:45 p.m. over the weekend. Buses don't run on major holidays. Download the MyStop app for route tracking and additional information.

Downtown Parking

Parking downtown can be tricky for visitors and locals alike, but you'll usually have better luck finding a spot on side streets and farther away from the Arch. Metered parking is \$2 an hour with a two-hour maximum from Monday to Saturday from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., and all meters take credit cards. After 6 p.m., you may purchase additional time, and after 10 p.m., the meters are not monitored.

You can find city-operated decks on College Avenue, a few blocks from the Arch, and on West Washington Street, closer to restaurants and music venues. Parking in these lots is typically free for the first 30 minutes, and \$1 per additional hour. The downtown area has several spots and lots that can be reserved and paid for via the ParkMobile app, which is also utilized by several UGA decks.

Most street parking is free on Sundays and major holidays and is not monitored after 10 p.m. Many university lots are free and unrestricted on non-game weekends.

visitors centers

UGA Visitors Center

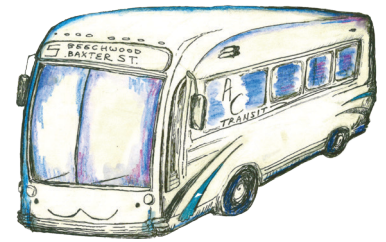
405 College Station Road

Here you can schedule campus tours, get directions and find answers to all your UGA-related questions. The Visitors Center is open Monday through Friday and on select Saturdays. Student-led campus tours consist of an admissions presentation, a ride on a UGA bus and an hour-long walking tour of historic North Campus. Registration is required for all guests, but self-guided tour maps are also available.

Historic Athens Welcome Center

280 E. Dougherty Street

Stop by the Church-Waddell-Brumby House, which is considered the oldest surviving residence in Athens, to grab a map, sign up for tours and get Athens-themed gifts. Open seven days a week, the welcome center offers both guided and self-guided tours about Black history, local music, historic homes and more.





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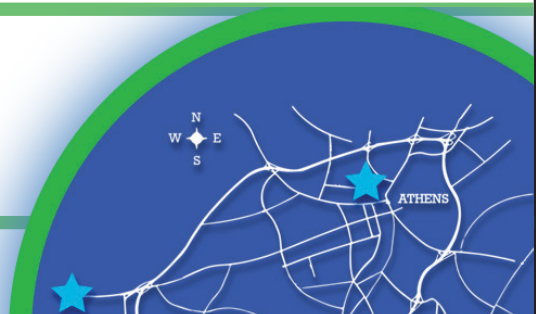
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2025 football schedule

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**August 30
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**October 4
Kentucky**
Sanford Stadium
Athens, GA

**November 8
Mississippi State**
Davis Wade Stadium
Starkville, MS

**September 6
Austin Peay**
Sanford Stadium
Athens, GA

**October 11
Auburn**
Jordan-Hare Stadium
Auburn, AL

**November 15
Texas**
Sanford Stadium
Athens, GA

**September 13
Tennessee**
Neyland Stadium
Knoxville, TN

**October 18
Ole Miss**
Sanford Stadium
Athens, GA

**November 22
Charlotte**
Sanford Stadium
Athens, GA

**September 27
Alabama**
Sanford Stadium
Athens, GA

**November 1
Florida**
EverBank Stadium
Jacksonville, FL

**November 28
Georgia Tech**
Mercedes-Benz Stadium
Atlanta, GA

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eat + drink



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Ted's Most Best |
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restaurant guide

Unique places to eat for any occasion

vegan and vegetarian



Maepole • \$-\$\$

At the laid back Maepole — a brainchild of Peter Dale, the chef/owner behind the likes of Seabear and The National — diners select from bases, sides and proteins to create new twists on meat-and-three plates. Don't forget to add house-made dressings and toppings like kimchi, avocado and roasted seeds.

Mannaweenta • \$

The idea to open Mannaweenta came to owner Haregu Bahtu in a dream, and now the Ethiopian and Eritrean restaurant is celebrating a decade in business. Praised as one of the best international eateries in Athens, the menu includes meat and veggie plates featuring chicken, lamb, beef, lentils, chickpeas and more. It's also a great place to try injera or Ethiopian coffee and tea.

Taste of India • \$-\$\$

This East Side restaurant has been serving authentic Indian food since 2005. Entrees include korma, saag, curry, tikka masala and biryani with your choice of protein served with basmati rice. Their menu also features a huge selection of starters, sides, and specialty dishes.

lunch meeting

Big City Bread Cafe • \$-\$\$

This cafe is open for breakfast, lunch and Friday night dinner. There's burgers, sandwiches, salads and baked goods to enjoy in the spacious dining area or on the shaded patio.

Birdies • \$-\$\$

A newer addition to Prince Avenue, Birdies is a gourmet grocery store with a deli and coffee bar. Get a sandwich, soup, salad or latte and grab a seat at a table, on the patio or at the counter with a beautiful view of Emmanuel Episcopal Church.

The National • \$\$-\$\$\$

This Mediterranean-influenced restaurant on West Hancock Avenue was co-founded by Hugh Acheson and Peter Dale. With serene decor and stellar service, it's ideal for lunch meetings and family celebrations.

Trappeze Pub • \$\$-\$\$\$

Famous for its enormous beer selection, this pub at the corner of Hull and West Washington streets also serves lunch and dinner, catering to carnivores with dishes like the Double Pig (braised pork plus bacon), with plant-based options like the veggie Reuben.

fancy dinner

Chuck's Fish • \$\$\$

Operating in a renovated former Greyhound station, this upscale restaurant features seafood fresh from the owner's dockside wholesale market in Destin. Along with daily specials, Chuck's serves sushi and classics like seared scallops and stuffed shrimp.

The Expat • \$\$\$

This venture from Jerry and Krista Slater, housed in a cozy Five Points cottage, emphasizes inventive cocktails and an Italian cafe-inspired menu, with dishes like sausage tagliatelle, squid ink bucatini and strawberry bruschetta.

Five & Ten • \$\$\$

Before "Top Chef," Hugh Acheson made his name here with innovative takes on Southern fare like cornbread, watermelon salad, fried chicken and Hoppin' John fritters. Located in a historic home on South Milledge Avenue, Five & Ten is a popular spot for special occasions and private events.

Seabear Oyster Bar • \$\$

Go for the namesake shellfish; stay for the crab cakes, lobster rolls and shrimp and grits. Sit at the bar or the outdoor patio; the drinks ledge allows you to set your cocktail down while you wait for a table. There's also a variety of daily specials like ramen on Mondays and low country boils on Thursdays.

brunch



Cafe Racer • \$

Cafe Racer got its start as a popular food truck in Oglethorpe County. Its newest location on West Broad Street has a drive-thru and walk-up window serving Counter Culture Coffee

alongside their signature potato donuts and a variety of breakfast food. They recently introduced a dinner menu as well, which includes burgers, fries, chicken tenders and more.

The Farmcart • \$-\$\$

A family-run business that started as a food truck, The Farmcart expanded into a brick-and-mortar restaurant on Baxter Street in 2019 thanks to the popularity of their flaky biscuit sandwiches full of local ingredients.

Ideal Bagel Co. • \$

Operated by Luna Baking Co., Ideal Bagel serves a variety of bagels and breakfast sandwiches loaded with house-made cream cheese spreads, your choice of meat, fried eggs and toppings. The people are friendly, the service is quick and the seating is plentiful.

Mama's Boy • \$-\$\$

Consistently voted Best Brunch in Athens by Red & Black readers, Mama's Boy serves indulgent breakfast fare like salmon cakes Benedict, breakfast burritos and Georgia peach French toast. There are two locations in Athens and one in Watkinsville now, too.

casual lunch



Em's Kitchen • \$

Owner Emily Ullrich started working at the Hawthorne Drugs soda fountain in 1998, and expanded it into a restaurant 12 years later. A true hidden gem, Em's Kitchen serves breakfast and lunch on weekdays, and it's definitely worth a morning visit for biscuits, omelets, grits, salads, sandwiches and homemade desserts.

Dawg Gone Good BBQ • \$

Serving recipes passed down from his grandmother, owner William "B.J." Hardy keeps things simple but delicious at his restaurant on West Hancock Avenue. Eat classics like pulled pork, mac and cheese and brisket inside the shop or on the outdoor patio.

Poquitos • \$-\$\$

Birria, carnitas, posole and more are served in the former Go Bar space from the former owners of The Grit and Pedro de Paz of Ted's Most Best. Bonus: A sunny corner patio.

Tamez Barbecue • \$-\$\$

Alejandro Tamez's Texas-style barbecue spot with retro decor serves brisket, homemade tortillas and even breakfast burritos.

group gathering



Shokitini • \$-\$\$

This downtown sushi restaurant is a popular spot for parties. It has a huge menu, full bar and several private karaoke rooms.

Ted's Most Best • \$

Families flock to this pizza and pasta place with one of the best patios in town featuring a sandbox. Pizzas are light with thin crusts and salad dressings are made in house.

Tlaloc • \$

This beloved family-owned restaurant serves Mexican and Salvadoran food in a bright orange building on North Chase Street. Keep an eye out for drink specials and taco Tuesdays.

before a show



Clocked! • \$

This American diner on Washington Street is approaching 25 years in business. Eclectic decor and retro branding adorn the dining room and patio, while the offerings range from burgers and hot dogs to fried pickles and black-

berry milkshakes. Plus: they can make almost anything on the menu vegetarian.

FIVE Athens • \$\$-\$\$\$

Five Bar is perfect for indecisive diners. Their menu offers five entrées, wines and cocktails to choose from, with a focus on local ingredients and generous portions. Dinner options include a 12 oz. ribeye, panéed chicken and a gourmet cheeseburger, while brunch ranges from shrimp and grits to breakfast burritos. Don't forget to greet the Beatles mural on your way in and out.

