

VISITORS GUIDE



SUMMER 2025

MAMMA MIA! Meet the makers of ZZ & Simone's on page 22

YA LIKE JAZZ? Swing Theory makes their mark on page 39

DON'T-MISS IT! Check out our list of spring and summer events on page 56



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UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

VISITORS GUIDE

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear reader,

Welcome to the 2026 Visitor's Guide to Athens. Although I am going on four years of living in the Classic City, I am always learning more. From hidden gems to fan favorites, there is a treasure trove of discovery for visitors from all walks of life.

An Atlanta native and the daughter of a Double Dawg, it's surprising that I didn't visit Athens until my senior year of high school. My mom wanted me to visit her alma mater since I couldn't be convinced of Athens' greatness by her testimonies alone. A little over an hour of a car ride later, I felt an instant connection to the town. Contrary to the metropolis that encroaches upon my childhood home, it seemed like all aspects of Athens worked with rather than against one another. I couldn't wait to move.

But Athens wasn't what I expected. The community I had sensed while visiting wasn't waiting for me. I longed for a lost sense of home. What was I doing wrong? It took me too long to realize that I needed to put myself out there. The impetus of it all was The Red & Black.

For my first assignment, I went out to Sweet Olive Farm, a local nonprofit dedicated to caring for exotic and farm animals, in Winterville, Georgia. I sat down with owner Kat Howkins while she talked about their journey. I felt the spark and signed on as a contributor to the culture desk. From then on I visited K.A. Artist Shop, celebrated the return of Athens Bagel Company; I chased interpersonal connection. Today, I boast over hundreds of photos and stories published on our digital website and even print.

My discovery can be boiled down to this: It does not matter how long it takes you to get to Athens, only that you get here. Post-arrival, you are in charge of cultivating your community, your Athens experience. Whether your stay is four years or longer like mine or only a day, the town can be everything that you make of it.

Try thinking of your visit as a puzzle. The guide in your hands provides hundreds of potential pieces; turn the pages, see if any might fit. You may decide on a simple jigsaw or opt for a hundred piece expedition, but take it from me, the more people you talk to or places you go, the more meaningful it will be.

Best of luck,
Caroline Newbern, senior editor



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NAVIGATE

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HISTORY LESSON

A brief history of Athens and UGA

The Arch | Libby Hobbs

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. Campus construction began in 1801, and the original area is now part of what's considered North Campus, a leafy hill-top quad of neoclassical buildings perched above the Oconee River.

That same year, Clarke County was established and named in honor of a Revolutionary War 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 primary 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 came to be known as 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-52s. 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, eclectic restaurants and more.

UGA TIMELINE

From 1785 to today

1785

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

1801

John Milledge 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.

1806

The city of Athens is 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. When UGA receives these funds a decade later, it expands its curriculum.

1892

UGA plays its first football game against Mercer on North Campus' Herty Field. (They won.)

1918

White women are now allowed to enroll at UGA.

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 in their honor.

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 friend's birthday party in the old St. Mary's Episcopal Church building.

1990

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

1992

The HOPE Scholarship encourages Georgia high school students to remain in state for college. UGA's first-year enrollment increases five-fold in the following three decades.

1996

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

2012

The UGA College of Engineering is established, bringing the total of colleges and schools within the university to 18.

2019

The field at Sanford Stadium is named after Vince Dooley.

2020

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

2023

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

2024

Construction begins on UGA's School of Medicine, slated to open in fall 2026



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MAIN CAMPUS

Map + Key

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

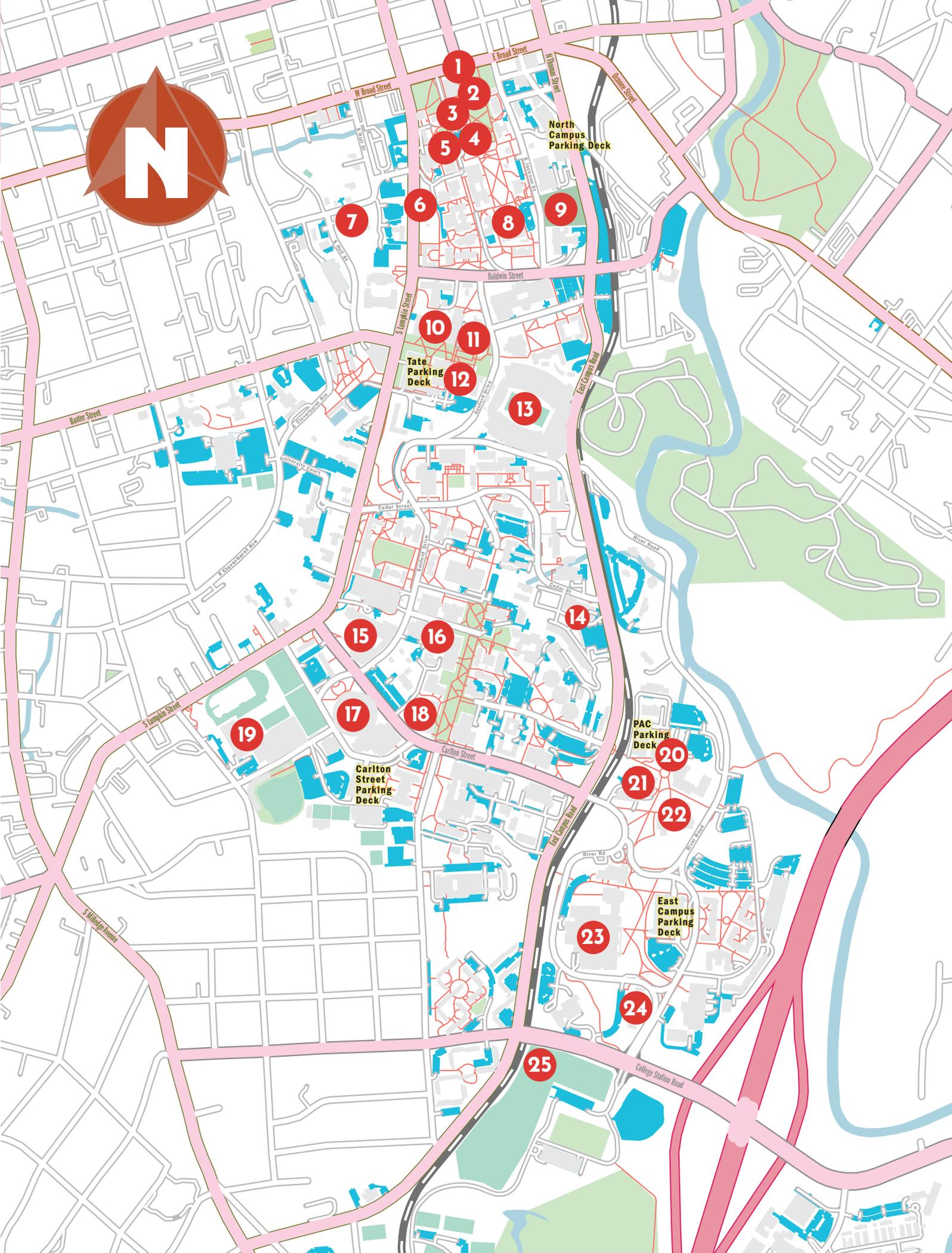


VISITOR PARKING DECK

UGA BUILDING

SURFACE PARKING

FOOTPATH



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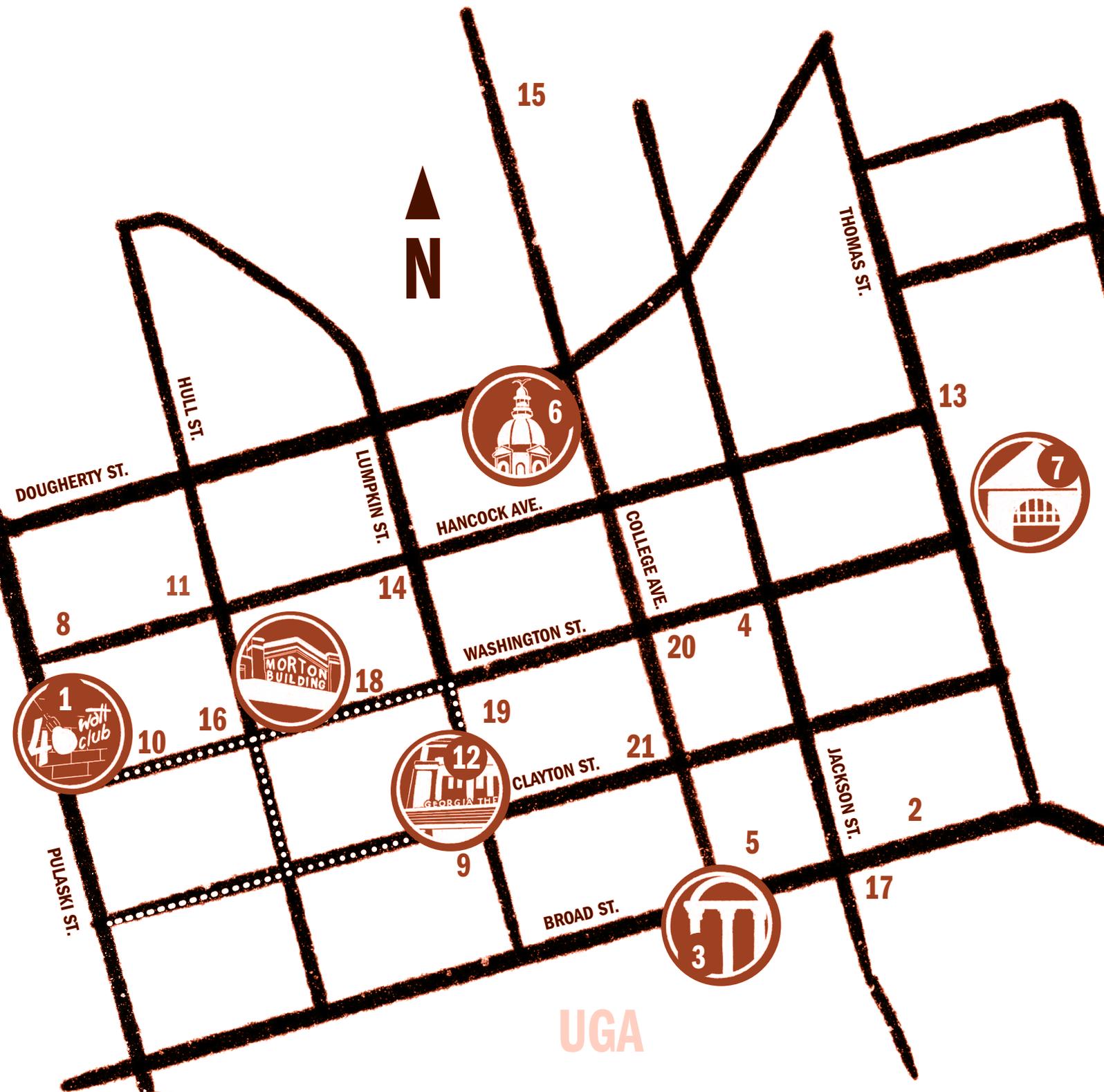
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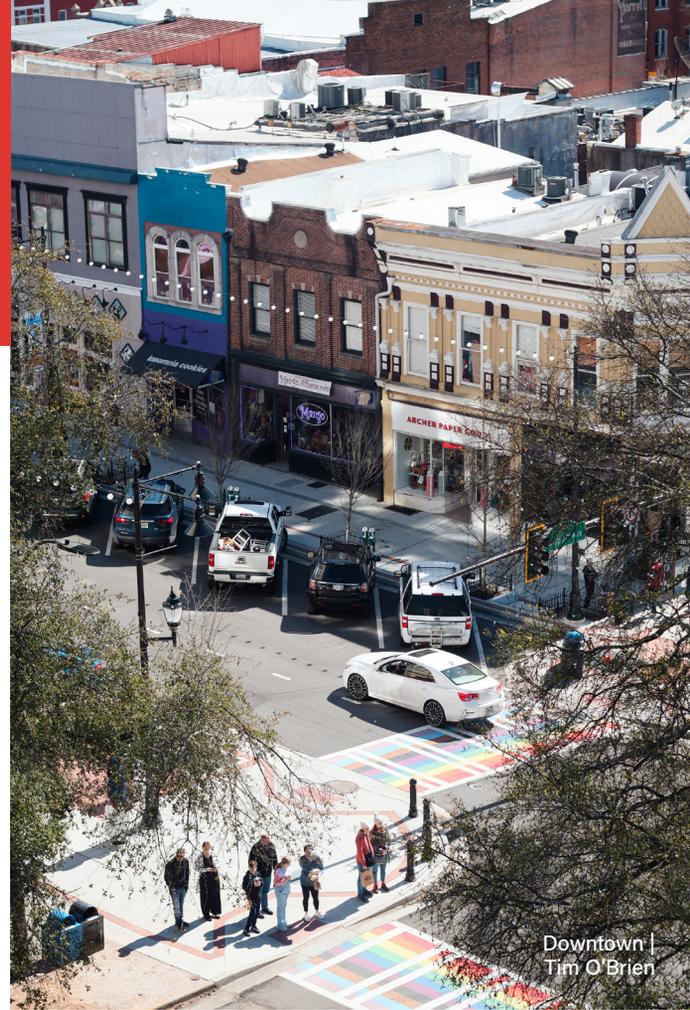


