

DISCOVER DeKalb

DINING • ATTRACTIONS • ENTERTAINMENT



Shades of DeKalb

35 WAYS TO EXPERIENCE THE
DIVERSE CULTURE OF DEKALB

INSIDE

DEKALB'S
ENTERTAINMENT
COMMUNITY

THE GREAT
OUTDOORS

TRAVEL OPTIONS
FOR EVERY TYPE
OF TRAVELER

WELCOME TO DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA



WELCOME TO DEKALB COUNTY, where vibrant communities, natural beauty, and rich culture come together to offer you an unforgettable experience. At Discover DeKalb Convention & Visitors Bureau, we're thrilled to invite you to uncover the treasures our locals hold dear—whether it's unwinding in our expansive green spaces, indulging in world-class cuisine, or exploring the hidden gems that make DeKalb truly unique. Here, we don't just invite you to visit—we invite you to DeKalibrate.

Just east of downtown Atlanta and a quick 10-mile drive from Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, DeKalb County offers the perfect blend of big city amenities and small town charm. Our cities—Chamblee, Doraville, Stonecrest, Stone Mountain, and Tucker—are ready to welcome you with open arms, offering everything from eclectic dining experiences to bustling shopping districts and friendly hospitality that makes you feel right at home.

For outdoor enthusiasts, DeKalb is a haven. Whether you're a hiker, runner, cyclist, or paddler, you'll find your adventure here. Explore the iconic Stone Mountain Park, with its 15 miles of scenic hiking trails, or take on the summit challenge of the Walk-Up Trail to capture breathtaking views of the Atlanta skyline. The Davidson-Arabia Nature Preserve, part of the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area, offers another stunning landscape of granite outcrops, wooded trails, and peaceful waters for paddling along the South River Water Trail.

DeKalb's culinary scene is a melting pot of flavors, reflecting our status as one of Georgia's most diverse counties. Whether you crave down-home Southern comfort or international delicacies, DeKalb delivers. Take a culinary journey along Buford Highway, a 10-mile stretch renowned for its global cuisine. And don't forget to explore our thriving craft beer scene while you're here.

Shopping in DeKalb is an experience in itself. From the unique boutiques and cultural hubs like the Plaza Fiesta and Atlanta Chinatown Mall to more traditional retail destinations like the Mall at Stonecrest, there's something for every style and taste. Be sure to save some room in your suitcase!

Your visit to DeKalb wouldn't be complete without experiencing our top attractions. Stone Mountain Park is more than just an outdoor paradise—it's also home to family-friendly adventures like the Swiss cable car and the world's longest-running laser show. For a journey through time, explore the wonders of Fernbank Museum of Natural History, where you'll encounter dinosaurs, ancient fossils, and live animal exhibits.

In DeKalb, everyone is welcome. Whether you're seeking outdoor adventures, a new favorite meal, cultural discoveries, or family-friendly fun, DeKalb has something for you. We're delighted you're here, and we hope your time in our county is as memorable as it is diverse.

Welcome to DeKalb. Welcome home.



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Discover DeKalb Convention & Visitors Bureau

Discover DeKalb



Discover DeKalb Convention & Visitors Bureau is the official destination marketing organization for the vibrant cities of Chamblee, Doraville, Stonecrest, Stone Mountain, Tucker, and the unincorporated areas of DeKalb County. Our mission is clear: to showcase DeKalb as a premier destination for leisure travelers, business meetings, group tours, sports events, and family reunions. Under the leadership of our Executive Director & CEO, James Tsismanakis, we are committed to driving economic growth and attracting visitors to experience all that DeKalb has to offer.

DeKalb County, Georgia's fourth largest, is home to nearly 765,000 residents and is strategically located just six miles east of downtown Atlanta and 10 miles from Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. This prime location makes DeKalb not only easily accessible, but also a gateway to some of Georgia's most renowned attractions. Among these are Stone Mountain Park, Fernbank Museum of Natural History, Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area, the David J. Sencer CDC Museum, Your DeKalb Farmers Market, and the globally recognized Buford Highway International Corridor.