Thai Spoon • \$-\$\$

Voted best family-owned international restaurant by our readers, Thai Spoon is nearing two decades in business between Little Italy and The Globe. Their extensive menu features dozens of Thai rice, noodle, soup and curry dishes.

try something new

Osteria Olio • \$\$-\$\$\$

Located inside the Rivet House hotel (see page 14), Osteria Olio is a new upscale Italian restaurant. Their menu features regionally inspired dishes, wine, beer and cocktails. Stop by or make a reservation for dinner or brunch.

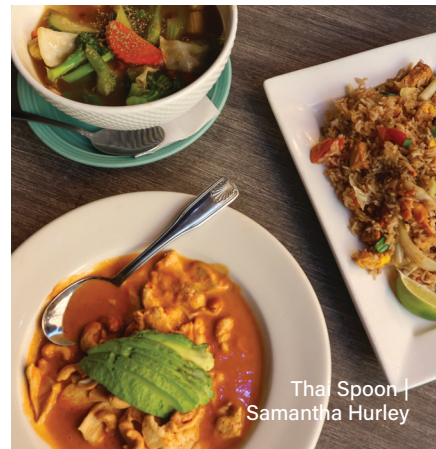
Puma Yu's • \$\$-\$\$\$

This cozy Thai-inspired restaurant by Pete Amadhanirundr and Ally Smith serves dishes

like sesame miso salad, shrimp tempura and garlic pork noodles. Stop by their stylish space in the historic Southern Mill complex for lunch, dinner or one of their creative cocktails featuring Japanese gins and whiskeys.

Pretty Boy • \$\$-\$\$\$

Chef Kenny Nguyen recently opened this modern Vietnamese restaurant on Prince Avenue following a series of pop-ups and an appearance on "Top Chef." Sharing plates range from mushroom rice paper pizza and Vietnamese street corn to coconut-braised ribs and crunchy chicken salad. There's four kinds of customizable pho, unique desserts and Vietnamese coffee.



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Tate Student Center | Jessica Gratigny

campus cafes

Where to eat without leaving campus

Bulldog Bistro

This restaurant inside the Georgia Center for Continuing Education and Hotel is open to hotel guests and visitors alike, with offerings ranging from coffee and ready-made salads and wraps to a full lunch and dinner menu updated each week.

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There are 11 self-serve micro markets across campus that stock grab 'n go meals, snacks, drinks and drugstore essentials. Some also offer frozen foods and treats, and they're open any time the academic buildings are.

Einstein Bros. Bagels

Einstein Bros. has a variety of bagels and breakfast sandwiches ranging from bacon, egg and cheese to avocado toast. They also offer coffee, tea, pastries and sides like chips and fresh fruit. There's a location in the Main Library and another in the Science Learning Center.

FujiSan

While FujiSan sushi is available in various campus markets and UGA dining halls, the main location in Joe Frank Harris Commons on East Campus offers the full range of rolls, poke bowls and gyoza. It's also the only place to get boba tea on campus.

Niche Pizza Co.

UGA's personal pizza kitchen originated in the Niche Dining Commons in Normaltown, but the location in Tate offers the same oven-fired thin crust pizzas as well as Sambazon acai bowls and craft sodas.

Tate Student Center

The Tate food court features familiar chains like Starbucks, Panda Express and Chick-fil-A. Head to the Market at Tate on the other side of the building to get burritos, tacos, quesadillas and salads from Barberitos.

Rothenberger Cafe

Located on the second floor of Amos Hall in the Terry College of Business, the Rothenberger Cafe serves sandwiches, salads and grab 'n go snacks. Breakfast offerings range from pastries and muffins to a peanut butter and banana sandwich, while lunch options include a grilled chicken caesar salad, a turkey sandwich and a grilled cheese. Thanks to a recent revamp, they also offer a limited Starbucks coffee menu.

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classic city classics

Beloved Athens restaurants you have to try

ADD Drug • \$

Athens Discount Drug opened in 1961, and both the pharmacy and old-fashioned lunch counter are both still serving patrons today. Swing by in the morning or early afternoon for breakfast, sandwiches, burgers, milkshakes and more.

Cali N Tito's • \$-\$\$

The Five Points location is close to campus with patio seating and a BYOB policy, while the larger East Side location has a full bar, gelato counter and arcade games. Both spots are beloved by locals, students and families alike for their great atmospheres and some of the best food in town.

DePalma's Italian Cafe • \$-\$\$\$

DePalma's has been serving pizza, pasta and other Italian classics since 1988, with a different menu to try at each of its three Athens locations. Pizza is served by the slice or by the pie, and the gelato flavors change daily.

The Globe • \$\$

Closed for two years during the pandemic, The Globe was refurbished during the downtime and reopened in mid-2022. Traditional pub menu items like fish and chips are complemented by vegetarian options like elote corn ribs and a hummus bowl. The selection of whiskeys has been a hallmark since it opened in 1989.

The Grill • \$-\$\$

This downtown diner first opened its doors in 1981. It may not be open 24 hours a day anymore, but you can still dine on burgers, feta fries, malts and milkshakes.

Last Resort Grill • \$\$-\$\$\$

Founded as a music venue in 1966, Last Resort hosted acts like Jimmy Buffett and Towns Van Zandt before it started serving its signature southern fare. Steaks, praline chicken and crab cakes are all on offer, but don't leave without a slice of white chocolate cheesecake.

Little Italy • \$

Regularly open until 3 a.m., Little Italy has been serving thick and thin crust pizza to Athens' late-night diners since the '90s. Calzones, Italian subs and stromboli are also available.

Strickland's Restaurant • \$

Opened on Broad Street in 1960, the family-owned restaurant eventually settled on Atlanta Highway in 1995. Specializing in southern dishes like ribs, catfish and green beans, Strickland's is open for breakfast, lunch and all your catering needs, with a rotating menu of specials that changes daily.

Weaver D's Delicious Fine Foods • \$

Made famous for owner Dexter Weaver's slogan, "Automatic for the People," which became an R.E.M. album title, this green restaurant on East Broad Street is popular for juicy fried chicken and signature meat-and-three plates. Try the sweet potato souffle or broccoli casserole.



coffee and tea

Your guide to Athens cafes

1000 Faces Coffee

Informed by its founder's decades of international travel, this fair-trade roasting company prioritizes relationships with countries of origin and sustainable coffee consumption. The cafe on North Thomas Street has become an Athens staple, offering artisanal brews and baked goods. Their chai and matcha lattes were also voted best in Athens by our editors.

Bubble Cafe

String lights and floral garlands welcome you into this cozy cafe offering dozens of Taiwanese tea drinks and a full lunch and dinner menu. People flock to Bubble Cafe for the food and drinks alike, but it's also a comfortable spot to work or study just steps from North Campus.

Buvez

This Euro-style cafe on Barber Street serves coffee, tea and craft sodas during the day, then cocktails, wine and beer at night. Their breakfast bagel menu is also a highlight. Buvez also doubles as a music venue, hosting local bands and improv shows every week.

Choco Coffee

This Baxter Street cafe frequently collaborates with other Athens businesses. Alongside its selec-

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tion of Ecuadorian coffee, Choco Coffee serves Independent Baking Co. pastries and Figment Kombucha. Keep an eye out for vintage clothing pop-up sales.

Condor Chocolates

The predecessor and sister business of Choco Coffee, Condor is known for its Ecuadorian chocolates and truffles. They also serve coffee, milkshakes, gelato and baked goods at their cafes in Five Points and downtown.

Hendershot's

This Prince Avenue staple is a coffee shop by day, bar by night and a popular spot for live music, comedy and open mics. The menu features coffee roasted in-house, specialty lattes and dozens of tea flavors. Breakfast and lunch is available until 12:30 p.m., after which cocktails, mocktails, local beer and appetizers are served.

Jittery Joe's

The Classic City's best known coffee brand has expanded to over a dozen locations since 1994. Jittery Joe's serves a full range of coffee (hot, iced and frozen), chai, matcha and baked goods. They also carry a range of custom blends in colorful tins, made in collaboration with local bands, businesses and even the Georgia Bulldogs.

Molly's Coffee Company

This cafe on Macon Highway offers a place to linger and enjoy your coffee away from the bustle of downtown. Molly's serves coffee from 1000 Faces and pastries from Kiki's Bakeshop as well as specialty mochas, matcha and chai.

Iron Works Coffee

Hotel Abacus's lobby-level cafe is open to the public daily until 11 a.m. Enjoy coffee, tea, breakfast and lunch surrounded by eclectic decor. Their menu includes breakfast sandwiches, waffles, avocado toast and more.

Sips Espresso Café

Voted best coffee shop in Athens by our readers in 2024, Sips offers seasonal specialty drinks, latte art and a selection of baked goods. Order from their take-out window or enjoy your drink on their Normaltown patio.

Sunroof Coffee Company

Sunroof's co-founders dreamed of opening their own business as roommates at UGA, and now they serve coffee, chai and more out of their walk-up window in the Mill District.

Walker's Coffee and Pub

A popular bar across from the Arch on College Avenue, Walker's doubles as a coffee shop during the day. It has a selection of coffee, tea and baked goods, as well as a covered patio. They also host Wednesday night bingo.



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bars guide

Where to get a drink in Athens

where to watch a game

Cutters Pub

This downtown bar has tvs, skee-ball, pool, a photo booth and a huge selection of craft beer and bourbon. If the main floor is crowded, head upstairs to the tiki bar. The dollar beer night is as fun as it is affordable.

Paloma Park

Happy hour deals and daily menu discounts make this stylish Tex-Mex restaurant and tequila bar on Washington Street a popular spot for date nights and group outings, while its outdoor beer garden is a great place for live music and watch parties.