MUSIC WALK OF FAME

DOWNTOWN ATHENS

Map + Key

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. Ciné
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



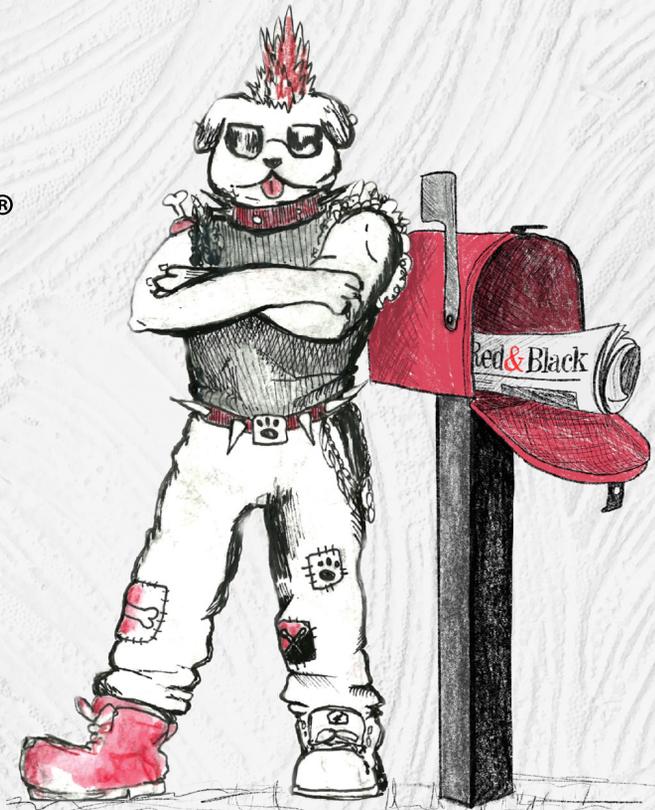
Downtown |
Tim O'Brien

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SUITE LIFE

Athens hotels near UGA

University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education & 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 with large suites, two restaurants and a shuttle service.

Georgia Gameday Center

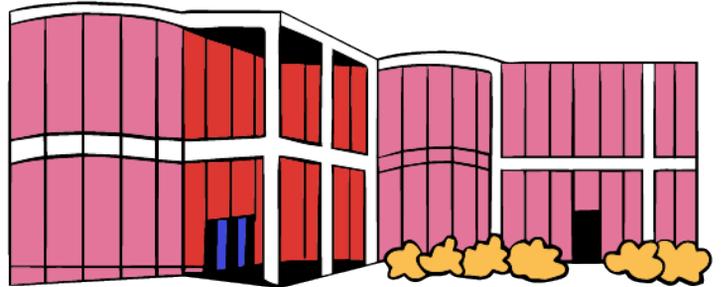
0.2 miles from UGA

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 rents one- two- and three-bedroom condos decked out in red and black. Units include kitchens, washers and dryers, access to a fitness center, parking garage and free Jittery Joe's coffee.

Holiday Inn Express

0.4 miles from UGA

Just off West Broad Street, the Holiday Inn Express has standard rooms and suites, on-site parking, free breakfast and a pool.



Homewood Suites by Hilton

0.3 miles from UGA

This East Broad Street hotel with larger suites offers several family-friendly features like free hot breakfast, connecting rooms and kitchens. You'll also find an on-site restaurant, The Bourbon Bulldog, 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 hosts music events in The Rialto Room and offers locally-sourced dining at Madison Bar & Bistro. Its private event spaces host meetings, conferences and even weddings.

Hyatt Place

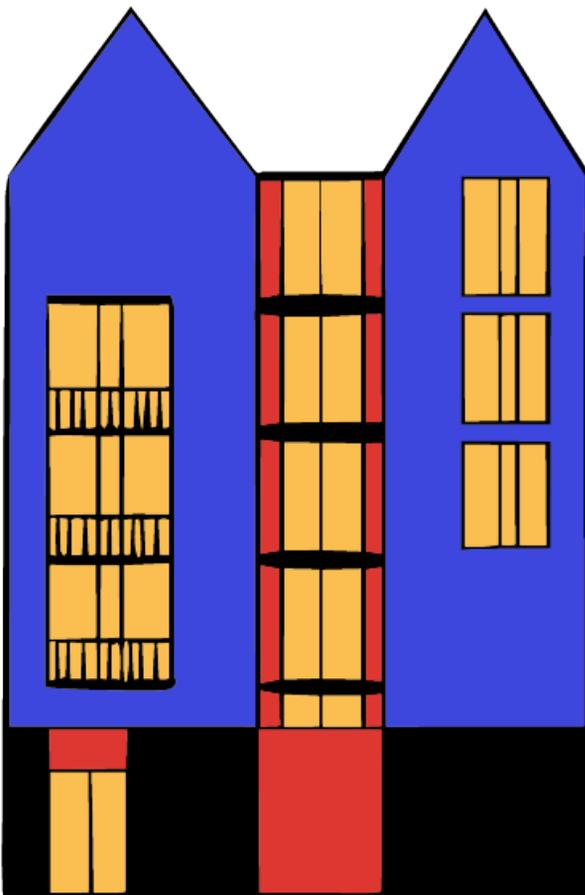
0.3 miles from UGA

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 Hybar, a rooftop bar with panoramic views of downtown Athens. Hyatt Place also offers meeting and event spaces, as well as catering done in-house.

SpringHill Suites by Marriott

0.2 miles from UGA

This downtown hotel offers one- and two-room suites that include sleeper sofas and work areas. Enjoy complimentary breakfast, a fitness center and an on-site restaurant, 1918 Lounge.



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ON THE GO

Your guide to Athens transportation

Lexington Road bus stop | Jim Bass

GETTING HERE

GETTING AROUND

VISITORS CENTERS

While most visitors drive to Athens, many flying in from out of state arrive at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta 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 shuttle service runs throughout the day from Hartsfield-Jackson to Athens and back. There are several pick-up and drop-off spots around town, including at the Georgia Center, the Classic Center and many downtown hotels. Fares range from \$39 to \$65, and one pet is allowed to travel with you for an additional \$15 fee. Online booking discounts are available.

CAMPUS TRANSIT

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

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 \$3 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 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 \$2 per additional hour. The downtown area has several ParkMobile 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 UGA lots are free and unrestricted on non-game weekends.

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 East Dougherty Street

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

GEORGIA'S 2026 FOOTBALL SCHEDULE



SEPTEMBER 5 Tennessee State at Sanford Stadium
SEPTEMBER 12 Western Kentucky at Sanford Stadium
SEPTEMBER 19 Arkansas at Razorback Stadium
SEPTEMBER 26 Oklahoma at Sanford Stadium
OCTOBER 3 Vanderbilt at Sanford Stadium
OCTOBER 10 Alabama at Bryant-Denny Stadium

OCTOBER 17 Auburn at Sanford Stadium
OCTOBER 31 Florida at Mercedes-Benz Stadium
NOVEMBER 7 Ole Miss at Vaught-Hemingway Stadium
NOVEMBER 14 Missouri at Sanford Stadium
NOVEMBER 21 South Carolina at Williams-Brice Stadium
NOVEMBER 28 Georgia Tech at Sanford Stadium

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RESTAURANT GUIDE

Where to eat in Athens for any occasion

FANCY DINNER BRUNCH
CASUAL LUNCH BEFORE A SHOW
VEGAN AND VEGETARIAN LUNCH MEETING
TRY SOMETHING NEW GROUP GATHERING

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 standards.

MANNAWEENTA • \$

The idea to open Mannaweenta came to owner Haregu Bahtu in a dream, and now the Ethiopian and Eritrean restaurant is nearing 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, vegetarian and specialty dishes.

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. Swing by for biscuits, omelets, grits, salads, sandwiches or homemade desserts.

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. Check out the expanded patio.

CHUCK'S FISH • \$\$\$

Operating in a renovated former Greyhound station, this upscale restaurant features seafood fresh from the owner's Destin, Florida, dockside wholesale market. 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 cacao pepe and salads full of seasonal produce.

FIVE & TEN • \$\$\$

Before "Top Chef," Hugh Acheson made his name here with innovative takes on Southern fare (think fried catfish with saffron beurre blanc and cornbread with fen-

nel pollen). Located in a historic home on South Milledge Avenue, and now owned by Athens local Peter Dale, this is a popular spot for special occasions. It's also available for private event booking.

SEABEAR OYSTER BAR • \$\$

Go for the namesake shellfish; stay for the fried clam strips, lobster roll and fish po'boy. Sit at the bar or the outdoor patio; a drinks ledge allows you to set your cocktail down while you wait for a table.

CAFE RACER • \$-\$\$

Cafe Racer got its start as a popular food truck in Oglethorpe County. Its 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 farmers market 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 loaded with house-made cream cheese spreads. Add-ons like eggs, lox and bacon are also available.

MAMA'S BOY • \$-\$\$

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

DAWG GONE GOOD BBQ • \$

Serving recipes passed down from his grandmother, owner William "B.J." Hardy keeps things simple but tasty at his restaurant on West Hancock Avenue. Chow down on classics like pulled pork, mac and cheese and brisket.

POQUITOS • \$-\$\$

Birria, carnitas, pozole and more are available 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 • \$-\$\$

At Alejandro Tamez's Texas-style barbecue spot with retro decor, homemade tortillas and brisket take center stage. Breakfast burritos with bacon and eggs are also a hit.

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 casual 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.

CLOCKED! • \$

This American diner on Washington Street has been in business for over 25 years. Eclectic decor and retro branding adorn the dining room and patio, while the menu ranges from burgers and hot dogs to fried pickles and blackberry milkshakes. Plus: they can make almost anything vegetarian.

FIVE ATHENS • \$\$-\$\$\$

Five Athens 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 authentic Thai rice, noodle, soup and curry dishes.

OSTERIA OLIO • \$\$-\$\$\$

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

PUMA YU'S • \$\$-\$\$\$

This Thai-inspired restaurant by Pete Amad-hanirundr and Ally Smith serves small plates like pork dumplings and shrimp aguachile. 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 chicken salad. There's four kinds of customizable pho, unique desserts and Vietnamese coffee.