As DeKalb's official tourism agency, Discover DeKalb partners with a diverse array of organizations and agencies across various sectors. Our focus includes international travel, sports and recreation, film and entertainment, LGBTQ tourism, and the SMERF markets (encompassing Social, Military, Educational, Religious, and Fraternal groups). We also work closely with government, corporate, and group services to ensure a welcoming and inclusive environment for all visitors.

Whether you're planning a vacation, a business meeting, or a special event, Discover DeKalb is here to support your needs. For more information about what we can offer and to start planning your visit, head over to discoverdekalb.com.

We look forward to welcoming you to DeKalb County, where culture, community, and adventure await!



Eventful DeKalb

The fun is year-round in DeKalb County, where events range from food and family to arts and culture. Take a look at this jam-packed seasonal calendar and get ready to get out there.

Chamblee Summer Concert Series

SPRING

- Learn about other cultures and have fun at the same time at **Clarkston Culture Fest**, highlighting foods, languages, and traditions of international residents. This popular festival has grown since April 2014, much like the diversity of the town it celebrates. clarkstonculturefest.com
- The **Atlanta Film Festival** delights cinephiles every spring with a variety of flicks from all over the globe. As one of the oldest, largest festivals in the country—and one of only 24 Academy Award-qualifying festivals—it represents the best in independent film. atlantafilmfestival.com
- **Tucker Day** is exactly what it sounds like: a community-wide event to celebrate the city and its residents. Each May, Main Street comes alive with a parade and vendors offering food and wares, live music, and a number of activities for all ages. tuckerday.com
- The word **Frühlingsfest**, meaning “spring festival,” is a fitting name for this celebration of all things German in Avondale Estates. From food and beer to art and even a collection of vintage German cars, it’s a cultural education for the whole family. goethefruehlingsfest.com

SUMMER

- June kicks off the **Chamblee Summer Concert Series**, also known as Chamblee Rocks, on the first weekend of the month. This all-summer series lasts from June to August and has hosted headliners such as the rock band 10,000 Maniacs. chambleega.com
- On the second Friday of the month from July through September, **Fernbank After Dark** offers a special evening for adults 21+ with small plates, cocktails, live entertainment, and an up close and exclusive look at science and nature. fernbankmuseum.org



→ Summertime means library time at the **DeKalb County Public Library**, and the summer film series is a great way to beat the heat. Got kids? Check out the **Atlanta Children's Film Festival** in June, where kids ages 5 to 17 can learn about the art of cinema. dekalblibrary.org

→ Say “so long” to summer at the **Atlanta Caribbean Jerk Festival**, featuring the flavors and colors of the islands since 2005. With live performances, delicious cuisine, Caribbean art, and activities aplenty, no wonder it's one of the largest Caribbean celebrations in North America. atlantajerkfestival.com

FALL

→ **Taste of Tucker** was founded at Tucker First United Methodist Church and became so popular that it moved to Main Street. With delectable bites from numerous local eateries and breweries to sample, plus entertainment and family fun, it's the ideal event for those who love food and fall. tasteoftucker.com

→ For more than half a century, the **Stone Mountain Highland Games and Scottish**

Festival has transformed the town into the Scottish Highlands, complete with Celtic music, piping and drumming competitions, festive food and drink, plus more. smhg.org

→ Encouraging creativity for all, **Doraville Art's Fall Fabulous Festival** presents gallery shows, live performances, and fine art vendors—plus food trucks, a silent auction, a book sale, and more—to further the nonprofit's mission of supporting and presenting the arts in Doraville. doravilleartcenter.org

→ Celebrating the town of Stonecrest in DeKalb County since 2017, the eponymous **Stonecrest Fest** includes a festival walk in Brown's Mill Park, presentations at the Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve, live entertainment, a chalk art walk, and much more. stonecrestfest.com

WINTER

→ In early December, the City of Stonecrest invites families to gather for **Light Up Stonecrest**, an annual tree lighting ceremony with plenty of holiday foods, treats, and activities to celebrate the festive mood of the season. stonecrestga.gov

WHERE TO STAY

FAMILY REUNIONS

Did you know that DeKalb County is the Family Reunion Capital of the South? If you're planning a family reunion or other social gathering in the Atlanta area, Discover DeKalb can help. We provide complimentary services to families, including welcome bags, name tags, and even planning workshops. In-person and Zoom options are available; register and get more information at discoverdekalb.com.