The Royal Peasant

Watch the week's top Premier League matches while dining on bangers and mash or "proper plates" like fish and chips at this Five Points British pub with a huge beer list.

where to go on a night out

Blue Sky Bar

With a (sort of) secret entrance, this bar has a speakeasy vibe and boasts more than 100 beers and a substantial whiskey list. If you bring a vinyl on Wednesday nights, they'll play it for you and take a dollar off your drink.

Magnolias

This classic college-town bar at the edge of campus is known for happy hour specials, Long Island iced tea and shots.

Tropical Bar

Patrons can enjoy drinks, dancing, karaoke and more at this downtown Latin bar. Stay posted for regular events with drink specials and DJs.

fun and games

Nowhere Bar

This laid-back dive bar across from the Georgia Theatre was opened by Craig "Sky" Hertwig, a former Georgia All-American in 1994. It's known for live music, darts and pool.

The Rook & Pawn

Have a house cocktail and a snack while competing with friends at this downtown board game cafe. Their impressive selection of over 600 games ranges from classics like Scrabble and Clue to strategy challenges like Catan and Ticket to Ride.

Wonderbar Athens

Wonderbar offers classic arcade games, multiplayer games, board games, and some of the most creative shooters in town. The games are free to play, and the drinks are based off of classic video game characters.



local favorites

Little Kings Shuffle Club

Catering to the local crowd, this bar has plenty of craft beers and a spacious outdoor area. Keep an eye out for special events like craft markets and dance parties.

Manhattan Cafe

One of Athens' best-kept secrets, this hidden gem is a local favorite thanks to the chill atmosphere and cocktails served with zero pretentiousness. Plus: There's always free popcorn.

Normal Bar

A mellow bar catering to Normaltown locals, this spot has an enormous main room and a small outdoor area perfect for date night. Don't miss trivia every Wednesday at 7 p.m. Insider Tip: Order from Automatic Pizza next door for in-bar delivery.

sit n sip

Hidden Gem

This Barber Street spot is pure magic. The menu features curated beers, wines, and house cocktails for the sophisticated sipper. Hanging plants, colorful lighting and eclectic antiques make this a perfect spot for a chill night out or listening to IDM.

Nighthawks Lounge

This art deco bar opened in 2023 and offers cocktails, wine, beer and old-fashioned snacks like pimento cheese and tinned sardines.

The Old Pal

Wood-paneled and serious about mixology, this Normaltown bar has a nice selection of whiskeys. Always wanted to try absinthe or pastis? This is the place for it.

where to get food

Bar Bruno

This Five Points spot describes itself as a "choose your own adventure bar" led by wine expert Greg Smolik and the team behind ZZ & Simone's. Menu items include Italian wines, cocktails and tapas-style dishes.

Hi-Lo Lounge

This Normaltown spot is a neighborhood favorite thanks to a cozy vibe, sizable beer list and creative cocktails. Plus, they have a full lunch and dinner menu including sandwiches, soups, hot dogs and chili.

The Pine Bar

This upscale Five Points bar offers a substantial selection of wine, as well as tapas, charcuterie and entrees like wood-fired oysters.

The World Famous

Located in the Hot Corner District, this bar and restaurant offers American cuisine for late-night cravings. Known for their fun cocktails, stellar french fries and eclectic ambience, the World Famous has something for everyone.

brewery crawl

Beer, wine and spirits



beer

Akademia Brewing Company

In addition to over two dozen original beers and guest brews, Akademia serves wine, cocktails, brunch, lunch and dinner at its combination restaurant and brewery just off Atlanta Highway. The taproom opens up into a spacious bar and dining area, but patrons can also sit outside on the large patio. Don't skip the giant pretzel with ale cheese and honey mustard.

Athentic Brewing Company

This newer addition to Athens' brewery scene is located in Normaltown and offers a variety of beers, from Irish stouts to tropical IPAs. Authentic features indoor and patio seating and also sells cans of beer to take home. They regularly host trivia nights, food trucks and local restaurant pop-ups.

Creature Comforts Brewing Co.

Creature Comforts is a local favorite with over a decade of success behind them. Their downtown taproom is located in the old Snow Tire Co. factory, where you can find year-round favorites like Tropicália and Classic City Lager, or try seasonal flavors like Lemon Shandy, Festbier Lager and Cold Red IPA. In July, Creature Comforts opened Cura, a cocktail lounge behind the taproom, between Epiphany and Rook & Pawn. Open Thursday through Saturday, Cura serves craft spirits distilled on site and hosts private events.



Creature Comforts
Jaxon Meeks

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Figment |
Samantha Hurley

Normaltown Brewing Co.

This small-batch brewery in the historic Chase Street Warehouses offers a constantly changing selection of beer on tap and the occasional live set from a local artist. It was the fifth brewery to open in Athens and the first in the Normaltown neighborhood. They also occasionally host local chef pop-ups, so keep an eye out for the chance to grab drinks and dinner.

Terrapin Beer Co.

Since it opened its doors in 2002, Terrapin has become Athens' most widely distributed beer. Stop by the Newton Bridge Road location with a lush greenspace to find popular beers like Hopsecutioner and Luau Krunkles. The recipient of multiple sustainability awards, the solar panels on Terrapin's roof provide all the energy used during the brewing process.

wine

The Lark Winespace

Both a tasting room and a wine shop, this Prince Avenue store from Krista Slater specializes in sustainable wine and cocktail ingredients. Its rotating menu showcases a variety of foreign and domestic wines, while appetizers like charcuterie boards and tinned fish help round out any cocktail party.

Tapped Athens

Putting a futuristic twist on your typical wine bar, Tapped allows you to buy wine by the ounce from soda fountain-style dispensers. They stock over 200 labels to choose from with a rotating selection of 24 wines on tap to try before you buy. Recurring events include Wine 101 (a tasting class for beginners) and mimosas and biscuits on the first Saturday of every month.

spirits

Five Points Bottle Shop

No crybabies! This liquor store has been a neighborhood staple for over 30 years, with a huge selection of beer, wine, spirits and local drinks. It's an Athens tradition to swing by on your 21st birthday to get a free t-shirt.

Oak House Distillery

Founded in 2020 by UGA food scientists, Oak House is the first legal distillery in Athens since the 1860s. Located in the historic Henry Bishop House on Macon Highway, they produce botanical gins and Jamaican-style rums in a relaxing space featuring a speakeasy-style cocktail bar and lounge. Classes on distilling and mixology are also offered.

kombucha

Figment Kombucha

If you're looking for some non-alcoholic brews, head to Figment on Baxter Street. Opened in 2018, Athens' only kombucha brand uses local ingredients and prioritizes innovative flavors and sustainability (it comes in aluminum cans instead of glass bottles). Stop by their tasting room to pick up a can, taste seasonal flavors on tap and shop local foods and goods at The People's Pantry.



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arts + culture



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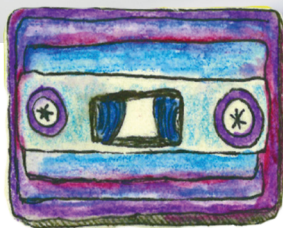
55 EVENTS



Wuxtry |
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our music legacy

A brief history of music in Athens



Athens burst onto the national music scene in the late 1970s with the emergence of new wave band The B-52s and remained in the spotlight through the 80s thanks to groups like R.E.M. and Pylon. “Love Shack” and “Losing My Religion” remain some of the most iconic songs to come out of Athens.

The landmark 1986 documentary “Athens, GA: Inside/Out” further showcased the town’s legendary music culture to the world, and the scene was bolstered by Elephant 6 bands like Neutral Milk Hotel and Of Montreal gaining prominence in the 90s and 2000s.

But the roots of musical innovation in Athens go back decades before then, from the groundbreaking opening of Morton Theatre in 1910, which provided a venue and platform for African American performers, to the influential work of composer Hall Johnson, who was known for arrangements of Black spiritual music.

In more recent years, musicians have continued to forge new ground in the Classic City, with work spanning genres from country to hip-hop and an explosion of new bands thanks to the ever-growing student population.

During the annual AthFest Music & Arts Festival, launched in 1997, artists come together and perform all weekend long with crowds of thousands surrounding multiple stages. New groups make their debut and experienced acts strengthen their connection with the community.

Visitors can trace the city’s musical history by strolling the Athens Music Walk of Fame, a series of bronze sidewalk plaques installed in 2020 that honors those who have contributed to the town’s powerful musical legacy. The route will also take you by some of the town’s most notable music venues, without which Athens wouldn’t have the thriving music scene or nightlife it does today.

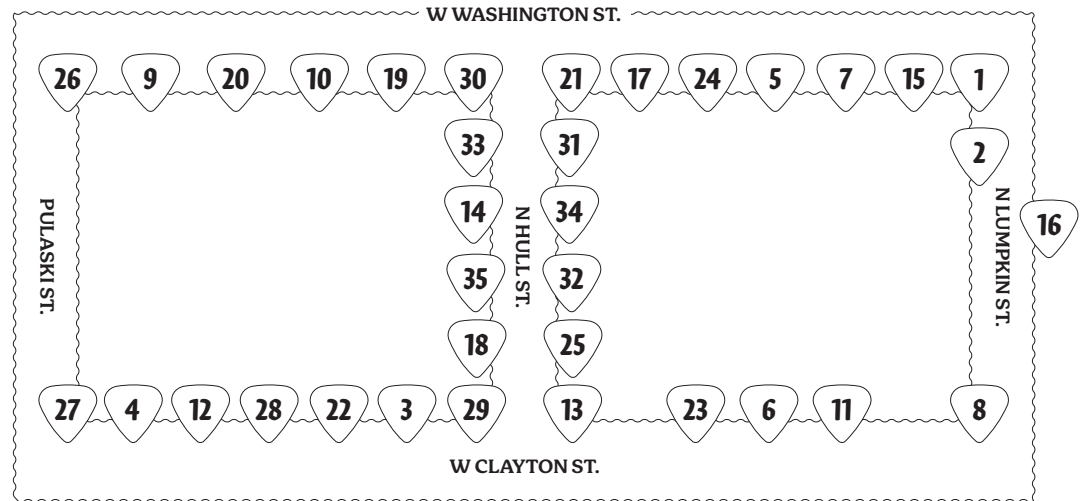


Morton Theatre |
Jaxon Meeks

1. The B-52s
2. Danger Mouse
3. Drive-By Truckers
4. Elephant 6
5. Hall Johnson
6. Neal Pattman
7. Pylon
8. R.E.M.
9. Vic Chesnutt
10. Widespread Panic
11. Bob Cole
12. Lo Down & Duddy
13. Of Montreal
14. Nuçi's Space / Linda Phillips
15. Art Rosenbaum
16. Bloodkin
17. Tituss Burgess
18. The Glands
19. ISHUES
20. Love Tractor
21. Monroe Bowers "Pink" Morton
22. Normaltown Flyers
23. Jackie Payne
24. Calvin Orlando Smith
25. WUOG
26. 40 Watt Club
27. Bar-B-Q Killers
28. George Fontaine Sr.
29. John Keane
30. James R. Smith / Voices of Truth
31. Walter Allen Sr.
32. Randall Bramblett
33. Five Eight
34. Flagpole Magazine
35. Michael Guthrie Band