CLASSIC CITY CLASSICS

Beloved Athens restaurants that have stood the test of time

ADD DRUG • \$

Athens Discount Drug, located on South Lumpkin Street 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, hot dogs, 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, have great atmospheres and some of the best food in town. Favorites include the empanadas, tostones and maduros.

LITTLE ITALY • \$

Regularly open until 2 a.m., Little Italy has been serving thick and thin crust pizza to Athens' late-night diners since 1997. Calzones, Italian subs and stromboli are also available.

DEPALMA'S ITALIAN CAFE • \$-\$\$

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

THE GRILL • \$-\$\$

The Grill is back! The downtown diner first opened its doors in 1981 and reopened them after pandemic closures. Dine on burgers, hand cut fries, malts and milkshakes among vintage memorabilia and the iconic red neon lights.

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.

THE GLOBE • \$-\$\$

Traditional pub menu items like fish and chips are complemented by vegetarian options like elote corn ribs and a hummus plate. The selection of whiskeys has been a hallmark since it opened in 1989.

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.

LAST RESORT GRILL • \$\$-\$\$\$

Founded as a music venue in 1966, Last Resort hosted acts like Jimmy Buffett and Gamble Rogers before it started serving its signature Southern fare. Steaks, cornbread crusted trout and crab cakes are all on offer, but don't leave without a slice of white chocolate cheesecake.

TRAPPEZE PUB • \$\$-\$\$\$

Famous for its large craft and imported beer selection, this pub at the corner of North Hull and West Washington streets serves superior bar fare, catering to carnivores with dishes like the Double Pig (braised pork plus bacon), with plant-based options like the Veggie Reuben. Don't forget to try the signature raspberry ketchup.



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TO VIEW MENU








THE TEAM BEHIND ZZ & SIMONE'S AND BAR BRUNO

Pride Haggerty

When Ryan Sims was a kid, his family always ate out and he loved the fact that you could pick anything off the menu to eat. Now, he and his wife have opened up two Italian restaurants in Five Points.

Ryan and Shae Sims met while working at Five & Ten, a restaurant in Athens, when it was located in Five Points. Shae had culinary experience, so the two decided to open up a restaurant together.

The couple tested dishes for their first restaurant, ZZ & Simone's, in Bar Bruno beginning in 2017, but it wasn't until 2021 that they opened up their current location to achieve their larger restaurant dreams.

"That's our best expression of a full, big restaurant. To be as many things to as many people as possible," Ryan said.

ZZ & Simone's, named after their two daughters, Zelda and Felix Simone, now hosts everything from private events to weddings and intimate dinners.

The restaurant is a team effort, with Shae's pastries being a highlight on their menu while Ryan handles more of the savory side

of things. There's also collaboration between the couple, the chefs and their two partners, Greg Smolik and Jamie Chang.

Smolik, known as "the wine guy," has spent years in Italy and brings his wine expertise and ideas for authentic dishes to the Bar Bruno menu. Chang, the general manager, helps run the bar and all the cocktail programs.

One thing the Sims pride themselves on is hand-picking all of their designs for both restaurants. Everything in their restaurants means something to them.

"It's an artistic outlet for us and so I'm really, really proud of the way that, because we designed them ourselves," Ryan said. "They're cool in the daytime, but they're only really, really special when they're full of people."

Shae's favorite part about her restaurants are the people.

"We have lots of great people who work for us and work with us," she said.

The couple's commitment to their staff runs deep and is shown through one of their main goals.

"It's really cool to do that for team members that we have and seeing them advance from just getting started as a line cook to working their way up to a chef, or a server becoming a senior server or a captain. It's just fulfilling," Ryan said.

"That's one of our goals. We have five goals as a company and one of them is to further the professional development of anyone who works for us."

While Ryan Sims admits that restaurant work is hard and some struggles pop up, he said that seeing his restaurants filled with people at night makes it all worth it.

"I feel very grateful and blessed, or whatever the right word is, that we are, as busy as we are," Ryan said. "When we're a place that people like to celebrate at, it just provides so many more opportunities."

Even with two restaurants already open and bustling, the couple still has hopes to one day open a third restaurant. In a town filled with restaurants to pick from, the Sims have found a way to stand out.

Ryan Sims at Bar Bruno | Hosanna Worku





CAMPUS CAFES

Where to eat between classes

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, 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.

TATE STUDENT CENTER

The Tate food court features familiar chains like Starbucks, Panda Express, Your Pie 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 CAFÉ

A recently established on-campus eatery, located inside Amos Hall in the Terry College of Business, the Rothenberger Café serves sandwiches, salads and grab 'n go snacks. They also serve items from Dunkin' and Newk's Eatery.

BULLDOG BISTRO

This restaurant inside the Georgia Center for Continuing Education & 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.

CAMPUS MARKET EXPRESS

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



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Athens Farmers Market athensfarmersmarket.net

Every Saturday morning it's in season, 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 hand-made crafts. The weekend market runs all year, but Creature Comforts hosts a smaller market downtown on Wednesday nights through November.

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.



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WITH CAMERA

TO VIEW
MENU



COFFEE & TEA

1000 Faces Coffee

Inspired 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.

Staff pick: Lavender latte

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.

Staff pick: Horchata milk tea

Choco Coffee

This Baxter Street cafe frequently collaborates with other Athens businesses. Alongside its selection of Ecuadorian coffee, Choco Coffee serves Independent Baking Co. pastries and Figment Kombucha.

Staff pick: Chai latte

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.

Staff pick: Iced caramel latte

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.

Staff pick: Mocha

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, 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.

Staff pick: Dirty chai latte

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.

Staff pick: Iced matcha latte

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.

Staff pick: Caramelo

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.

Staff pick: Iced shaken espresso

Walker's Pub & Coffee

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. Wednesday night bingo is a regular occurrence.

Staff pick: White chocolate mocha

RAISE YOUR GLASS

Breweries, wine shops and distilleries in Athens

WINE
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 patio. Don't skip the giant pretzel with ale cheese and honey mustard.

ATHENTIC BREWING COMPANY

Located in Normaltown and offering a variety of beers, from Irish stouts to tropical IPAs, Authentic also features indoor and patio seating and 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. Last 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.

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 opening in 2002, Terrapin has become Athens' most widely distributed beer. Stop by the Newton Bridge Road location to find popular beers like Hopsecutioner and Luau Krunkles. The recipient of multiple sustainability awards, the solar panels on their roof provide all the energy used during the brewing process.

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 ro-

tating 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.

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.

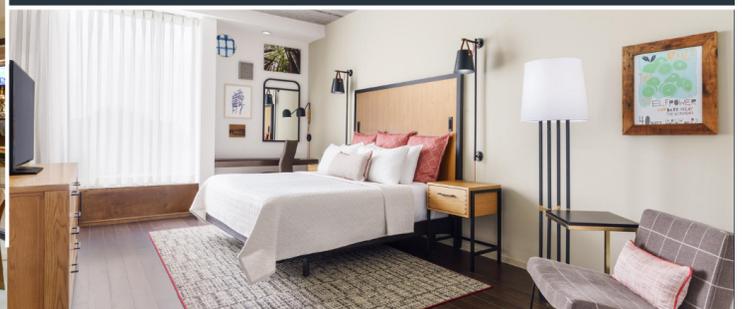


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BAR CRAWL

Places to drink, from dive bars to luxe lounges

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. On Thursdays, Cutters dollar beer night is also 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 an extensive beer list.

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.

HIDDEN GEM

This Barber Street spot is pure magic. The drink menu features curated beers, wines, and house cocktails for the sophisticated sipper. Ambience created by hanging plants, multicolor lighting, and eclectic antiques make this a perfect spot for a chill night out or listening to IDM in public.

WONDERBAR ATHENS

The only video game bar in Athens, this bar 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.

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. Cranium and The Chameleon are favorites for larger parties

SIT N' SIP WHERE TO WATCH A GAME

WHERE TO GO ON A NIGHT OUT

LOCAL FAVORITES FUN AND GAMES

NOWHERE BAR

The old dive bar features live music, games of darts and pool tables, creating a lively environment. Whether celebrating a birthday or spending a casual night out with friends, fun is a guarantee.

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.

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.

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 Pastic? This is the place for it.

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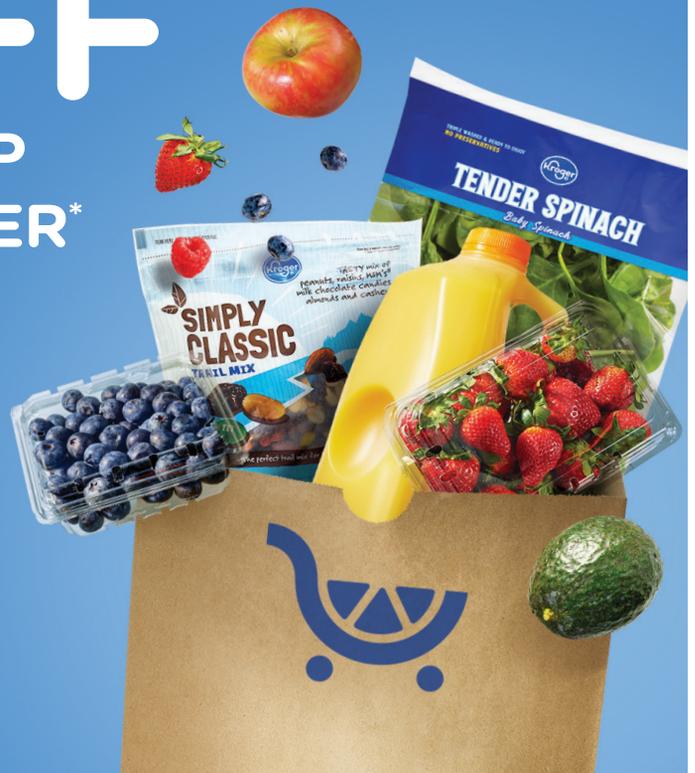


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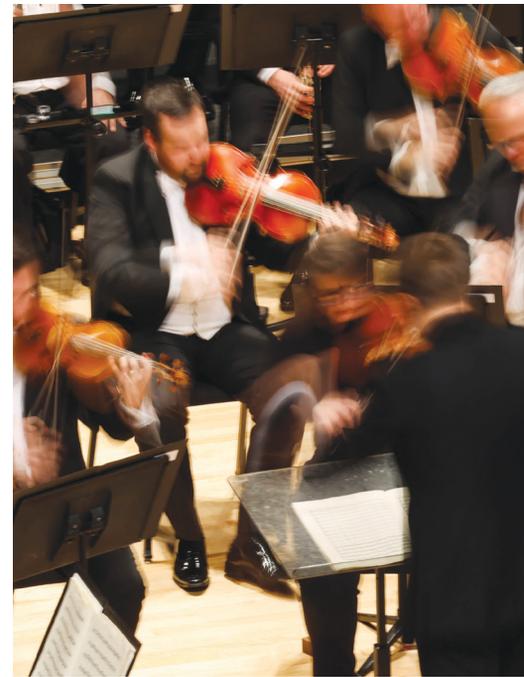
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ARTS & CULTURE

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2025 INDUCTEES



Randall Bramblett | Nick Ladd

Walter Allen Sr.

Walter Allen Sr. served in the military after college, was a musician during the Korean War and later in the 90's. He taught music at the U.S. International University in Nairobi, Kenya. As a teacher and mentor in the Clarke County School District, he empowered generations of students through education and music.

Randall Bramblett

Randall Bramblett is an acclaimed singer-songwriter, multi-instrumentalist and session musician. Bramblett has worked with legends like Traffic, Widespread Panic and Bonnie Raitt. He also maintains a solo career rooted in Southern rock, blues and jazz-inflected Americana.

Five Eight

Five Eight was formed in the 90's and often described as "too loud for folk and too honest for punk." Their music touches on mental health, addiction and redemption, a unique edge in the alternative rock scenes nationally.

