



thrive



Historic Heartland



Enjoy true Southern hospitality in Georgia's Historic Heartland, just south of Atlanta. From charming towns and authentic antiques to quaint little shops along scenic byways, the Historic Heartland offers the warmth of yesteryear in quintessential Southern style. Stop to smell the flowers and listen to folks talk up local festivals. Get your feet wet and catch a mess of fish, or follow themed trails through the region's beauty. For more information, please visit www.historicgeorgia.com.



Athens is well-known for its lively music scene, which gave birth to groups such as the B-52's, R.E.M. and Widespread Panic. The city has also become a destination for distinctive dining. Home to the University of Georgia, Athens' restored and vibrant downtown area sparkles with award-winning restaurants, eclectic cafes and favorite local pubs. www.visitathensga.com

The **Blue Willow Inn** in Social Circle continues to win national awards for its Southern cuisine, but is also developing an adjacent village of turn-of-the-century style shops as well as the Creation and Natural History Museum. www.bluewillowinn.com



One of the best-kept secrets in Jackson is **Dauset Trails Nature Center**, home to wildlife like bison and bobcats as well as farm animals and a rustic farm setting. The woodland garden includes miles of scenic trails for bikers, hikers and horseback riders. www.dausettrails.com. Nearby is **Indian Springs**, home of the first state park in the United States and the Indian Springs Hotel, where you'll learn the story of Chief William McIntosh and the Creek Indians in Georgia. www.buttscountyhistoricalsociety.org

Just outside Fort Valley, visit **Lane Packing**, the largest peach grower in Georgia, to take a riding tram tour through peach and pecan orchards and learn the history of Georgia's peach industry, as well as how these crops are grown and harvested. www.lanepacking.com

Macon is the Cherry Blossom Capital of the World, but is also home to world-class museums. The **Georgia Music Hall of Fame** celebrates music legends like Otis Redding, Johnny Mercer and Alan Jackson, while the **Georgia Sports Hall of Fame** honors heroes like Hank Aaron from the state's top athletic fields. Visit Georgia's largest African American museum, the **Tubman African American Museum**, which offers 14 exhibition galleries, or tour the magnificent 1859 **Hay House**, one of "America's Castles." www.maconga.org

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Madison is steeped in history and antebellum architecture and steps back in time with the **Madison Museum of Fine Arts**. The museum collects, preserves and creatively displays original works by historically significant artists from around the world. www.madisonmuseum.org. Also plan a visit to the **Bruce Weiner Micro Car Museum**, “the Big Museum for Little Cars,” featuring cars from post World War II Europe. www.microcarmuseum.com



Massee Lane Gardens in Fort Valley has a children’s garden where kids can play and dig for dinosaur bones while adults enjoy acres of camellias, azaleas, roses, pond areas and grasslands. www.camellias-acs.org



Milledgeville is full of great architecture and history. The **Old Governor’s Mansion**, an outstanding example of Greek revival architecture and once home to eight of Georgia’s governors, has undergone a \$10 million historic restoration. The **Georgia Antebellum Capital Museum** traces the history Native Americans and the Civil War. If bonsai is your interest, more than 100 trees are exhibited at **Lockerly Arboretum** from late April through November. www.milledgevillecvb.com

Warner Robins’ Museum of Aviation continues to grow and expand with more than 100 aircraft and hundreds of exhibits. The welcome center, located in the historic 1943 train depot, has added a caboose for touring. www.museumofaviation.org



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