athens music walk of fame

Downtown map + key



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art around town

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galleries



Ace/Francisco Gallery

Located inside the Thrasher Photo + Design studio in the historic Leathers Building, this gallery hosts contemporary art exhibitions from local, regional, and national fine artists. Ace/Francisco is open on the third Thursday of every month, for special events and by appointment.

The Athenaeum

The University of Georgia's downtown creative space offers rotating exhibitions, a listening room, and a reading room. The Athenaeum is open Wednesday to Saturday from noon to 6 p.m. Free entry and parking make this a great space for students and local creatives. Upcoming exhibitions include Krista Clark: Assembly and Steven Thompson: Ever Loyal, Ever True.

ATHICA

The Athens Institute for Contemporary Art, or ATHICA, is a nonprofit institution in the historic Leathers Building that hosts art exhibitions, performance art, live music, poetry readings and community gatherings.

Lyndon House Arts Center

Operated by Athens-Clarke County, this downtown center hosts contemporary gallery exhibitions, classes, workshops, festivals and events. An annual highlight is the juried showcase of work by local artists. Admission is free.

Tiny ATH Gallery

This intimate gallery space is uniquely Athenian; located in a remodeled grocery store, the space platforms a local artist every month and holds exhibitions accompanied by artist talks and makers markets.



Athenaeum |
Sidney Chansamone



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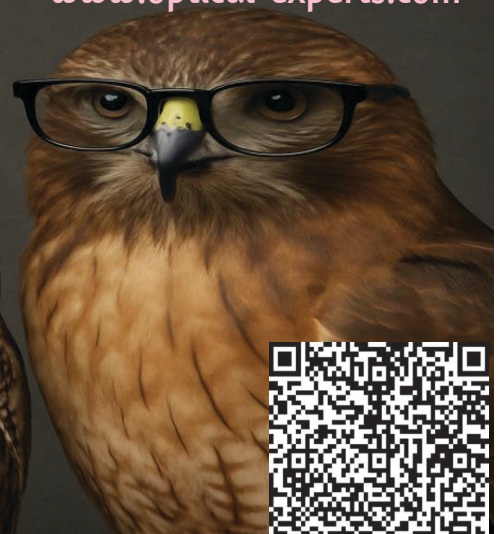


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house museums

Church-Waddel-Brumby House

Believed to be the oldest home in Athens, this former residence of UGA president Moses Waddel was built in the 1820s and has been meticulously restored. It's also the home of the Historic Athens Welcome Center.

Taylor-Grady House

Athens's only National Historic Landmark, this 1840s home is named for original owner Robert Taylor, a cotton merchant and planter, and Henry W. Grady, the famed newspaperman, whose father bought the house from Taylor. It's now a formal event venue managed by the Junior League of Athens.

T.R.R. Cobb House

The distinctive pink mansion is the former home of Thomas Reade Rootes Cobb, a Georgia lawyer, politician and Confederate brigadier general. Cobb was a controversial figure in Athens history; when he died, 25 enslaved people lived on the estate. The lower level of the house showcases life in the mid 1800s while the upper level holds exhibitions that include more contemporary interpretations of history.

Ware-Lyndon House

The 1840s Ware-Lyndon House is a city-owned house museum downtown. The 1840s furnishings reflect the lives of the two prolific doctors

the house is named for, while a new exhibit shares ongoing research about the enslaved families that lived on the Ware Plantation. Next door is the Lyndon House Arts Center, a community visual arts complex that includes galleries and studios.

uga museums

Georgia Museum of Art

Opened in 1948, the state's official art museum occupies a contemporary building on UGA's East Campus. It holds nearly 17,000 pieces, including 19th- and 20th-century American paintings, artwork from the Italian Renaissance and a growing collection of Southern decorative arts. The monthly Family Day events allow kids and parents to spend a Saturday morning learning about a specific exhibit. Plus: admission is free.

Georgia Museum of Natural History

The specimens at the official state museum of natural history include 1.3 million insects, over 325,000 species of fishes and nearly 50,000 reptiles and amphibians. To visit the South Campus museum, schedule a tour; open Tuesday through Thursday.

Lamar Dodd School of Art

Located inside the main art building, the Dodd Galleries are five different exhibition spaces for

both students and visiting artists. The school also hosts rotating exhibitions from local and international creators and artist talks.

Special Collections Libraries

This 115,000-square-foot building on Hull Street holds the Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, which includes more than 250,000 books about Georgia history, 120,000 rare books and over two centuries of UGA history in the form of publications, artifacts, official records and more. The facility also houses the Richard B. Russell Library for Political Research and Studies and the Walter J. Brown Media Archives and Peabody Awards Collection, which preserves over 250,000 works in film, video, audiotape, transcription disks and other formats.

public art

Keep your eyes peeled for public works of art around town, from murals to colorfully painted fire hydrants, sculptural bus stops and the famous bulldog statues. If you're downtown, make your way to the intersection of West Washington and North Lumpkin to see the Hot Corner Mural, which marks the heart of Black commerce and culture in the early 20th century. For a unique photo op, check out "Rainbow Forest," a sculpture garden consisting of 36 towering neon columns on the North Oconee River Greenway.

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music venues

Where to see a show in Athens



large venues

40 Watt Club

This iconic Athens venue has become a symbol of our music legacy to townies, students, and visitors alike. Touring acts and local bands give you a great reason to dance under the whimsical string lights and enjoy the world class sound system.

Akins Ford Arena

Located behind The Classic Center, Athens' newest and biggest venue opened in December 2024 following two years of construction. With a capacity of 8,500, the arena hosts everything from country stars and comedians to Monster Jam and Disney on Ice. It's also the home of the Rock Lobsters, Athens' pro hockey team.

The Classic Center

This downtown event space opened in 1995 and now encompasses 11 venues, including the 2,122-seat theater for polished performances. Keep an eye on the event calendar to see music legends, orchestral performances, musicals and plays.

The Georgia Theatre

One of Athens' most prominent music venues with an iconic marquee, this downtown theater hosts energetic touring acts and local rock bands that draw huge crowds. You can even catch a show at the rooftop bar.

The Morton Theatre

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, The Morton Theatre was built in 1910 by Monroe Bowers "Pink" Morton. Located in the historic "Hot Corner" Black business district of downtown Athens, the theater is housed in the Morton Building, which also held offices for Athens' Black professionals in the early 1900s. Today, the theater hosts concerts, comedy, dance, plays and more.



smaller venues

Boar's Head Lounge

Indoor and outdoor spaces make this bar a good choice for sampling new local music.

Bolo Bolo House

A thoughtful, intimate, and casual listening room for musical performances and poetry.

Buvez

Buvez is a Euro-style cafe with a stage that hosts local bands, singer-songwriters and weekly improv.

Ciné

This beloved independent movie theater also has an event space (The LAB) where you can see experimental bands, local heavy hitters and attend goth dance parties.

Dottie's and Dukes

This brand new country bar in the heart of downtown offers country music, line dancing, and club-style DJs.

Flicker Theatre & Bar

Flicker is one of the most popular music bars in town thanks to the variety of its show schedule. If you're trying to get more into the scene, Flicker is a great place to start.

The Foundry

Hotel Abacus' house venue, this spot has live music, trivia, comedy, karaoke and more.

Hendershot's

With earlier show times and an analog soundsystem, this coffee shop and bar provides classy entertainment right off of Prince Avenue. Hendershot's hosts singer-songwriters, jazz musicians, vinyl nights, no phone parties and more.

Normal Bar

Normal Bar hosts comedy shows, songwriting competitions, local bands and the annual 4/20 music festival. It's (of course) located in Normaltown, and offers delivery from Automatic Pizza.

Nowhere Bar

The ambience, sound system, and great booking make Nowhere Bar a great venue for country music.

The Roadhouse

This classic dive bar between Little Italy and Thai Spoon hosts rock music and boy bands.

The World Famous

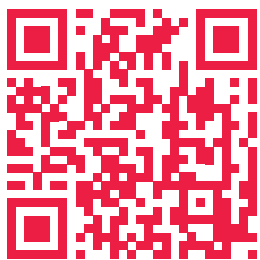
"This is it!" proclaims the sign above the door of this tiny bar with a massive following thanks to its eclectic interior, good food and fun cocktails. The World Famous hosts punk, rock, hip-hop, country and special events.



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Bayou Princess |
Forest Dynes

local sounds

Dive deeper into the Athens music scene

By Viv Awesome

Athens is recognized internationally for its contributions to music, culture, and the arts. Over the decades, our town has gained a reputation for producing cutting-edge sounds and styles. Musicians and fans alike know there's something special about the local music scene.