Flagpole Magazine

Founded by Jared Bailey and Dennis Greenia, Flagpole Magazine has been serving the Athens community weekly since 1987. Flagpole Magazine was originally coined the, "Colorbearer of Athens Alternative Music," founded to cover bands like Pylon, R.E.M. and the 40 Watt Club scene. It's since evolved to cover local news, politics and art aside from just music.

Michael Guthrie Band

Fronted by Michael Guthrie, the band is known for its energetic live shows and dedication to original music, embodying the enduring DIY spirit of Athens. Brothers Michael and Herb Guthrie began playing together in Germany before forming Arnold Bean in Columbus, Ga in 1966, later rebranding to the Michael Guthrie Band in the mid-70's.



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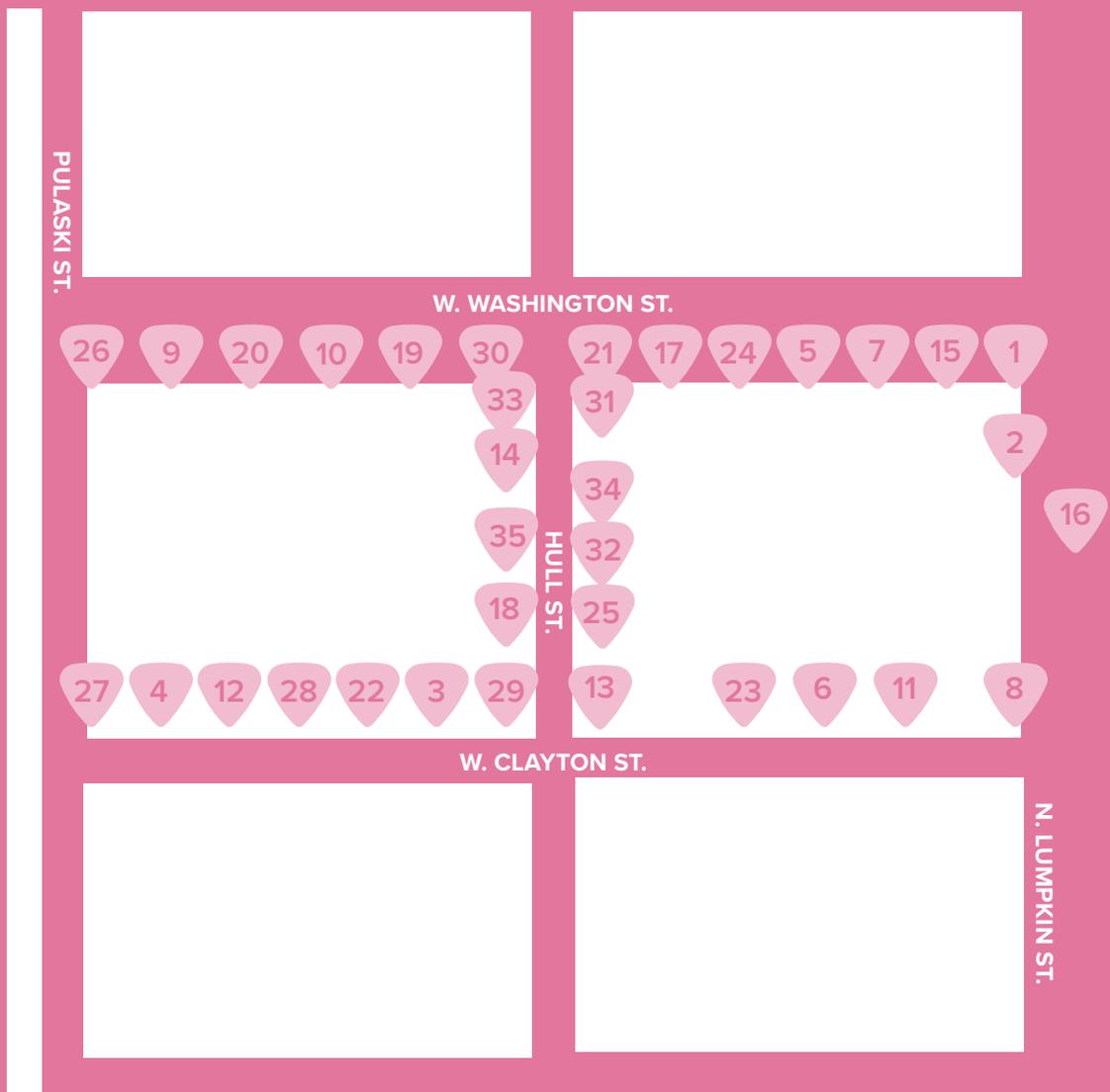


BEHIND THE TRACTORS

ATHENS MUSIC WALK OF FAME

Downtown Athens Map + Key

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



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 have the ability to come together and perform all weekend long with crowds of thousands surrounding multiple stages. New groups make their debut and experienced performers strengthen the connection with their fans.

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.

PERFORMING ARTS

TOWN & GOWN PLAYERS

Since 1953, local, community theatre, Town & Gown Players has been producing plays. Town & Gown Players invites all members of the Athens community to view and create shows. Located outside of the building is Arcadia, a memorial heritage garden dedicated to their memories by friends and families.

ATHENS CREATIVE THEATRE

A division of the Athens-Clarke County Leisure Services Department, Athens Creative Theatre is a nonprofit, community-led theatre and has produced classic and original plays since 1966. Performances are presented at the Morton Theatre and Quinn Hall at Memorial Park.

UGA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

Construction began for the Performing Arts Center in December of 1993 and was completed in late 1995. The Performing Arts Center consists of two concert halls: the Hugh Hodgson Concert Hall and Ramsey Concert Hall. An extensive schedule of performances in a variety of music, theatre and dance genres can be found at pac.uga.edu.

THE MARIGOLD AUDITORIUM FOR ARTS AND CULTURE

The Marigold Auditorium for Arts and Culture (MAAC) is a performance venue in the Winterville. Built in 1953, the Auditorium was used by the community for concerts, plays, pageants and other public functions. After extensive renovations and restorations, the MAAC now offers state-of-the-art lighting, audio and projection capabilities.

MOONLIGHT THEATER COMPANY

Located in the restored Leathers Building Warehouse off Pulaski Street, the Moonlight Theater Company offers an intimate, 40-seat house with a variety of comedy performances. Chase Brantley founded Moonlight Theater Company, Athens first comedy venue, in December of 2018.

THE CLASSIC CENTER THEATRE

Hosting a variety of events, including Broadway, comedy and concerts, the Classic Center Theatre consists of 2,090 seats and is one of northeast Georgia's premier performing arts venues. Upcoming events, tickets and group sales can be found at classiccenter.com/theatre.

UGA FINE ARTS THEATRE

The Fine Arts Theatre was the last of the Works Progress Administration projects to be constructed on UGA's campus. The Fine Arts Theatre was designed in the ornate, high style of proscenium theatres of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Current performances and tickets can be found at ugatheatre.com.

NEW DANCE THEATRE

Built in 1928 for the Women's Physical Education program, the New Dance Theatre was transformed beginning in 1998 and reopened in 1999. The New Dance Theatre is operated by UGA's Department of Dance and presents the work of students, faculty and student lead Dance companies. It is home to The Ballet Ensemble and the CORE Concert Dance Company.

ROSE OF ATHENS THEATRE

Rose of Athens Theatre, is a professional, nonprofit theatre company and produces several productions each year in a variety of locations and utilizes a lights-on-in-the-audience style. Rose of Athens' educational outreach includes field trips to ROA productions, touring shows, workshops and Academy classes.

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ART AROUND TOWN

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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. The ACE / FRANCISCO Gallery is open on the third Thursday of every month, for special events and by appointment.

THE ATHENAEUM

UGA's downtown creative space features free entry to 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 free parking make this a great space for students and local creatives. Exhibitions currently on view "Mars: a color study," by Amanda Burk and "threshold (true): finding comfort in hidden worlds" by Elinor Saragoussi. The commissioned work of both Athens artists will remain on view until 2028.

ATHICA

ATHICA: Athens Institute for Contemporary Art is a nonprofit institution that hosts art exhibitions, performance art, live music, poetry readings and community gatherings. ATHICA is located in the Leathers Building and is open to the public for events and exhibitions.

TINY ATH GALLERY

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

LYNDON HOUSE ARTS CENTER

Operated by Athens-Clarke County, this downtown center hosts contemporary gallery exhibitions, classes and workshops as well as

festivals and events. An annual highlight is the juried showcase of work by local artists. Admission is free to the public.

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 Rotes 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.



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Hot Corner Mural | Tim O'Brien

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. The museum is currently closed for renovations at the time of publication.

LAMAR DODD SCHOOL OF ART

Located inside the main art building, the Dodd Galleries are five different exhibition spaces for both visiting artists as well as students exhibiting work. The Lamar Dodd School of Art exhibits both local and international artists; the exhibitions and artist talks are open to the public.

PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

UGA's Performing Arts Center on East Campus is home to the Hugh Hodgson Concert Hall and the Ramsey Concert Hall, venues that host national and international performers as well as UGA music students and faculty.

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

Look out 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 streets 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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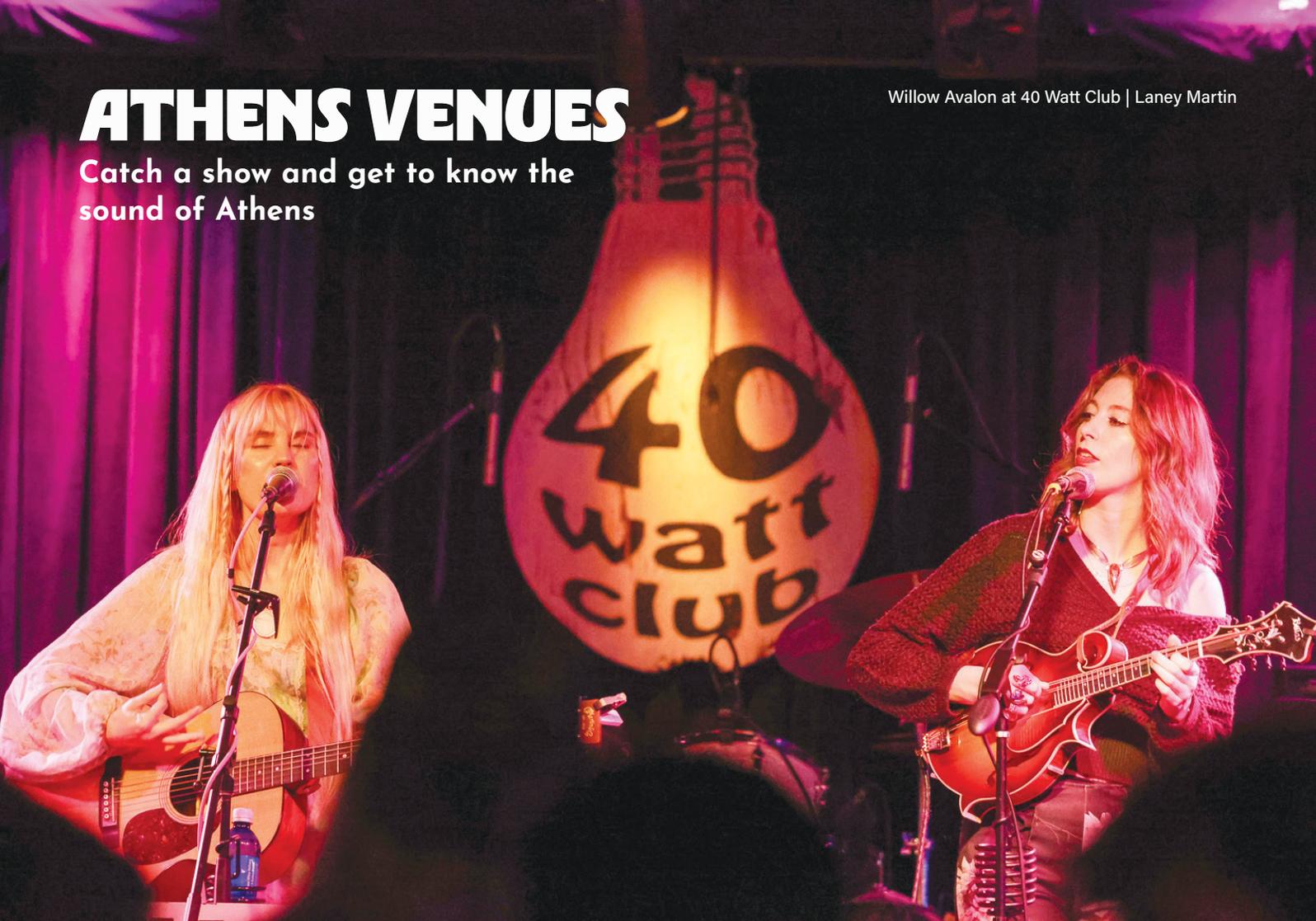
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APARTMENTS & TOWNHOMES



ATHENS VENUES

Catch a show and get to know the sound of Athens

Willow Avalon at 40 Watt Club | Laney Martin



BIGGER VENUES | SMALLER VENUES

40 WATT CLUB

This iconic Athens venue has become a symbol of our music legacy to townies, students and visitors alike. The 40 Watt Club is a magical venue and an Athens landmark; lose yourself in the world class sound system and whimsical fairy lights. Touring acts and local bands with something to celebrate give you a great reason to check out the historic venue.