LODGING

DeKalb County is home to more than 80 hotels, ranging from affordable accommodations to high-end properties. We'd be happy to help you with a list of featured hotels and special packages and rates. Distinctive restaurants, popular attractions, and convenience are just some of the reasons you should stay.

MEETINGS & CONFERENCES

Perhaps you're looking for a four-diamond resort with amenities. Or maybe you need a high-tech conference center. No matter what your checklist calls for, Atlanta's DeKalb is an ideal location for your next corporate meeting or retreat.

Discover DeKalb's Accessible Side

BY RICHARD L. ELDREDGE

With everything DeKalb has to offer, county officials are always working hard to ensure that visitors and residents with disabilities have easy access to its most popular attractions. The DeKalb County Americans With Disabilities Compliance Office conducts regular accessibility audits while DeKalb County Transportation officials stay busy overseeing sidewalk improvements, crosswalk enhancements, and public transit accessibility upgrades.

Of course, there are a wide array of additional efforts undertaken at locales across the county. For instance, **Stone Mountain Park** created an in-depth accessibility guide to make certain that exploring one of DeKalb County's oldest and busiest attractions won't be a problem. Stone Mountain's "3200 acres of natural beauty" even has a "Blue Line" accessibility route map covering large swathes of the park and a separate "Yellow Line" for electric convenience vehicles (wheelchairs and ECVs are also available for daily rental).

At the **Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area**, a natural wonder located just east of Atlanta's I-20, there's plenty of wheelchair and ECV-accessible paved trails, whether you choose to take in the beauty of the nature preserve or the 100-acre granite monadnock at the nearby Panola Mountain State Park. The destination, which touts itself as "400 million years in the making," not only includes its namesake mountain, but

also reaches to the adjacent City of Lithonia Historic District, with plenty to see and do.

The crown jewel of downtown Decatur, the always-bustling **Decatur Square** is filled with patio-adorned restaurants such as Leon's Full Service, beloved French restaurant Cafe Alsace, Indian favorite Chai Pani, or the Spanish tapas favorite the Iberian Pig. Shoppers will love the funky HomeGrown Decatur, Little Shop of Stories for children's books, the Olive Branch Wellness Boutique, and the iconic Decatur CD (that, in 2024, stocks just as much vinyl!). Shops

are accessible via sidewalk curb cuts, and there's convenient accessible parking right on the square as well.

Enjoying the arts is equally within reach thanks to a variety of venues across the county. The **Callanwolde Fine Arts Center**, located on a historic 12-acre estate, remains a local favorite for a reason. Whether you're in the mood to check out a Jazz on the Lawn concert (now in its 25th season) or take a pottery and ceramics, garden-

ing, painting and drawing, or writing class, Callanwolde features unbribed artistic creativity, along with ADA-compliant parking, entrances, ramps, and restrooms.

Housed inside a historic Neoclassical granite former courthouse, the **DeKalb History Center** offers visitors a glimpse into county history with interactive museum exhibits, special local beer-enhanced Hops at the History Center events, opportunities to research your family history, or the chance to take a historical architecture tour through Decatur's most famous structures via accessible sidewalks on Ponce de Leon Avenue. There is also easy elevator access to all levels of the history center.

With 23 branches across the county, including its main branch at 215 Sycamore Street in downtown Decatur, the **DeKalb County Library System** offers lots of amenities to increase accessibility for people with developmental and physical disabilities. These include large print books, audiobooks, handheld magnifiers, screen reading software, sign language interpretation at library-sponsored events, closed captioned videos, and other assistive technology devices. All library locations are accessible to anyone in a wheelchair or ECV, and doors are conveniently electric powered.

For years, DeKalb County has offered so much for so many, and that tradition continues to this day with an ever-growing list of accessible activities, events, and venues that welcome everyone to experience entertainment, relaxation, and fun.