There's a wide variety of artists, experiences and venues, and this diversity creates authentic, genre-defying acts. With so much to offer, it can be hard to find what you're looking for. Local labels, promoters and booking agents work tirelessly to connect Athens bands with new audiences, all out of love for the community. You can learn about a few of them below, but remember: the best way to explore the music scene is to get out and go to a show!

Attaboy! Tapes

For fans of: They Might Be Giants, hand-knit sweaters, biking and zines. Attaboy! Tapes founder and director Nathan Sheets describes the label's sound as "Appalachian Indie" that has a "psychedelic energy." Attaboy! shows often pair acts that are sonically different from each other, but similar in essence. Groups range from orchestral and experimental to

indie rock. United by a shared love of country classics and a caring community, the Attaboy! ethos is based in authenticity and diversity. If you're looking for sweet indie rock and thoughtful pairings, Attaboy! shows offer an intimate and approachable vibe for music lovers of all kinds.

Dosed by An Angel

For fans of: The Stooges, good pizza, King of the Hill and friendly mosh pits. Dosed by An Angel books a variety of heavier sounds. "The overarching thread is a vibe, call it a heart quality," founder and director Phelan LaVelle explained. "The sonic aesthetic of DBAA presents mostly as punk music." Their shows have an energetic and intense sound, but a laid-back and welcoming attitude. Acts range from sludge metal to noise rock to primitive punk. If you're looking to let loose, pull up to a DBAA show with your earplugs and dancing shoes.

Indecent Artistry

For fans of: SST Records, art school, two beers, the telecaster sound and existentialism. Indecent Artistry is a boutique label founded and directed by musician and producer Adam Wayton. Live shows highlight alternative rock sounds like shoegaze, grunge, and jangle rock. The common denominators for bookings are experimental and catchy; if you're looking for bands that are too experimental for the punk scene and too punk for the indie rock scene then head to an Indecent show.

Nightshade Family Band

For fans of: pashminas, feeling the bass in your feet, rave values and dancing all night. Nightshade Family is a label, collective, and nonprofit organization that produces and distributes electronic dance music. Their sound is rooted in Dubstep and Deep House. Nightshade hosts raves and

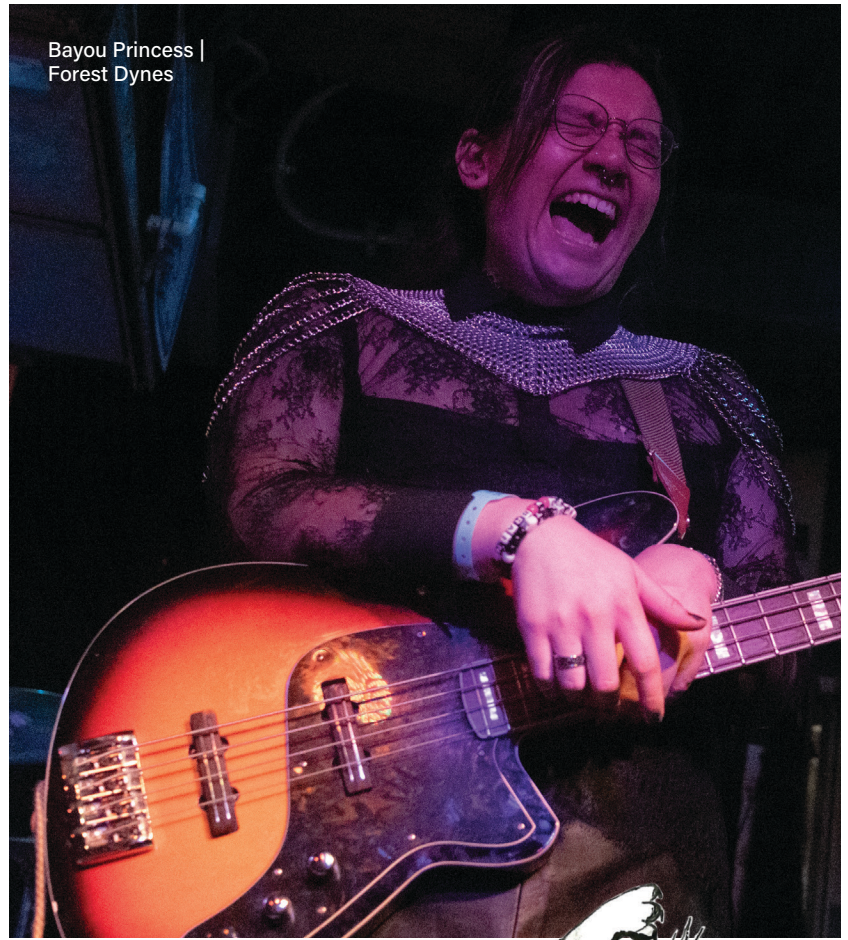
secret location parties while also offering sound system services and mentorship opportunities. "We want to make sure we have resources for fostering education, industry skills, sound design, stage production and allowing people to garner the skills they need," explained label representative Christina Cruz. They also prioritize safety and harm reduction through hearing protection, drink test kits and Narcan training.

Primordial Void

For fans of: Elephant 6 Collective, analog technology, vintage fashion and picnics. Established in 2019, Primordial Void is an independent label that releases cutting-edge music from all genres. Marcel Sletten, the founder and director of PV, books a variety of ambient, electronic, folk, and punk shows on bills featuring local and touring artists. Primordial Void shows can range from an introspective and chill night of listening to dancing along to a high-energy performance. Regardless of the genre, expect a well curated bill of musicians dedicated to their sound and craft. Expect at least one set that will change your heart like a good movie does.

Shadebeast

For fans of: contemplating the void, Doc Martens and slap tags. Shadebeast is a booking, promotion and apparel company that began as a one-room record store in 2017. Their enigmatic presence is undeniable, and they host metal shows at multiple venues around town. They book local and touring metal bands with the mission of spreading the metal sound and culture. Expect a heavy show inspired by doom metal with contemporary elements of grind and crossover. Lots of distortion and crazy drum racks are guaranteed.



Bayou Princess |
Forest Dynes



DJ Know |
Jaxon Meeks

upcoming shows

Just a few of the performances scheduled in Athens this fall and winter

AJJ with Pacing

August 14
40 Watt Club

Penelope Road, Wim Tapley & The Cannons

August 21
Georgia Theatre

An Evening with Mountain Grass Unit

August 23
Georgia Theatre

Omni with Benét

September 5
40 Watt Club

Merce Lemon, Songs for Sleeping Dogs, Petty Kash

September 8
Flicker Theatre

The Avett Brothers

September 12
Akins Ford Arena

Soft as Snow, Night Palace, Chairs

September 27
Ciné

Stereolab

September 19
Georgia Theatre

Deerhoof, Mr. [Redacted], Bad Kill

September 30
40 Watt Club

Panchiko with Glixen

October 3
40 Watt Club

ZZ Top

October 5
The Classic Center

The Head and The Heart

October 8-9
Georgia Theatre

Julie, Sword II

October 14
Georgia Theatre

Ty Myers

October 15-16
Georgia Theatre

Rainbow Kitten Surprise

October 16
The Classic Center

Willis, Hotel Fiction

December 6
Georgia Theatre



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play + explore

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29 ARTS & CULTURE

55 EVENTS





Dudley Park |
Sidney Chansamone

get outside

Parks, trails and rivers



parks

Ben Burton Park West Side

Located on Mitchell Bridge Road, this 32-acre park features a 1.4-mile trail following the Middle Oconee River. It has 14 picnic tables, two charcoal grills, fishing access and a boat launch for non-motorized vessels.

Bishop Park Normaltown

This 33-acre city park is close to the University of Georgia's Health Sciences Campus and has walking trails, tennis courts, a swimming pool, a playground and an event pavilion. It also hosts the Athens Farmers Market every Saturday morning.

Dudley Park East Side

A short walk from campus, this 32-acre park provides access to two paved trail networks, the North Oconee Greenway and the Firefly Trail. Picnic tables and grills are also available.

Founders Memorial Garden North Campus

Opened in 1939, this garden is dedicated to the 12 founders of the Ladies' Garden Club of Athens, the first garden club in the U.S. The site is managed by the UGA College of Environment and Design, housing over 300 species on its 2.5 acres. Features include a formal boxwood garden, a sunken perennial garden, two courtyards, arboretum areas and a terrace. It's also a popular spot for graduation and formal photos.

Latin American Ethnobotanical Garden North Campus

This garden is managed by the UGA Latin American and Caribbean Studies Institute and contains roughly 150 culturally significant plants. Opened in 1998, it was created in collaboration with El Colegio de la Frontera Sur in Mexico to research medicinal plants used by the Tzotzil and Tzeltal Maya.

Memorial Park Five Points

Just west of campus, Memorial Park's 72 acres cover hiking trails, basketball courts, a dog park, a playground, a recreation center and a fishing pond. It also offers access to Bear Hollow Zoo, Birchmore Trail and Athens Creative Theatre.

Oconee Forest Park Intramural Fields Area

This 60-acre park is managed by the UGA Warnell School of Forestry. Populated by century-old trees, the grounds offer access to Lake Herrick, picnic facilities, a hiking area, a dog park and tennis courts. The IM Fields have parking, but UGA and Athens Transit stop there too.

Sandy Creek Nature Center North Athens

With 225 acres of wetlands, woodlands and trails, this is a popular spot for hiking and birdwatching. The nature center houses reptiles, amphibians, marine life and immersive wildlife exhibits.

Sandy Creek Park North Athens

This massive outdoor recreation area just north of Athens encompasses 782 acres surrounding Lake Chapman. It has over 16 miles of dog-friendly hiking trails with private and public dog parks. Entry is \$2 per person, and free for children under 4 and adults over 65.