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's calendar features artists like Megan Moroney and Riley Green and events from Disney on Ice to Monster Jam. It's also the home of Athens' pro hockey team, the Rock Lobsters.

THE CLASSIC CENTER

This indoor venue is great for those who prefer indoor venues, assigned seating and a night of refined professional performance. Check out the Classic Center's calendar to catch an orchestral show, theatrical performance or an acoustic set from a music legend.

GEORGIA THEATRE

One of Athens' most prominent music venues with an iconic marquee, this downtown theater hosts acts that draw in townies, students and visitors alike. The Georgia Theatre hosts energetic touring acts and local rock music. Their rooftop bar also hosts live shows!

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.

BOAR'S HEAD LOUNGE

Large indoor and outdoor spaces make this bar a choice for sampling live music. Patrons can also enjoy a game of pool or darts with friends.

CINÉ

This beloved independent arthouse movie theater also hosts live bands in its LAB space. This venue hosts goth dance parties, experimental bands and local heavy hitters.

DUKE'S AND DOTTIE'S

A new country bar in the heart of downtown, Duke's and Dottie's offers line dancing, country music and late night club style DJing.

FLICKER THEATRE & BAR

Flicker is one of the most popular music bars in town for the musical variety that this venue boasts. If you are not sure what part of the scene you are interested in, stand at Flicker for a week; you will hear something worth exploring further.



HENDERSHOT'S

Located off of Prince Avenue, Hendershot's hosts singer-songwriters, jazz musicians, vinyl DJing and no phone parties. With earlier show times and an analog soundsystem, this coffee shop and bar provides high brow entertainment for a classy and fun time.

NORMAL BAR

Normal Bar hosts comedy shows, songwriting competitions, local shows and the annual 4/20 music festival. This bar is located in Normaltown, and offers delivery from Automatic Pizza.

NOWHERE BAR

Laid-back and known for darts, pool and live music, this bar hosts country and rock bands. The ambience, soundsystem and great booking make it a great venue for country music.

THE ROADHOUSE

A classic dive bar, for over 30 years, this spot has hosted rock music for boys.

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, country and special events.

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SEE WHAT'S OPEN AT
dining.uga.edu/locations-hours

Ashley Travieso | Emily Laycock



shows for the community. The studio started small, teaching about three classes and now offers over 90 weekly classes.

The studio provides support for individuals, whether they are dancers, kids on field trips or special education classes. Its outreach programs offer field trips to self-contained and English as a second language classrooms, reflecting the current executive director, Ann Woodruff's passion for special education and making aerial arts accessible to all.

Ashley Travieso, Canopy's associate director and repertory instructor, learned about Canopy in 2007. She came in with a background in gymnastics and now manages marketing initiatives, outreach and instructs at Canopy.

For Travieso, creating an inclusive and welcoming environment is one of the most important parts of their mission.

"We've worked really hard to have an open-door policy to welcome anyone that wants to be here," Travieso said.

For Mazie Bowen, a senior instructor, repertory company member and former board member, the sense of warmth at Canopy is key to the studio's openness.

"Community means a little something different to each individual, but I think the overall arching thing is safety and acceptance and that kind of ability to be yourself," Bowen said. "The spirit of the organization really fosters that kind of environment."

Jo Nicol, a member of the repertory company and trapeze instructor, came in with no experience in trapeze or a dance background, but tried one day and fell in love. She loves the creative outlet that Canopy provides and appreciates the ability to let go of creative work without having a long-term commitment.

As an instructor, Nicol enjoys watching students challenge themselves and discover what works for them.

"I really like helping people get a trick that they had been out of reach for a while," Nicol said. "It's a fun puzzle, because everybody's body is different." The studio gives individuals the opportunity to build resilience and improve their mental health through aerial arts.

"Ariel is addicting and it becomes a part of who you are and what you want to be, and it does so much for people's mental health resiliency," Travieso said.

The studio is on track to provide \$80,000 worth of scholarships to its students this year, covering financial needs, medical disability and teaching training. This funding enables children and adults to experience the benefits of aerial arts regardless of financial limitations.

"We have this really phenomenal scholarship program, grants and donations," Bowen said. "These kids who maybe have and adults who maybe have economic situations that wouldn't normally allow them to take these classes, because it's not cheap, that they can do it for free or for reduced costs."

At the time of publication, Canopy Studio recently announced a move to a new location to be built on Wake Street and move-in ready for fall 2026.

"I think as a studio, kind of continue that trajectory of being the leader in dance trapeze nationwide and internationally would be awesome," Travieso said. "We're busting at the seams and you know, are on the hunt for a bigger space to accommodate more students."

Even as Canopy looks to expand, its mission remains grounded in fostering creativity, movement and community.

CANOPY STUDIO BRINGS UNIQUE FORM OF MOVEMENT TO ATHENS

Pride Haggerty

Canopy Studio, the nonprofit aerial arts and movement education center in Athens, has grown significantly since its founding in 2002. The studio, located in the Chase Park Warehouses, offers more than 90 weekly classes to over 600 students.

Founded by Susan Murphy, Canopy aims to enrich the community through aerial dance. Classes range from trapeze to fabrics, acrobatics and flexibility, and other offerings include workshops, parties and



SWING THEORY CONTRIBUTES TO ATHENS' JAZZ SCENE

Pride Haggerty

The Athens-based jazz collective Swing Theory brings a post-1940s jazz style to the community and an open-door approach. Unlike traditional jazz bands, the group welcomes anyone to join, staying true to its collective name.

The band is made up of University of Georgia students, alumni and other community members, representing a diverse array of majors and backgrounds, from business to science. They also feature many different instruments, including saxophone, bass, drums, trumpet and guitar.

“We have tons of younger musicians who come and sit in, random people from the community who play with us. There’s a professor who comes and plays in our band sometimes,” Kai Owens, the band leader, said. “We just are trying to get more people involved with performing jazz and growing the jazz scene in Athens.”

Owens recently took over running practices, held twice a week, coordinating gigs and communicating with venues, a role he describes as rewarding and enjoyable.

“I’d say overall, it’s just been a great experience for me. This was the first band that I’ve

ever, you know, been in charge of,” Owens said. “All the guys who are up there on the bandstand with me just make my job incredibly easy.”

Swing Theory performs at venues from Five Bar every Sunday, to Hendershot’s, 40 Watt Club and Nowhere Bar. The band has also performed at UGA sorority and fraternity events and corporate outings.

Performing at 40 Watt Club was particularly rewarding for the band.

“Talking to the sound guys, they couldn’t remember the last time before us that they had a jazz band in there,” Owens said. “It’s just an awesome opportunity to get to play for that legendary of a venue.”

The band works with the UGA jazz department to help foster their growth and gain mentorship from professors, influencing the growth of their collective.

“We play in the UGA jazz ensembles and we use other UGA jazz musicians, as you know, as part of our collective,” Levi Brown, Swing Theory’s business manager, said.

The band emphasizes a supportive

environment and members push each other, sharing music to foster collective growth.

“The interpersonal aspect of swing theory, that’s something that I am very fulfilled about,” Brown said. “Now I think it’s gotten deeper, and that’s been rewarding, that I think promotes better music.”

One challenge the band faces is the willingness of venues to accept jazz music.

“We had to do a lot to advocate for ourselves and get in the door with people and really make those relationships with certain venues,” Owens said.

Looking to the future, Owens and Brown hope the band will continue to thrive even after they graduate. They aim to pass the group down to the next generation.

“Have it be a bigger collective that is really just getting out there in all different capacities,” Owens said. “Getting more people and more of the community exposed to jazz.”

Through its unique jazz music style, open community and spirit, Swing Theory is leaving a lasting impression on the Athens music scene.

UPCOMING SHOWS

Just a few of the musical acts scheduled in Athens this spring

March 20

*The Rat Pack:
Together Again*
Morton Theatre

March 21

Starboro
40 Watt Club

March 24

Max McNown
Georgia Theatre

March 28

Jam In The Streets
Washington Street

March 31

Kishi Bashi with Bayonne
40 Watt Club

April 1

Christone "Kingfish" Ingram
40 Watt Club

April 2

Breabach
Hodgson Concert Hall

April 10

Ébène Quartet
Ramsey Concert Hall

April 16

SteelDrivers
Georgia Theatre

April 17

Cécile McLorin Salvant
Hodgson Concert Hall

April 18

*Athens Twilight
International Street Festival*
Downtown

April 21

*Dance Me: The Music of
Leonard Cohen*
The Classic Center Theatre

April 23

The Bends
Georgia Theatre

April 25

*Live Between The Hedges ft.
Luke Bryan and Jason Aldean*
Dooley Field at
Sanford Stadium