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Dekalb County is at the forefront of a creative renaissance

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Shades of DeKalb

35 ways to soak in the diverse culture of our exceptional county

BY BLAKE GUTHRIE

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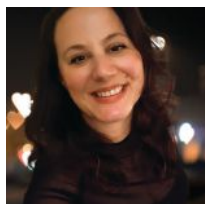
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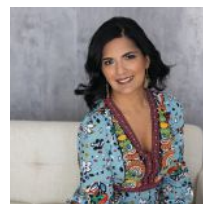
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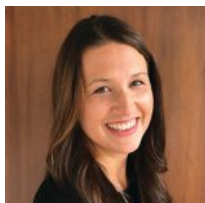
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A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhoods

There's so much to see and do across DeKalb's vibrant communities

BY JESSICA WHITTINGSLOW



Atlanta Chinatown



Keswick Park



Plaza Fiesta

CHAMBLEE

IT'S HARD TO TELL NOW, but Chamblee began as a tiny rail town. Named the fastest-growing city in DeKalb County, this thriving, diverse neighborhood has become a cultural mecca for international dining. For travelers, the city is uniquely located between two major highways, a MARTA rail station, and the state's second busiest airfield, PDK Airport.

EAT International influences are evident as you drive along **Buford Highway**. **Atlanta Chinatown's** food court highlights Laotian, Cantonese, and Vietnamese flavors. Curb your caffeine cravings at **Moonbird Coffee** and enjoy elevated Southern fare at **Southbound**. Head to **Hopstix** for a local beer. **Oaxaca** offers mouthwatering meals and margaritas. Featured on many favorite lists, **Mamak Vegan Kitchen** is top-notch. Experience modern art and master mixologists at the **Distillery of Modern Art**. Get a taste of the north down south at **Bronx Bagel Buggy**.

SHOP Plaza Fiesta is a vibrant, ever-changing indoor South American market packed with 280-plus vendors offering everything from quinceañera dresses to arepas. Shop all of your lifestyle goods and gifts at **Wanderstate Mercantile**.

DO The new **Chamblee City Hall** is a must-see and was recently awarded the American Institute of Architects Georgia 2023 People's Choice Award for best-built project over 5,000 square feet. Check out the Trackman simulator suites and casual bar vibe at **Atl Golf & Social**. Watch planes ascend as the kids play on the **Doc Manget Memorial Aviation Park** playground. Enjoy a hands-on craft class at **AR Workshop**. Walk or bike the **Rail Trail**, a more than half-mile trail that extends to the city's 45-acre **Keswick Park**.



Northern China Eatery???

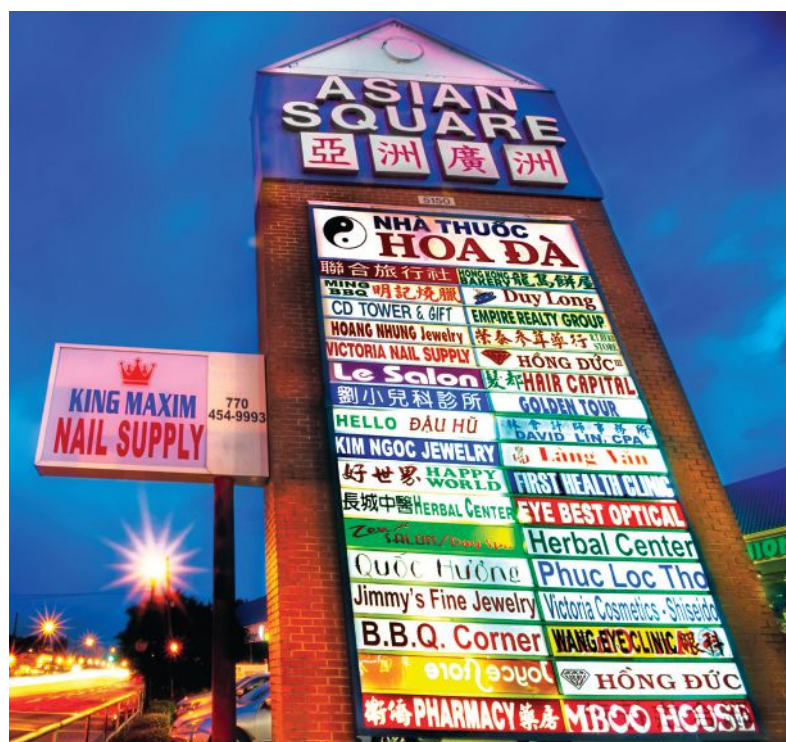
DORAVILLE

DORAVILLE IS A CITY ON THE RISE. Home to Assembly Atlanta, one of the largest film production sites in the state, this bustling neighborhood is bursting with exciting experiences and tranquil parks.