State Botanical Garden of Georgia at UGA South Milledge Avenue

Operated by the university, the State Botanical Garden has more than 300 acres of themed gardens, greenhouses, a tropical conservatory and over five miles of trails. There's plenty on offer year-round, but be sure to catch the Winter WonderLights.

UGA Gardens at UGA South Campus

Located behind Snelling Dining Commons, these gardens serve as the site of a contest for the Classic City Award, where annual and perennial plants from all over the world are judged for their endurance and beauty against southern heat and humidity.

UGArden South Milledge Avenue

The UGArdens offers students hands-on experience in sustainable food systems. Crops produced there are used by its partner nonprofit, Campus Kitchen, and its Georgia school outreach program: "Grow it. Know it." UGArdens offers five annual classes, workshops from UGA Extension, and customized tours. To plan a tour, email ugarden@uga.edu.

Walker Park East Side

This 113-acre park is located just off Loop 10 on Trail Creek Street. It has a large picnic area, a playground and a splash pad for family outings, as well as sports fields, hiking areas and mountain biking trails.

trails

Birchmore Trail Memorial Park Length: 1.25 miles | Difficulty: Moderate

Located in Memorial Park, this walking trail offers a look at local art as it brings you through forests, creeks and bridges to get to the Great Wall of Athens. This rock wall was built by Fred Birchmore, beloved Athens local, in his 70s, and now stands tall for passing hikers to enjoy.

Firefly Trail **Athens and Winterville**

Length: 39 miles planned | Difficulty: Easy

This 14-foot-wide concrete trail is suitable for wheelchair users, strollers and wagons. It's planned to run from Athens to Union Point, but for now, the completed paved sections are in Athens, Winterville, Maxeys and Greene County. Our stretch includes a 500-foot-long bridge with an expansive view of the North Oconee River. Look out for 5K races in the fall, like the Dudley Park Fleet Feet Five Miler in August. For more information and construction updates, visit fireflytrail.com.

Lakeside Trail **Sandy Creek Park**

Length: 7.5 miles | Difficulty: Moderate

Sandy Creek Park's Lakeside Trail runs around the edge of Lake Chapman, which encompasses 260 acres. Along the trail, you'll see plenty of wildlife as well as the park's beach area, boat ramps, fishing spots and picnic shelters. This trail also connects with the park's Buckeye Trail.

Nature Trail **Watson Mill Bridge State Park**

Length: 2 miles | Difficulty: Moderate

See the historic covered bridge and the remains of the old grist mill along the Nature Trail at Watson Mill Bridge State Park. About a half hour drive from Athens, it's the closest state park to UGA. After your walk, you can cool off in the Broad River. There's a \$5 daily parking fee and annual passes are available.

North Oconee River Greenway **Athens-Clarke County**

Length: 8 miles | Difficulty: Easy

This trail system has multiple access points throughout Athens and includes a wetland trail, wildlife areas and 8 miles of paved multi-use trails perfect for walking and biking.

White Trail **State Botanical Garden of Georgia**

Length: 3.6 miles | Difficulty: Hard

Popular for its gardens and birding, White Trail is one of seven color-designated trails with a good mix of flat and hilly terrain. Good to know: Dogs aren't allowed at the Botanical Garden, with the exception of service animals.

rivers

Big Dogs on the River **Atlanta Highway**

Big Dogs is located on the Middle Oconee River, just an eight-minute drive from Athens. Visitors can rent both single and tandem kayaks and take a leisurely paddle 3.5 miles downstream. The complimentary shuttle will pick you up when you're done and take you back to your car.

Broad River Outpost **Danielsville**

Twenty minutes northeast of town, Broad River Outpost offers a range of activities, from beginner whitewater kayaking to scenic canoe trips, as well as free campsite access for all paddlers.

Lake Chapman **North Athens**

This 260-acre lake includes a half acre of water and a beach with 28,000 square feet of sand. There are boat ramps for non-motorized vessels, fishing spots and kayak rentals. Sandy Creek Park access is \$2 per person.

Middle Oconee River **Ben Burton Park**

At this park, you can launch canoes or other non-motorized boats on a system of water trails along a 39-mile stretch of the Oconee River.



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shopping spree

One-of-a-kind shops downtown

fashion

Agora Vintage

If you're into designer bags, clothes and accessories, explore owner Airee Edwards' extensive collection of authentic secondhand pieces from racks of Gucci and Chanel to a wall of Birkin bags.

Cillies Clothing

Overflowing with vintage finds, Cillies has booths full of secondhand clothing, shoes, accessories, gifts and decor from local vendors. It's also a great place to find gifts.

Cheeky Peach

For concert and gameday wear, this stylish boutique offers a wide selection of accessible trends and free personal styling sessions.

Community

A beloved boutique on North Jackson Street, Community designs sustainable fashion, alters clothing, hosts sewing classes and offers a curated selection of local gifts. Fun fact: this store repairs the UGA football jerseys when they are damaged.

Dynamite Clothing

Dynamite is a jam-packed vintage store on North Jackson Street. It offers one-of-a-kind finds, from retro t-shirts and wool sweaters to Gunne Sax dresses and statement earrings.

Empire South

This preppy boutique carries brands like Peter Millar and Patagonia, stylish clothing for all ages and unique gifts.

Epiphany

This downtown lifestyle boutique is woman-owned and offers affordable fashion with a mission of donating profits to local and global charities.

Heery's Clothes Closet

Since 1959, Heery's has outfitted generations of students and alumni in high-end clothing and luxury UGA merch. Lines carried include Rag & Bone, Ganni and Staud.

The Indigo Child

This colorful boutique is ready to fulfill all your going out needs. Find statement tops, neon dresses and sorority-themed accessories.

Kempt

From California surf brands to timeless pieces your grandpa may have in his closet, Kempt focuses on modern menswear in earth tones and playful patterns.

Kum's Fashions

Since 1978, this eclectic shop has provided students with stylish sunglasses, shoes, tees and more from brands like Ray-Ban, Coyote, Vans and Dr. Martens.

Onward Reserve

Founded by a UGA alum, this clothing store carries a wide selection of gameday goods and casual, preppy menswear.

The Swank Company

Looking for a statement piece? Choose from a selection of ruffle dresses, sherpa jackets, two-piece sets, platform shoes and more.

music, gifts + more

Archer Paper Goods

Adorable stationery, mugs, wall decor and art supplies fill this charming Clayton Street shop.

Bear Hug Honey Company

Bear Hug stocks local and internationally-sourced honey along with skin-care products, jewelry, candles, home decor and even Taylor Swift merch.

K. A. Artist Shop

This Jackson Street store has a huge selection of art supplies, gifts and locally-made pieces. They also host classes, events and summer camps.

Low Yo Yo Stuff Records

Nestled between Clocked! and Flicker, Low Yo Yo carries vinyl, CDs and cassettes. Don't miss the book section in the back.

Margo Metaphysical

A mineral, jewelry and home decor store that's been open since 2002, Margo carries incense, beads, crystals and meditation tools to help you elevate (or cleanse) your space.

Musician's Warehouse

This Lumpkin Street shop has served Athens musicians for more than 25 years and carries brands like Fender, Martin, Yamaha and many more.

Native America Gallery

Known for their handmade jewelry and gemstones, this store also sells accessories, clothing and gifts inspired by nature.

Wuxtry Records

Founded in 1976, this iconic record shop describes itself as "a user-friendly retail outlet and walk-in museum of the greatest music of the last century." Bizarro Wuxtry, its sister store on the second floor, is packed with comics, collectibles and blind box toys.



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The K. A. Artist Shop is an all-around art space in downtown Athens, Georgia.

We sell art supplies, colorful gifts, creative kits, local art, and stationery. We host camps, classes, parties, and workshops. We provide archival prints, art

photography, and other studio services.

Happy to serve the creative community, we strive to be a colorful and positive place for all of your visual art needs.



BLACK-OWNED BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

If you're looking to shop beyond the downtown boutiques, check out some of our favorite Athens businesses owned by Black artists and entrepreneurs. Many of them have online storefronts or can be found vending at local markets (see page 50).

Absynia absynia.info

Absynia offers artisan jewelry inspired by the African diaspora handcrafted by designer Elle Lewis. Lewis got her start by repurposing broken jewelry, and soon began making her own using ethically sourced materials. Eyes, suns and ginkgo leaves are common motifs in her designs.

Chalises Heavenly Inspired chalises.com

Founder Adrienne Chappell makes natural skin and hair care products like homemade soaps, bath bars, sugar scrubs, men's grooming goods and more. Chalises has a permanent location in Winterville and can often be found at pop-ups and farmers markets around Athens.

Charles Pinckney charlespinckney.com

Charles Pinckney is a metalsmith from South Carolina. Mostly self-taught, he crafts jewelry and small sculptures out of metal, wood and stone, mediums he first began using at only nine years old. Find him at local festivals and craft markets.

MEplusTEA meplustea.com

Precious Jones has been perfecting her curation of loose-leaf tea since 2017. Her company, MEplusTEA, combines high quality tea from around the world with locally grown herbs to create a wide range of flavors. You can find their loose-leaf tea, as well as gift sets, iced teas, brewing tools and their medicinal Tea.pothecary line at the Athens Farmers Market every Saturday. They also offer tea tasting for private events, allowing guests to sample their flavors and take a gift set home.

Shalom Silkies shalomsilkies.com

UGA alum Gabrielle Adekogbe founded Shalom Silkies in 2020, turning her passion for sewing into a custom bonnet brand. They offer adjustable and reversible silk bonnets, pillowcases and scrunchies in dozens of colors, all made by hand.

meet your neighbors

Historic neighborhoods
in Athens to explore



Boulevard Historic District

Founded in the late 1800s, this neighborhood on the National Register of Historic Places is named after its widest street. When a streetcar line was built in the 1880's, the land north of the Prince Avenue mansions was developed around it. Greek Revival, Queen Anne and Neoclassical-style houses line Boulevard, while brightly painted wood cottages — the former residences of textile mill workers — dot the side streets. Many of these historic homes are still shaded by the same trees planted when the suburb was first laid out. While it remains a mostly residential area popular with artists and musicians, it's also home to Boulevard Woods Park and local businesses like White Tiger.