May 3

Atlanta Symphony Orchestra
Hodgson Concert Hall

May 7-9

*EXPO2026: 30 YEARS
OF KINDERCORE*
40 Watt Club

May 9

Winterville Marigold Festival
Pittard Park

May 15

The Del McCoury Band
Hodgson Concert Hall

May 30

The Mountain Goats
40 Watt Club

For more events see page 56



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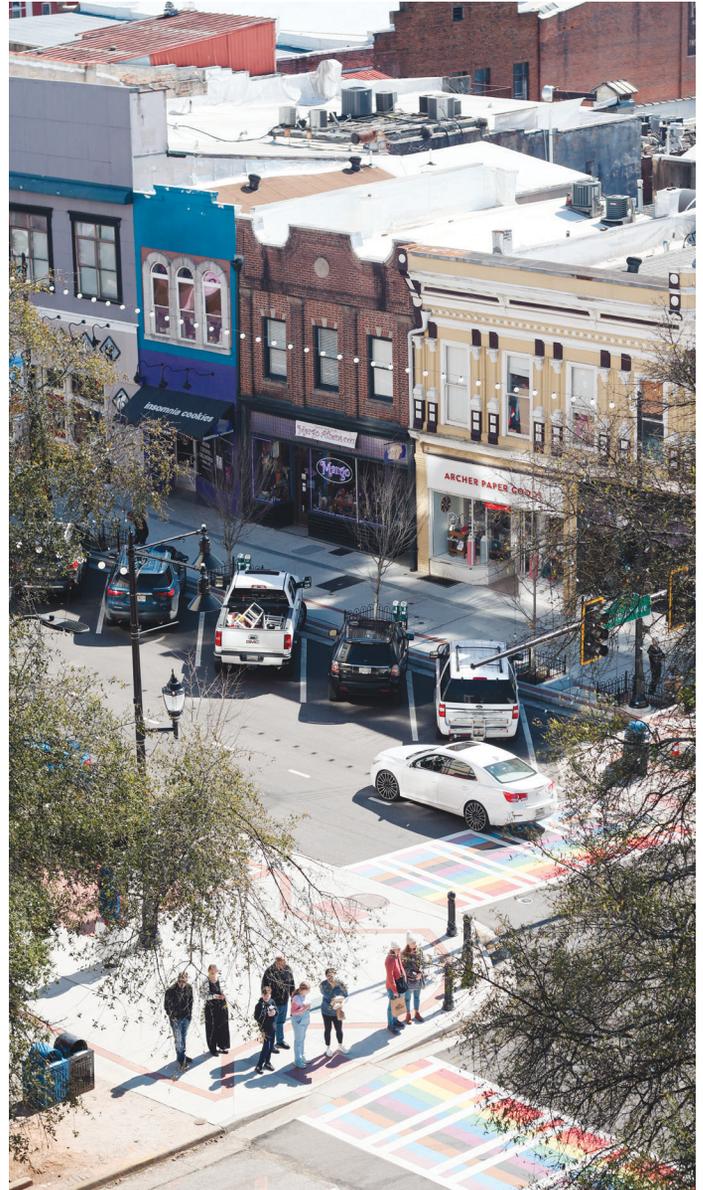
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ATHENS THIS SPRING AND SUMMER

BULLDOG SCAVENGER HUNT 60





EXPLORE THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Parks, trails and rivers in and
around Athens

PARKS **TRAILS** **RIVERS**

BEN BURTON PARK

West Side

Located on Mitchell Bridge Road, this 35-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

Established 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 and Natural Resources. 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 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

South Milledge Avenue

Operated by the University of Georgia, 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 towards the end of the year.

TRIAL 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. Students and visitors can come see the plants year-round.

WALKER PARK

East Side

This 113-acre park is located just off "the Loop" 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.

BIRCHMORE TRAIL

Memorial Park

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. It took five years to complete and now stands tall for passing hikers to enjoy.

FIREFLY TRAIL

Athens and Winterville

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

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

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

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

WHITE TRAIL

State Botanical Garden of Georgia

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.

BIG DOGS ON THE RIVER

Atlanta Highway

Big Dogs is located on the Middle Oconee River, just an eight-minute drive from Ath-

ens. 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

20 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, 4 and under as well as 65 and over get free admission.

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 meandering 39-mile stretch of the Oconee River.



Founders Memorial Garden | Tim O'Brien

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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 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.

CHRISTOPHER MOBLEY

This Alabama luxury menswear brand recently opened a location on Baxter Street. They stock formal wear and gameday pieces from sport coats and loafers to vintage-style Georgia polos and shorts with "Dawgs" embroidered over the back pocket.

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.

DUKES CLOTHIER

This high-end, vibrant boutique offers a variety of preppy women's styles. Stop by the new store on Milledge Avenue for a unique shopping experience, which includes a cup of frosé and a visit from their pug, Mr. Pickles.

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 to donate profits to local and global charities.

THE SWANK COMPANY

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



Dynamite Clothing | Tim O'Brien

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.

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 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.



Bear Hug Honey | Sophie Yaeger

BEAR HUG HONEY COMPANY

Bear Hug stocks local and internationally-sourced honey along with skincare products, jewelry, candles, home decor and even Taylor Swift merch. Its wide range of offerings makes it a go-to spot for buying gifts.

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 Metaphysical 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, Epiphone, 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. If you're feeling crafty, they have a huge selection of individual jewelry beads towards the back.

INDIE SOUTH

Featuring locally handmade gifts, Indie South carries a mix of books, candles, incense, gems and stones, jewelry and chocolates and teas. They also hold events like monthly Tarot & Tea Thursdays and pop-up flea markets and offer tarot readings.

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.

CLASSIC CITY VINTAGE GUITARS

Established in 2021, this vintage guitar shop sells vintage and used guitars, amplifiers and pedals. They also offer repairs and services for electric and acoustic guitars.

MOTHERLODE

Located on Baxter Street, MotherLode provides a wide variety of vintage and handcrafted goods. Featuring over 40 vendors, you'll find everything from clothing to room decor, modern furniture and accessories.



Wuxtry Records | David Barnes

BLACK-OWNED BUSINESSES

DAWG GONE GOOD BBQ
dawggonegoodbbqathens.com

This classic downtown barbecue joint owned by William Hardy is known for mouthwatering ribs and pork butt, demonstrated by its several Classic City BBQ Festival award wins. Bonus: convenient outdoor seating and free samples.

LAVENDER HILL BED & BREAKFAST
lavenderhillbnb.com

University of Georgia alum Jihan Bradford was inspired by the idea that design and flowers have personality, which led her to create a boutique bed-and-breakfast experience. Lavender Hill Bed & Breakfast, located on East Campus, offers homemade breakfast and a peaceful countryside feel. Amenities include a personalized in-room snack bar, mini refrigerator and smart TV. The inn also hosts events such as weddings, showers and other celebrations and offers custom floral packages.

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.

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 TEApothecary line, at the Athens Farmers Market. 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.



William Hardy of Dawg Gone Good BBQ | Jessica Gratigny



MEplusTEA items | Landen Todd

MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS

Explore these 9 Athens communities



Boulevard / North Chase / Pulaski Heights

Founded in the late 1800s as a suburb connected to downtown Athens by streetcar, historic Boulevard is a colorful neighborhood now popular with artists, entrepreneurs and musicians, as well as University of Georgia staff and students. It's a walkable, friendly community listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

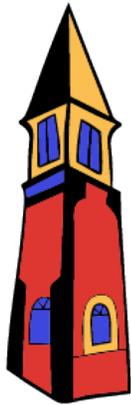
A once-industrial area off North Chase Street now houses lofts and small businesses. Pulaski Heights is still dotted with small historic homes that used to house a spectrum of laborers. The Pulaski Heights Trail is a paved walking and biking path that connects the neighborhood to downtown.

Cheap eats:

Maepole, Pancho's Tacos & Tequila, Tlaloc El Mexicano, White Tiger Gourmet

Stuff to do:

Attend a play at Town & Gown Players. Go indoor rock climbing at Active Climbing. Visit locally owned bookstore, Avid Bookshop and grab a coffee from Sunroof Coffee. Shop for toys and art supplies at TREEHOUSE kid and craft while checking out their TREATHOUSE to satisfy your sweet tooth. View contemporary art galleries at ATHICA: Athens Institute for Contemporary Art.



Chicopee-Dudley

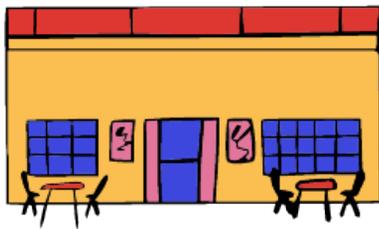
Stretched along the Oconee River between Third and Oconee streets, Chicopee-Dudley is home to students and longtime locals. It's not far from downtown, but it also has plenty of outdoor spaces to enjoy. The area is home to R.E.M. landmark, the steeple of St. Mary's Episcopal Church.

Cheap eats:

Mama's Boy on Oak Street, Rashe's Cuisine, Waffle House

Stuff to do:

Walk, run or bike on the newly expanded North Oconee River Greenway or the Firefly Trail. Walker Park and Dudley Park offer an outdoor reprieve with large recreation areas.



Cobbham

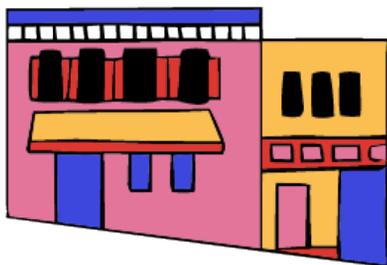
In the oldest suburb in Athens, east of the intersection of South Milledge and Prince Avenues, you'll find charming historic buildings from the 1800s and some of the city's top locally owned restaurants.

Cheap Eats:

Big City Bread Cafe, Donderos', Taqueria Del Sol, The Taco Stand, Punta Cana Latin Grill

Stuff to do:

Enjoy live music at Hendershot's, a coffee shop by day and a bar by night. Take a class at Shakti Yoga Athens. Taste test wines at Tapped Athens Wine Tasting Market or The Lark Winespace. Visit the Reese Street Historic District.



Downtown

The heart of Athens is bustling with restaurants, retail and posh student housing. Downtown living provides easy walking access to the University of Georgia's North Campus and Athens nightlife. With over 80 bars and a dozen music venues (some spaces acting as both), the streets are flooded with students and townies alike most weekends.

Cheap eats:

Bubble Cafe, Dawg Gone Good BBQ, Lindsey's Culinary Market, Clocked!

Stuff to do:

Go on a sustainable shopping spree at Dynamite Clothing, Cillies Clothing or Agora Vintage. Eat, drink and play board games at The Rook & Pawn. Catch a show at Georgia Theatre, 40 Watt Club or Flicker Theatre & Bar. Check out Wuxtry Records or Low Yo Yo Stuff Records for all your vintage vinyl album needs.

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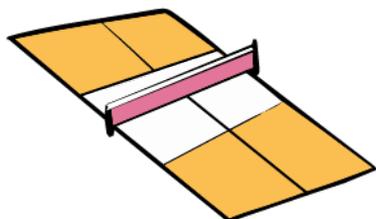
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East Side

Located off “the Loop” Exit 7 (College Station) and Exit 8 (Lexington Road/Oconee Street), the East Side is a home base for many UGA students. There are plenty of affordable housing options as well, from duplexes and townhomes to lively apartment complexes.

Cheap eats:

Cali-N-Tito’s East at La Puerta del Sol, Sweetie Pie by Savie, Taste of India, Taqueria La Parilla

Stuff to do:

Play tennis at Satterfield Park or hit a few rounds of golf at the UGA Golf Course. Go roller skating at Fun Galaxy Athens. Play pickleball and walk the trails at Southeast Clarke Park.



Five Points

Walking distance from campus amid the sorority and fraternity houses that line South Milledge Avenue, Five Points hosts a mix of students and families in both historic homes and smaller apartments. From food to fitness to retail, Five Points is a pedestrian-friendly hub of local business and activity.

Cheap eats:

Baddie’s Burger House, El Barrio Tacos & Tequila, Fully Loaded Pizza Kitchen, Kelly’s Authentic Jamaican Food, Condor Chocolates

Stuff to do:

Shop for organic groceries at Earth Fare or fresh bread at Independent Baking Co. Watch a soccer game at The Royal Peasant. Walk along Milledge Avenue.



Macon Highway

Just off “the Loop,” headed south down U.S. Route 441, Macon Highway is a quiet, developing area. With a few apartment complexes and small restaurants, this is an ideal spot for students who want some distance from the commotion of downtown. Nearby parks and trails provide opportunities to get outdoors, and the proximity to “the Loop” shortens the drive across town.

Cheap eats:

Butt Hutt BBQ, Mama’s Boy at the Falls of Oconee, Amici at the Falls of Oconee, Molly’s Coffee Company

Stuff to do:

Bring your best game to Showtime Bowl. Visit the State Botanical Garden of Georgia off Milledge Avenue. Have a picnic at Memorial Park. See the animals at Bear Hollow Zoo.