EAT Buford Highway provides a plethora of authentic international dining options. Try Taiwanese chicken, “the chicken that started it all,” at Java Saga. Grab Japanese dishes at Kura Revolving Sushi Bar. Encounter comforting Colombian food at Las Delicias De La Abuela. Handmade buns and delicious dumplings from Northern China Eatery are a must. Take your pick of tasty matcha treats from Japan at Matcha Cafe Maiko. El Rey del Taco is known for its wide variety of authentic Mexican food. Ming’s BBQ has been offering Cantonese barbecue to customers for nearly two decades.

SHOP Enjoy a fantastic food experience at Buford Highway Farmers Market, where you’ll find 100,000 square feet of Asian produce, fresh seafood, and Eastern European baked goods. Korean superstore H Mart sells everything from traditional snack foods and fresh produce to coveted K-beauty products.

DO Find yourself beneath tropical banana trees at Airstream Island, where you can “glamp” in a 1956 Airstream Travel Trailer. Enjoy an immersive artistic experience at Exhibition Hub Atlanta Art Center. Appreciate the pond views in Doraville Park, located on the property of Assembly Atlanta and open to the public. Visit Dora the Dinosaur, a T-rex statue, in English Oak Park, or the outdoor pool at Flowers Park (seasonal). Browse galleries and sign up for classes at the new Doraville Art Center.





Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve

STONECREST

DEKALB'S NEWEST CITY is sure to impress. Stonecrest incorporates an exciting array of entertainment, dining, and shopping while also offering outdoor experiences at the astonishing Arabia Mountain.

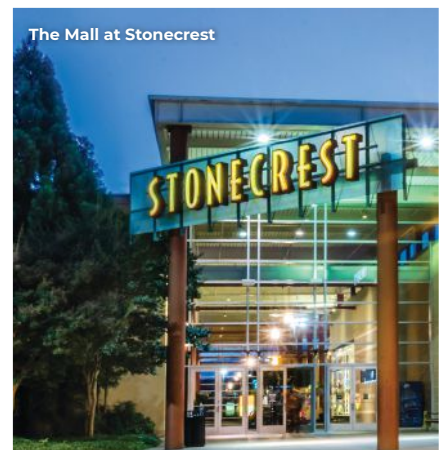
EAT Savor the flavors of barbecue at **Smokey Bones Lithonia**. Indulge in sushi made by skilled chefs at **Kampai Sushi & Steak**. Partake in your favorite Chinese dishes at **Chou Lee's**. Dig into lobster, snow crabs, and more seafood at **Rockin' Crab**.



Smokey Bones Lithonia

SHOP The Mall at Stonecrest is the destination to shop 'til you drop. Its extensive retail list includes popular department stores such as Macy's and Dillard's; shop for gifts, clothing, home goods, and more.

DO Explore the **Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve**, which includes the granite outcrop of Arabia Mountain. Admire local animals, from opossums to owls, as they're rehabilitated at **AWARE Wildlife Center**. Take a trip to **Flat Rock Archives** and explore records and artifacts from the community's 150+ year history. Experience the benefits of infrared radiant heat at **3 Degrees Infrared Sauna Studio**.