Chicopee-Dudley

Located along the Oconee River between Third Street and Oconee Street, Chicopee-Dudley is named for the Chicopee building, a historic former mill that now houses UGA offices, and Dudley Park, the trailhead for both the North Oconee River Greenway and the Firefly Trail. The area is also home to several R.E.M. landmarks, like the steeple of St. Mary's Episcopal Church and Weaver D's Delicious Fine Foods of "Automatic for the People" fame. If the sightseeing and nature trails aren't your thing, it's still worth a visit for the Mama's Boy breakfast.

Cobbham

Known as Athens' first planned neighborhood, the area surrounding Prince Avenue is populated by historic homes and storefronts in various architectural styles. Antebellum houses and Gothic Revival cottages stand alongside some of the top locally-owned restaurants, making it a picturesque setting for shopping and dining if you're looking to explore beyond downtown.



Five Points

Named for the intersection of Milledge Avenue, Lumpkin Street and Milledge Circle, Five Points is a 1920s-era neighborhood known for its unique restaurants and boutiques. Dining ranges from nationally-recognized upscale spots like Five & Ten and The Expat to relaxed local favorites like The Royal Peasant Pub and Cali N Tito's. Condor Chocolates and Jeni's Splendid Ice Creams have dessert covered too. Just south of Five Points are Memorial Park and Bear Hollow Zoo, which are favorites among families with kids.



Normaltown

Known for its alternative crowd, Normaltown was originally nicknamed for the State Normal School, a teachers' college founded in 1891. Its former grounds are now home to UGA's Health Sciences Campus. Locals flock to the retail strip on Prince Avenue for casual dining (Agua Linda, Automatic Pizza, Marti's at Midday) and quality bars (Hi-Lo Lounge, Normal Bar, The Old Pal). Bishop Park hosts tennis courts, trails, fields, and on Saturdays, the Athens Farmers Market. Authentic Brewing Co. hosts weekly trivia, restaurant pop-ups, improv shows and movie nights.

Pulaski Heights/North Chase

Originally a multi-use neighborhood home to blue-collar workers and craftsmen, Pulaski Heights developed along with the local railroad and commerce industry in the 1800s. Today, renovated cottages and modern homes line the neighborhood's streets. The Chase Park Warehouses — former cotton storage facilities — house a variety of businesses and artists' studios. The Tree Room offers an opportunity to take a break from exploring and get a sense of the neighborhood's history. The Pulaski Heights Trail is a short walking and biking path that connects the area to downtown.



kid-friendly

Where to take younger visitors in Athens

explore outdoors

Alice H. Richards Children's Garden **South Milledge Avenue**

Located at the State Botanical Garden, this children's garden has an interactive space with edible landscapes, hands-on garden plots and themed spaces. Kids can learn about nature and have fun while doing it. There's also a canopy walk with observation decks, the Theatre in the Woods, an underground adventure area and a bog garden. The Sweet Pea Club is an hour-long weekly morning class where kids ages three to five can participate in outdoor activities. Keep an eye on the event schedule for the Sunflower Concert Series and the Winter WonderLights display.

Bear Hollow Zoo **Five Points**

Located in Memorial Park, Bear Hollow Zoo rehabilitates and cares for native animals like otters, alligators, birds and black bears that cannot survive in the wild. Kids can learn each animal's story and attend special events for hands-on encounters. Admission is free.

Sandy Creek Nature Center **East Side**

This nature center allows kids to learn about the outdoors through immersive activities. It features reptiles, amphibians, marine and freshwater aquariums, interactive natural history exhibits and a resource library. The Frog Pond gift shop carries locally-made educational toys.

Skate Park of Athens **Southeast Clarke Park**

With a series of bowls, ramps and rails, this 14,000 square foot facility is open daily for public use. Older kids can enjoy the ample space for skateboarding, roller skating and BMX biking.

Washington Farms **Oconee County**

Washington Farms, about half an hour away in Bogart, is an essential fall destination for locals, students and families alike. Starting in September, you can pick your own pumpkin, explore the 6.5-acre corn maze, race down the mega slide and enjoy over 30 other activities. Autumnal snacks, drinks, fair food and homemade ice cream are also available. Book your tickets online in advance to skip the line.

art, books + shopping

Athens Regional Library System **Multiple locations**

Each of the Athens libraries carries a wide selection of children's books. The main branch on Baxter Street near campus offers morning programs like storytime several days a week.

Avid Bookshop **Barber Street**

This independent book store just moved to its new location on Barber Street. They stock both popular and harder-to-find titles, have a great kids section and host hundreds of events and book clubs every year, many of which are for younger readers.

Georgia Museum of Art **East Campus**

Georgia's official art museum offers free admission and events for kids of all ages. Set up a "backpack tour" at the front desk for young visitors to get a backpack full of activity cards, touring tips and a bag of goodies. Check out the monthly Family Day events where kids and parents can spend a Saturday morning learning about a specific exhibit. Toddler Tuesdays offer storytime in the galleries once a month, and the Teen Studio program includes a museum tour, an art class and pizza every other month.

Treehouse Kid & Craft **Barber Street**

This wonderland of a store has creative toys, craft supplies, books and costumes as well as an in-shop studio with art classes and a DIY station. It has something for kids of all ages, as well as popular collectors items like Jellycat plushies and Sonny Angel dolls. There's always classes, summer camps or trading events on the schedule, and there's even an ice cream shop inside with allergen-free options.





restaurants + sweet treats

Buvez Barber Street

While the kids enjoy snow cones and watch the train go by, adults can sip a coffee or cocktail at this cozy railroad-side joint which often hosts live performances in the evenings. It's also conveniently located next door to Treehouse.

Cali N Tito's East at La Puerta del Sol Five Points/East Side

Both Cali's locations offer casual Latin fare in lively locations, but the East Side restaurant is especially popular with families, thanks to the huge dining area, fun decor, coin-operated rides and frozen treats. They also happen to serve some of the best food in town.

Classic City Eats Watkinsville

This Watkinsville restaurant serves southern cuisine in a casual atmosphere. Just 20 minutes from Athens, diners can enjoy starters like fried green tomatoes and hush puppies, mains like burgers, wings and wraps and an arcade full of games.

Kilwins Downtown

Kilwins opened a location in downtown Athens last summer. Just steps from the UGA campus, stop by the shop for ice cream, fudge, chocolates, caramel apples, souvenir treats and gift boxes. Summer ice cream flavors include key lime pie and lemon meringue pie.

The Rook & Pawn Downtown

This London-style board game cafe has over 600 games to choose from. Game passes are \$7, but they also have a menu full of sandwiches, charcuterie, snacks and sweets. Coffee, local beer and colorful custom Italian sodas are also available.

Ted's Most Best Downtown

With a giant sandbox, a shady patio and tons of indoor and outdoor seating, families are drawn to this casual Italian spot with thin-crust pizzas, pasta, calzones and salads.



The Rook & Pawn |
Samantha Hurley



Athens Farmers Market |
Laney Martin

Ashtin Barker

farmers markets

Shop fresh produce and local goods

Athens Farmers Market **athensfarmersmarket.net**

Every Saturday morning, more than 40 vendors set up shop on the tennis courts at Bishop Park to sell seasonal produce, meats and cheeses, baked goods, fresh flowers and handmade crafts. The weekend market runs all year, but Creature Comforts hosts a smaller market downtown on Wednesday nights through November.

Athentic Farmers Market **authenticbrewing.com**

Athentic Brewing Co. in Normaltown is known for hosting a ton of events, and one of the newest is a farmers market on Thursdays from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Swing by to shop locally-grown produce and goods from businesses like Diamond Hill Farm, Normaltown Bread Co., Flossie May Forage, Kate Bee Honey Co. and Grand Designs Woodworks.

The Culinary Kitchen of Athens **culinarykitchenathens.com**

Founded by Rashe Malcolm of Rashe's Cuisine, The Culinary Kitchen hosts seasonal markets, business classes and food safety workshops. Its mission is to support the Athens food industry, from restaurants to farmers to entrepreneurs. Keep an eye on their social media pages for market announcements.

Marigold Farmers Market **marigoldcollectivewinterville.com**

Head to Pittard Park in Winterville on Saturday mornings to shop for fresh food, produce, eggs, honey and more from nearby farms. You'll also find coffee, baked goods, jewelry and homemade decor. The market is hosted by The Marigold Collective, a group of farmers, small business owners and local leaders serving the Winterville and East Athens communities.

take a day trip

Small towns to check out near Athens

Comer

17 miles northeast

Head to Comer to grab a drink and a bag of beans from Comer Coffee Co. or fresh flowers, candles and more from 3 Porch Farm's Farm Store. Oasis Asian Market sells Asian snacks and grocery staples. It's also a 6-mile drive away from Watson Mill Bridge State Park, where visitors can explore trails along the Broad River.

Lexington

20 miles east

History buffs should head east to Lexington, in rural Oglethorpe County. On your drive, you'll pass through Crawford, where you can stop by the William H. Crawford Cemetery and grab fruits and veggies from Strickland Pride Produce. In Lexington, visit the historic 1887 Oglethorpe County Courthouse. On Fridays and Saturdays, visit the Rowdy Rooster for a sandwich, scone, slice of pie or piece of local art before heading to Shaking Rock Park, which earned its name from a perfectly balanced boulder that moved when it was pressed by a hand. The rock no longer moves, but the park is still worth checking out.

Watkinsville

9 miles south

Classic City visitors shouldn't miss out on all that Oconee County has to offer. Visit downtown Watkinsville to try favorites like Jittery Joe's away from the crowds, or grab steak and seafood at Chops & Hops. Visit donation-based Let It Be Yoga for a session in the barn. For something a bit more adventurous, take a tree climbing class at Wild Rice Adventures. If you're missing The Varsity in Athens, the new location in Watkinsville is now open.