Normaltown

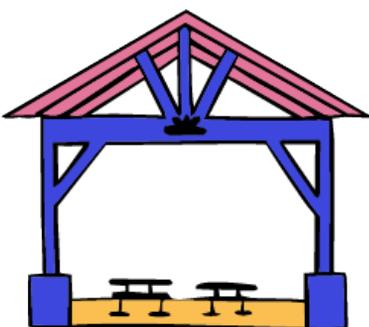
Normaltown is an eclectic area with a mix of older homes and local businesses lining Prince Avenue and its side streets. It was originally nicknamed for the State Normal School, a teachers’ college founded in 1891. Its former grounds are now home to UGA’s Health Sciences Campus and the future home of the UGA School of Medicine, putting Normaltown on the UGA bus line.

Cheap Eats:

Agua Linda Mexican Restaurant, Automatic Pizza, Marti’s at Middy, Fully Loaded Pizza Kitchen

Stuff to do:

Go shopping at Daily Groceries Co-op for local produce and fresh-baked bread. Grab a drink at The Old Pal or compete in a trivia night at Hi-Lo Lounge. Have a specialty latte on the patio at Sips Espresso Café.



West Side

The West Side of Athens runs along Atlanta Highway from the Middle Oconee River and is rapidly expanding with a variety of restaurants and big box stores, from Trader Joe’s and Target to Home Depot and Costco. Apartment complexes in the area have close proximity to the popular shopping and dining that most people regularly cross town for.

Cheap eats:

Locos Grill & Pub, Sr. Sol, Rafferty’s, Strickland’s Restaurant, Brett’s Casual American

Stuff to do:

Grab a few drinks and a bite to eat at Akademia Brewing Company. Do some shopping at America’s Thrift Store or Goodwill. Stroll the river trails at Ben Burton Park. Spend some time jumping around at Rush Athens Trampoline Park.



Skateboarding | Merrielle Gatlin

KID-FRIENDLY

Where to eat, shop and explore with younger visitors

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 museums and a resource library. The center hosts fundraisers like the Jack O' Lantern Jog in October and the Frog Hop 5k in February. The Frog Pond gift shop carries locally-made educational toys.

WASHINGTON FARMS

Oconee County

A popular destination during the fall, Washington Farm opens for strawberry picking season in April. About half an hour from downtown Athens, activities include playgrounds, a petting zoo, gem mining and more. Book tickets online in advance.

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.

ROAM

ALICE H. RICHARDS CHILDREN'S GARDEN

South Milledge Avenue

Located at the State Botanical Garden of Georgia, this children's garden offers an interactive space where kids can learn about nature and have fun while doing it. The garden offers a Theatre-in-the-Woods, featuring engaging shows, a Sweet Pea Club education team, a Garden Gnomes docent program, family festivals, summer camps and monthly Full Moon Hikes.

BEAR HOLLOW ZOO

Memorial Park

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.

The Red & Black PODCASTS

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Treehouse Kid & Craft | Sidney Chansamone

VISIT

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.

AVID BOOKSHOP

Barber Street

This bookstore on Barber Street has popular books from all around the country and an extensive kids' section. Avid hosts a wide range of events and book clubs every year, many of which are for younger readers.

EAT

CALI-N-TITO'S

Five Points/East Side

Both Cali-N-Tito's locations offer casual Latin fare, but the East Side restaurant at La Puerta del Sol is especially popular with families, thanks to the huge dining area, coin-operated rides and frozen treats.

CLASSIC CITY EATS & PIZZERIA

Oconee County

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

GEORGIA MUSEUM OF ART

East Campus

Georgia's official state art museum offers free admission and numerous events for kids and families. Set up a "backpack tour" at the front desk, where young visitors can pick up a backpack full of activity cards, touring tips and a bag of goodies. Check out monthly Family Day events where kids and parents can spend a Saturday morning learning about a specific exhibit.

TREEHOUSE KID AND 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 collector's items like Jellycat plushies and Sonny Angel dolls. There's even a gourmet ice cream shop inside the store with allergen-free options.

KILWINS

Downtown

Located in downtown Athens, Kilwins offers original recipe ice cream, fudge and confections and chocolates. They have loads of different flavors to choose from and even sell ice cream cakes. The shop opened in July of 2024.

THE ROOK & PAWN

Downtown

This London-style board game cafe has over 600 games to play. All-day access to the wall of games is \$7. The food menu is full of sandwiches, charcuterie, snacks and sweets. Customers of all ages can grab a coffee, local beer or custom colorful Italian soda.

TED'S MOST BEST

Downtown

With a giant sandbox and shady patio, families are drawn to this casual Italian spot with thin-crust pizzas, pasta and draft beers.



BEAR HOLLOW ZOO

Connecting the Athens community with native wildlife

Pride Haggerty

Bear Hollow Zoo, situated just off Milledge Avenue, is not only home to a variety of animals, but also the only zoo in proximity to Athens. Established in the 1940s, the zoo has been managed by the Athens-Clarke County Leisure Services department since 2004, ensuring that all animals are kept healthy, receive regular veterinary care and that zookeepers are thoroughly trained.

Bear Hollow sits on less than six acres of land and houses animals from black bears to the American beaver, to a bald eagle and spotted skunk.

Over the years, the zoo has seen tremendous growth, with its

addition of new animals, improvement of habitats and updating fencing for visitor protection. Leisure Services has allowed these improvements through grants, as well as better medical care for the animals and training animals to be willing to get checked and tested.

Kelly Garrison, zoo coordinator and UGA alum with degrees in animal science and dairy science, has been part of Bear Hollow since 2018. Garrison enjoys mentoring interns and part-time staff to help them grow their personal careers.

Bear Hollow provides a hands-on internship program to carry into vet school or wherever they might want to go.



“Now that I’ve been in this career for almost 20 years, it’s been really rewarding to kind of have seen them grow and get developed in their careers,” Garrison said. “It’s now kind of like I’m helping mold the next generation.”

Looking ahead, Garrison hopes to see continued growth in animal numbers and staffing at Bear Hollow.

“I would love to continue to see just the animal side grow,” Garrison said. “Then obviously, continuing to grow the staff, I never want to see them go, but since it is part-time, I would love to see them all leave for bigger and better.”

Adrienne Risk, park assistant at Bear Hollow, who participated in the internship program, emphasizes the zoo’s focus on native wildlife, giving visitors the chance to watch these species from afar.

“These are all animals that you could essentially find in your own backyard. So that’s kind of, the backyard connection that I think we’re trying to foster,” Risk said. “Being able to observe them from a distance and appreciate them from a distance.”

As a park assistant, Risk is in charge of daily husbandry, including feeding, cleaning, training and medicating the animals in the zoo. She particularly enjoys building relationships with the animals and figuring out their individual personalities to then appropriately care for them.

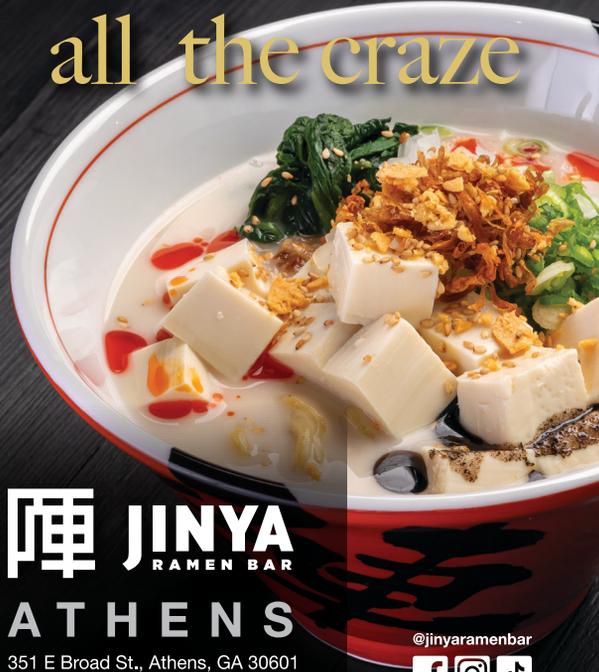
Bear Hollow hosts birthday parties, other events and outreach programs to give visitors a chance to connect with wildlife up close.

Megan Subock, the zoo’s program specialist, has been with Bear Hollow for 10 years and helps manage educational programs, including ambassador animal training and presentation during birthday parties and special events. She has a passion for teaching children not only about the animals but also how they can make a positive impact on wildlife and the environment in their daily lives.

“I teach thousands of kids every year. They get to meet a possum or an owl up close and learn and ask all the questions that they have and hopefully leave with something that they know that they can do to help that animal, that species, or just the environment as a whole, which is pretty rewarding,” Subock said.

With its focus on native animals, hands-on education and community outreach, Bear Hollow offers a place where visitors of all ages can connect with animals.

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Front Porch Bookstore | Taylor Gerlach

DAY TRIP

Explore restaurants, farms, parks and shops in these nearby towns

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 page 25) offers produce, food and artisan goods every Saturday, April through December. Visit the Front Porch Bookstore, a nonprofit, to purchase donated books. Sweet Olive Farm Animal Rescue allows volunteers to help feed and care for animals on the farm. 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.

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 WildRice Adventures or visit the iconic Iron Horse. If you're missing the eats from The Varsity in Athens, the new location in Watkinsville is now open.

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 family 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, or piece of local art before heading to Shaking Rock Park, which earned its name from a perfectly balanced boulder that the pressure of one's hand could move. The rock no longer moves, but the park is still worth checking out.

Comer 17 miles northeast

Head to Comer to grab a drink and a bag of coffee 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 six mile drive away from Watson Mill Bridge State Park, featuring Georgia's longest original site covered bridge, where visitors can explore trails along the Broad River.



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN AND AROUND ATHENS THIS SPRING AND SUMMER

MARCH

MARCH 7

Flight of the Fireflies Lantern Parade
Dudley Park

Hosted by Athens-Clarke County Leisure Services, this parade invites the community to enjoy live music, performers and huge illuminated art pieces. Bring lanterns or flashlights to help light up the path to Dudley Park.

MARCH 19-21

Great Southland Stampede Rodeo
UGA Livestock Instructional Arena

Hold onto your hats at the Great Southland Stampede Rodeo presented by the University of Georgia Block and Bridle Club. One of the largest rodeos in Georgia, it draws crowds of thousands to watch cowboys and cowgirls from all over the country ride, rope and hold on tight.

MARCH 22

Athens Symphony Spring Concert
The Classic Center Theatre

The annual spring concert is a favorite among classical music lovers. The theme of this year's show is "Four Tunes Walk into a Bar," and features the Barber of Seville Overture, Bolero, Festive Overture, Pictures at an Exhibition and La Grande Porte de Kiev. Tickets are available online starting March 9.

MARCH 25-26

Mrs. Doubtfire
The Classic Center Theatre

A musical comedy production of everyone's favorite Scottish nanny is coming to the Classic Center. At the time of publication, ticket prices begin at \$84 including fees and rise from there. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the show starts at 7:30 p.m.



MARCH 27

TEDxUGA: Dark Mode
Morton Theatre

UGA hosts this annual TED event where speakers from the Athens community offer a glimpse into their research, scholarship and experience that shapes our future. Tickets are \$15 for students and \$20 for non-students.

APRIL

APRIL 10-12, 16-19

Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike
Town & Gown Players

Town & Gown, Athens' longest-running volunteer community theater, performs the Christopher Durang play about the disruption Masha's new boyfriend brings home to her sisters, directed by Leslie Kimbell.

APRIL 17-18

Athens Twilight Criterium
Downtown Athens

Athens Orthopedic Clinic hosts the annual professional cycling race. The surrounding celebrations include a family-friendly festival, food vendors and BMX demos. Twilight draws thousands of athletes and spectators to downtown Athens, so arrive early for a good spot.

APRIL 18

International Street Festival
Downtown Athens

Created in 1999, this annual event presented by UGA's Center for Global and Cultural Student Engagement allows Athenians and visitors to explore different cultures. Student and family friendly, this free event has live performances, activities and food from countries around the world. This year, it will take place during the Athens Twilight Criterium.

APRIL 18

G-Day
Sanford Stadium

Get excited for the upcoming season by attending the annual G-Day spring scrimmage that pits Bulldog against Bulldog with an intra-squad game between the Red team and Black team.

APRIL 25

Live Between the Hedges Concert Series
Sanford Stadium

Georgia natives Jason Aldean and Luke Bryan will join artists Zach Top and Lauren Alaina for a concert between the hedges. This will be the first concert at Sanford Stadium in over a decade. At the time of publication, tickets begin at \$74.75 and rise from there.



MAY

MAY 2-3

**Indie South's Springtacular Makers Market
Downtown Athens**

One of the largest makers markets in Athens, this annual event features over 100 vendors selling original art, handmade goods and vintage items. There are also various food trucks and kids craft activities for families.

MAY 7-8

**UGA Spring 2026 Commencement Ceremonies
Sanford Stadium and Stegeman Coliseum**

Mark your calendars! On May 7 and 8, UGA will hold commencement ceremonies for undergraduate and graduate students. Undergraduate commencement will be held in Sanford Stadium, while master's and doctoral ceremonies will take place in Stegeman Coliseum.

MAY 9

**Winterville Annual Marigold Festival
Pittard Park**

Featuring one of the oldest 10K races in Georgia, this small-town spring festival also has a parade, vendors, family-friendly activities, a classic car show and live music going all day long.

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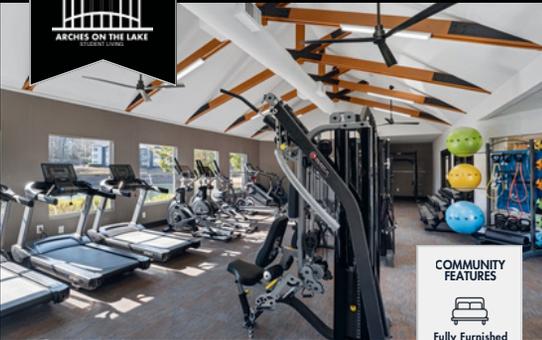
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JUNE

JUNE 5-14

**She Loves Me
Town & Gown Players**

Based on the classic romantic comedy novel by Joe Masteroff, this musical, directed by Michael Fulford, comes to life in a high-energy production that will transform the stage into a living pop-up book.

JUNE 11-13

**Hot Corner Food and Music Festival
Downtown Athens**

For over two decades, on the second weekend of June, downtown Athens comes together at the intersection of Washington and Hull Street during the Hot Corner Food and Music Festival featuring performances on the mainstage and the streets lined with food vendors, small businesses, information booths and more.

JUNE 26-28

**AthFest Music and Arts Festival
Downtown Athens**

AthFest is an annual three-day festival that brings local musicians, food vendors, artists and fans to downtown Athens. The event is part of a larger effort to raise money for AthFest Educates, a non-profit that supports music and arts education for Athens K-12 students.

Hot Corner | Ashtin Barker



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SCAVENGER HUNT

How many bulldogs can you hunker down?

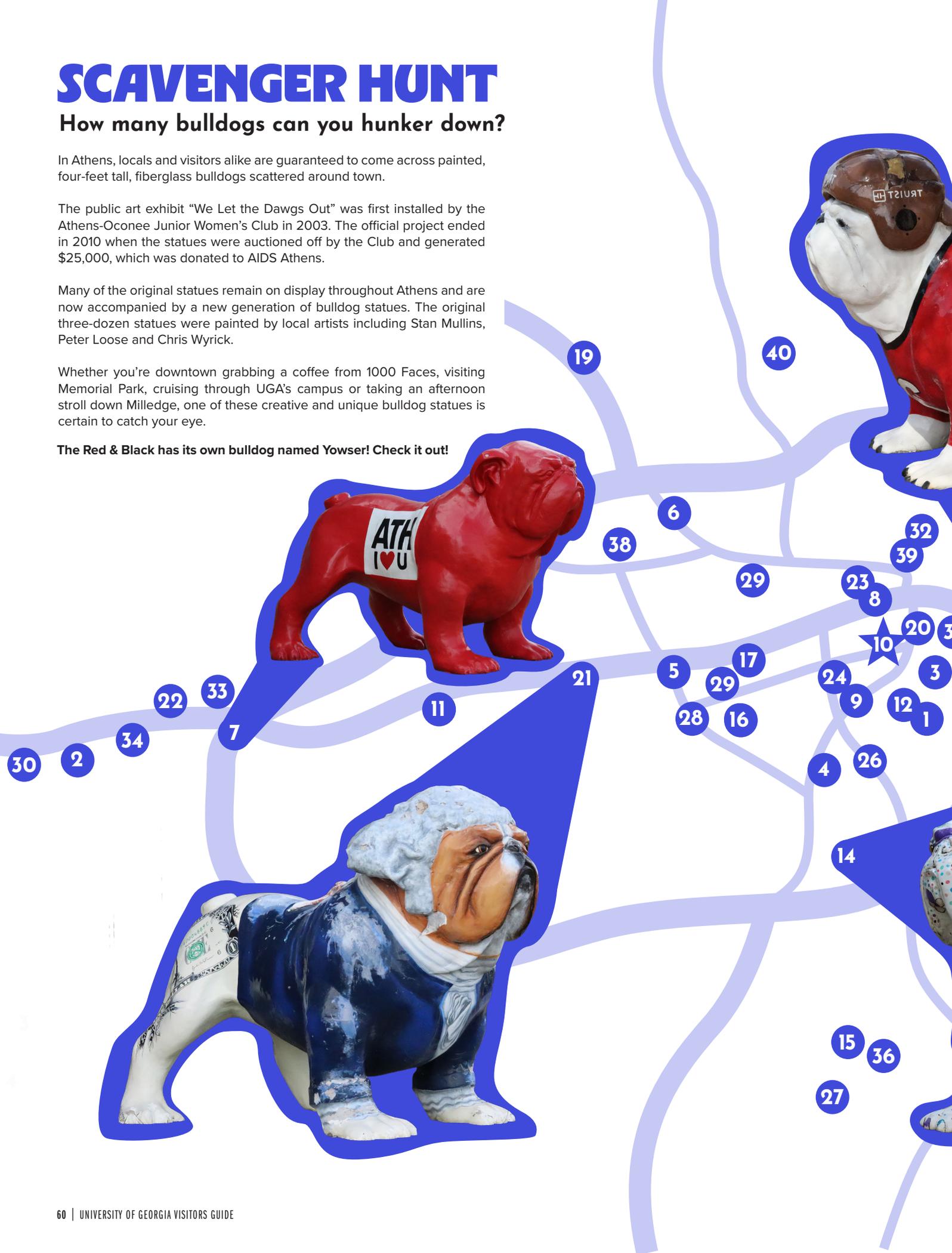
In Athens, locals and visitors alike are guaranteed to come across painted, four-foot tall, fiberglass bulldogs scattered around town.

The public art exhibit "We Let the Dawgs Out" was first installed by the Athens-Oconee Junior Women's Club in 2003. The official project ended in 2010 when the statues were auctioned off by the Club and generated \$25,000, which was donated to AIDS Athens.

Many of the original statues remain on display throughout Athens and are now accompanied by a new generation of bulldog statues. The original three-dozen statues were painted by local artists including Stan Mullins, Peter Loose and Chris Wyrick.

Whether you're downtown grabbing a coffee from 1000 Faces, visiting Memorial Park, cruising through UGA's campus or taking an afternoon stroll down Milledge, one of these creative and unique bulldog statues is certain to catch your eye.

The Red & Black has its own bulldog named Yowser! Check it out!



KEY



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25



31

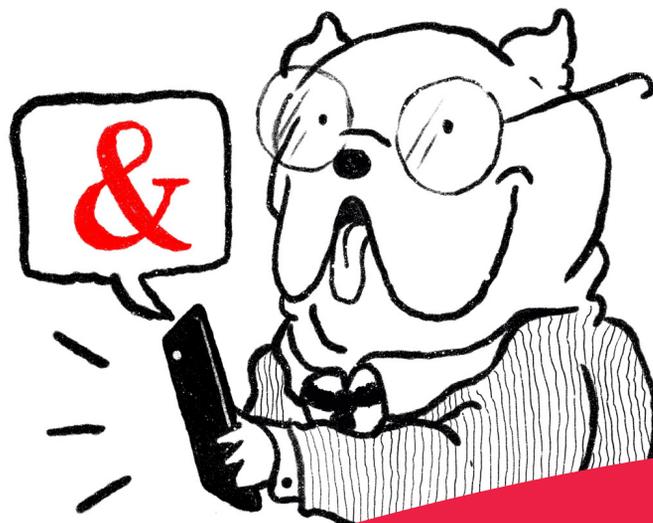
- 1** **A-pooch-ecary**
250 West Green Street
- 2** **Ain't Nothing But A Hound Dawg**
4175 Atlanta Highway
- 3** **AnAtomic Dawg**
501 D. W. Brooks Drive
- 4** **Archie**
1710 South Lumpkin Street
- 5** **Argo Dawg**
2310 West Broad Street
- 6** **AT&T Dawg**
2319 Prince Avenue
- 7** **Athens, I Love You**
10 Huntington Road
- 8** **Biotest Dawg**
233 W Hancock Ave
- 9** **The Blue Dawg of Happiness**
997 South Milledge Avenue
- 10** **The Red & Black Yowser**
540 Baxter Street
- 11** **Bugga**
3145 Atlanta Highway
- 12** **Celeste the Dawg**
1197 S. Lumpkin Street
- 13** **Champ**
196 Alps Road, Suite 31
- 14** **Chase the Dawg**
293 Gran Ellen Drive
- 15** **Chick-fil-A Dawg**
1870 Barnett Shoals Road
- 16** **Clover the Bulldog**
2025 Baxter Street
- 17** **Cookout Dawgs (There's Four)**
1917 West Broad Street
- 18** **Covered Bridge-Trestle Dawg**
920 East Broad Street
- 19** **Cuspid**
3380 Old Jefferson Road
- 20** **Dawg Walker**
298 South Hull Street
- 21** **Dollar Dawg**
2636 Atlanta Highway
- 22** **Dorothy the Service Dawg**
3898 Atlanta Highway
- 23** **Downtown Dawg**
272 West Hancock Avenue
- 24** **Dr. C. I. Dawg**
698 South Milledge Avenue
- 25** **EduDawg**
G-3 Aderhold Hall
- 26** **Flower Power**
1230 South Milledge Avenue
- 27** **Freedom Stands Guard**
2350 Barnett Shoals Road
- 28** **Game Dawg**
1230 Baxter Street
- 29** **Georgia Power Dawg**
1001 Prince Avenue
- 30** **License Plate Dawg**
4305 Atlanta Highway
- 31** **Manu**
4440 Lexington Road
- 32** **Robo Dawg**
297 Hoyt Street
- 33** **Rugga**
3690 Atlanta Highway, Suite 108
- 34** **Santa Dawg**
3990 Atlanta Highway
- 35** **Terrell Archie Jackson**
210 South Jackson Street
- 36** **Thurston Ladonnahue III**
1855 Barnett Shoals Road
- 37** **Truist Dawg**
475 East Broad Street
- 38** **Tugga**
915 Hawthorne Avenue
- 39** **Wugga**
500 College Avenue
- 40** **Zapp It**
200 Newton Bridge Road

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- World-Class Bicycle Racing
- 5K + Triathlon
- \$10K Mile Run
- 50K or 100K Gambler Bike Ride
- Athens Favorite Bands
- Charity Fundraising
- Twilight Global Challenge
- Open Container Festival Zone
- Concert & Start/Finish Line VIP
- Kids Zone
- BMX Shows
- Vendor Expo
- Food Court



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