Winterville

6 miles east

Winterville began as a railroad town, and today, it's the only municipality within Athens-Clarke County. The Marigold Farmers Market (see previous page) offers produce, food and artisan goods on the weekend. Visit the Front Porch Bookstore, a nonprofit that sells donated books to raise money for the library. Sweet Olive Farm, an animal rescue, allows volunteers to help maintain the grounds. You can also walk, run or bike the Winterville section of the Firefly Trail. Then head to Little City Diner, Big City Bread Cafe's sister restaurant, for brunch.



Rowdy Rooster |
Maddie Daniel



Winterville |
Maddie Daniel



claws up!

The Rock Lobsters gear up for their second season

By Viv Awesome

Fall in Athens is always a great time for sports fans, and with the Rock Lobsters preparing for their second season, we have both football and hockey to look forward to this year.

The formation of Athens' first professional hockey team arrived alongside the construction of Akins Ford Arena, the team's home rink. The venue was completed halfway through the 2024-2025 season, so this will be the first time the Rock Lobsters play a typical home game schedule.

Britton Briley is the Rock Lobsters Director of Marketing and the CEO of Ghost Brands. His staff shapes both the team and the fan experience,

from naming Clawdus and Crustacean Nation to coordinating Theme Nights and brand partnerships.

Briley believes that a longer home season will present more opportunities for new and existing fans to get involved. "There'll be a lot more theme nights and a lot more community stuff," he explained. "We'll be able to have a true first season."

There are 13 Theme Nights scheduled from October to April (see page 54). Some are holiday celebrations, like Trick, Treat & Defeat Night on Halloween, the New Year's Eve Bash or Clawdus' Birthday. Others bring fans together, like NASCAR Night and Star Wars Night.

"Those Theme Nights are designed to break up the continuity of just hockey, hockey, hockey," Briley explained. "But they also bring in different demographics to experience the sport, to say, 'Hey, I actually enjoy this. I love this — being around people that cheer and have fun and enjoy it. I want to come back to just regular games.'"

Athens might seem like an unlikely place for a growing hockey fanbase, but the Rock Lobsters know how tight-knit the town is and prioritize putting down roots.

"There's a big initiative saying, 'We are Athens, we're a part of Athens, We love Athens,'" Briley said. "If we show love to the community, the community will show love back to us."

Akins Ford Arena isn't the only new element this season, with Garrett Rutledge taking over as Head Coach and General Manager of Hockey Operations. His experience in the Federal Prospects Hockey League makes him a strategic hire, but he assured fans at a new coach meet and greet in July that he's here because of the team's potential and Athens' vibrant atmosphere. He went on to commend former coach Steve Martinson for his establishment of an excellent team culture.

Coach Rutledge was joined by Rock Lobsters forward Malik Johnson, who reiterated the team's appreciation for the local fanbase.

"The community and the fans are doing a great job in coming out, showing out, and supporting us," Malik said. "We're ready to take it to the next level, and hopefully win a championship next year."



Rock Lobsters Fans |
Ashtin Barker



Rock Lobsters Fans |
Ethan Greene



rock lobsters theme nights

Opening Night

October 25, 2025
vs. Carolina Thunderbirds

Trick, Treat & Defeat

October 31, 2025
vs. Carolina Thunderbirds

Military Appreciation Night

November 8, 2025
vs. Monroe Moccasins

Teddy Bear Toss

December 12, 2025
vs. Pee Dee IceCats

New Year's Eve Bash

December 31, 2025
vs. Columbus River Dragons

NASCAR Night

January 10, 2026
vs. Pee Dee IceCats

Clawdius' Birthday Bash

January 24, 2026
vs. Biloxi Breakers

Pucks & Paws

February 1, 2026
vs. Columbus River Dragons

Education Day (STEM Day)

February 18, 2026
vs. Columbus River Dragons

Stick It To Cancer Night

February 28, 2026
vs. Monroe Moccasins

First Responders Night

March 14, 2026
vs. Carolina Thunderbirds

Rodeo Night

April 3, 2026
vs. Indiana Sentinels

Star Wars Night

April 4, 2026
vs. Indiana Sentinels

events



56 AUGUST

56 SEPTEMBER

58 OCTOBER

61 NOVEMBER

61 DECEMBER

62 JANUARY

62 FEBRUARY

7 NAVIGATE

19 EAT & DRINK

29 ARTS & CULTURE

41 PLAY & EXPLORE



Linnentown – The Musical |
Nava Rawls

local events

What's happening in and around Athens this fall and winter

august

August 14–17: Athens Film Festival Downtown Athens

This four-day festival aims to unite and strengthen the local film community. More than 80 movies will be shown across five venues: Ciné, The Morton Theatre, Flicker, The Globe and Paloma Park.

August 20: Leanne Morgan Akins Ford Arena

Comedian, actress, author and Tennessean Leanne Morgan brings her Just Getting Started stand-up tour to Athens.

August 29: Tom Segura The Classic Center

Tom Segura is a comedian, actor, writer and podcast host. His Come Together Tour stops in Athens at the end of August.

september

September 6: Athens Water Festival Sandy Creek Park

The 16th annual Athens Water Festival invites kids and families to come swim in Lake Chapman, play in the splash zones and enjoy live music.

September 11: Lea Salonga UGA Performing Arts Center

Broadway and West End icon Lea Salonga brings her Stage, Screen & Everything In Between Tour to Athens, celebrating her career from “Mulan” and “Aladdin” to “Les Misérables” and “Miss Saigon.”

September 12–14: Linnentown – The Musical The Classic Center

This unprecedented tribute to Athens history highlights the Black neighborhood known as Linnentown in the 1960s that was destroyed during construction of UGA housing. Written by Hattie Thomas Whitehead, author of “Giving Voice to Linnentown,” the musical immerses you in the rich culture that defined the neighborhood.

September 20: Washington Farms Opening Weekend Washington Farms

The quintessential fall spot (pumpkin patch, corn maze, fair food) re-opens for the fall season in late September. The pumpkin patch is free,

A smartphone displaying the 'The Red & Black' Tailgate Guide app. The app's interface shows a 'TAILGATE GUIDE' section with 'TAILGATE STRATEGIES' and a photo of a building. Below that, it says 'Where to tailgate on campus at UGA' and shows a photo of people at a tailgate. The background of the entire section is a photograph of a football stadium filled with fans in red seats. Overlaid on the right side of the stadium photo is the text 'COMING TO TOWN THIS FOOTBALL SEASON?' and 'Check out our Tailgate Guide resource page!'. At the bottom of this section is a large red banner with the text 'TAILGATE GUIDE' and a QR code on the right.

COMING TO TOWN THIS FOOTBALL SEASON?

Check out our Tailgate Guide resource page!

TAILGATE GUIDE

Everything you need to know about UGA tailgating

TheRed&Black GUIDES + MAGAZINES



AthHalf |
Forest Dynes

but a ticket to the farm gets you access to the maze, flower field, slide, zipline and over 30 more outdoor activities.

September 28: Insectival State Botanical Garden of Georgia

The 35th annual Insectival brings entomological experts to Athens. Attendees can hear from presenters, see bugs up-close, watch a butterfly release and enjoy the botanical gardens.

october

October 11: North Georgia Folk Festival Sandy Creek Park

Grab your chairs and picnic blankets and head to the 40th Annual North Georgia Folk Festival. This day-long event features a dozen musicians, storytellers, local food vendors and crafts.

October 11: AthFest Educates 5K Multiple locations

The 9th annual race raises funds for AthFest Educates, a nonprofit organization that funds music and arts education for local youth. The course starts and ends at The Classic Center and takes runners through a stretch of the Firefly Trail.

October 12: AthHalf Multiple locations

The 16th annual half marathon takes runners through Athens' historic districts, downtown and the UGA campus, with local bands performing along the way.

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**October 17: World Ballet Company: Cinderella
The Classic Center**

The Los Angeles-based World Ballet Company brings the fairytale to life with a cast of 40 international dancers.

**October 19: Historic Athens Porchfest
Multiple locations**

Watch over dozens of bands from near and far perform on front porches of homes and businesses all across Athens. Admission is free!

**October 25: Wild Rumpus
Downtown Athens**

The 17th annual Halloween celebration takes over downtown Athens with a costume parade, live music, food vendors, dance parties and general spooky season frivolity.

november

**November 7–9: The Ring of Polykrates
UGA Performing Arts Center**

UGA Opera Theatre performs this 1914 romantic comedy by Erich Wolfgang Korngold.

december

**December 5–14: Chicago
Town & Gown Players**

Town & Gown, Athens' longest-running volunteer community theater, performs the beloved musical about merry murderesses directed by Harriet Anderson.



Wild Rumpus | Merielle Gatlin





Classic City Marathon |
Kaleb Tatum

january

January 24: Classic City Marathon Multiple locations

The third annual Classic City Marathon starts and ends in Downtown Athens, but takes runners across the entire city, from Bishop Park to Five Points to Athens-Ben Epps Airport. There's also a half marathon and a marathon relay!

January 30: A Midsummer Night's Dream UGA Fine Arts Theatre

The Acting Company performs one of Shakespeare's most popular plays. There's an hour-long morning show aimed at middle school and high school students, as well as a full-length show in the evening.

January 31: Great Expectations UGA Fine Arts Theatre

Another performance by The Acting Company, the classic Charles Dickens novel is adapted into a lively stage show.

february

February 1: Yo-Yo Ma UGA Performing Arts Center

A 19-time Grammy winner and one of the greatest cellists of all time, Yo-Yo Ma is coming to Athens to perform at the UGA Performing Arts Center 30th Anniversary Gala.



Classic City Marathon |
Merielle Gatlin

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