The Mall at Stonecrest

TUCKER

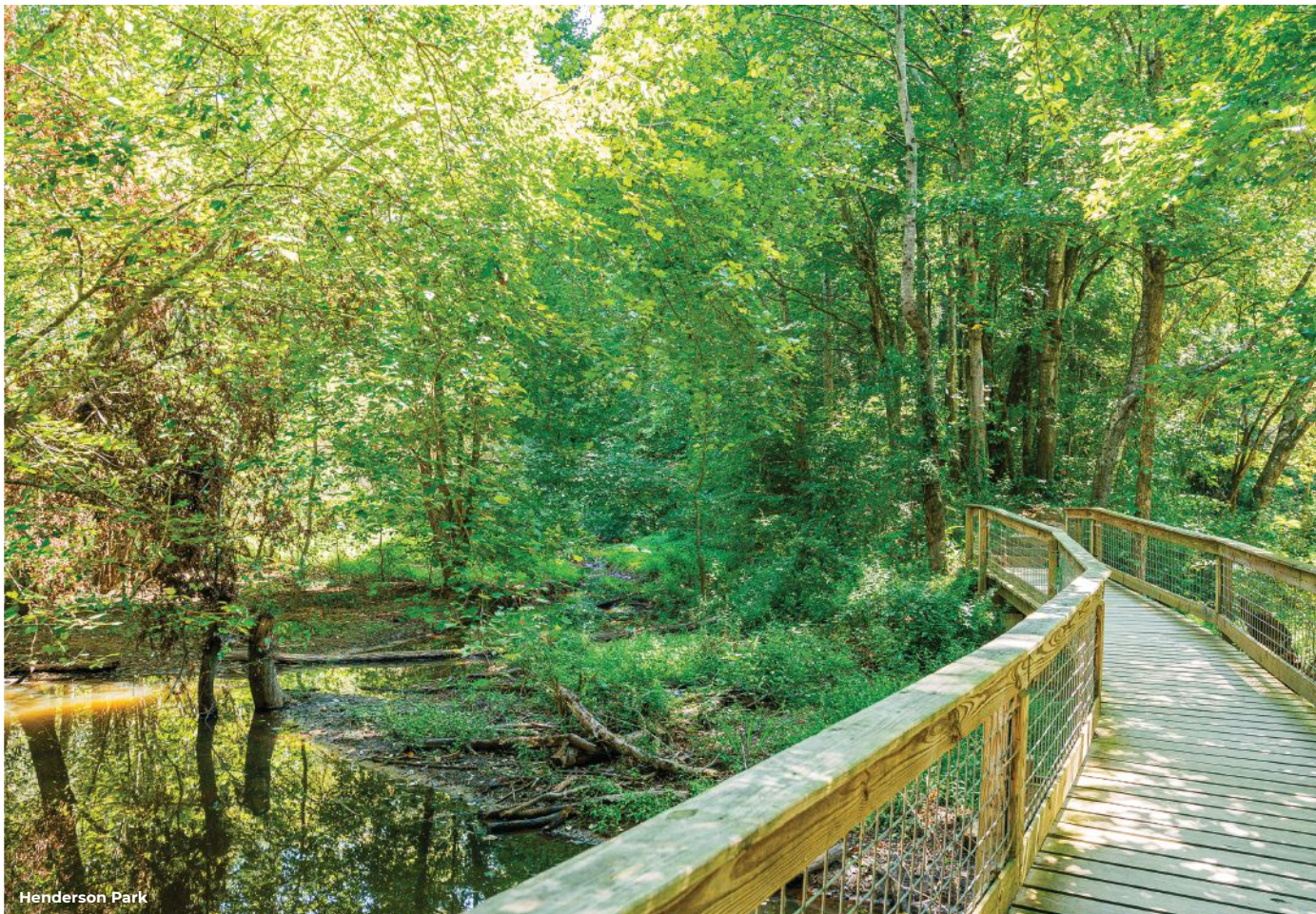
VOTED ATLANTA'S BEST SUBURB by readers of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* in 2020, Tucker is a classic community making a comeback. Plans are underway to create contemporary mixed-use communities in the Northlake area.

EAT The **Corner Cup Coffee** is the coolest place to grab locally roasted coffee beans. Settle in for Southern comfort food at **Magnolia Room Cafeteria**. Tuck into barbecue with a Mexican twist at **Ford's BBQ**. Creative Korean fusion dishes are on the menu at the **Bite of Korea**. Head to **High Card Brewery** for a cold pint of beer. Go crazy for cookie flavors like s'mores at **Munster Cravings**.

SHOP Stock up on authentic Georgia souvenirs at **Georgia Gifts & More**, from jams and jellies to T-shirts and magnets. From April to December, the **Tucker Farmers Market** opens on Thursdays and offers fresh produce, baked goods, and live music.



DO Go bee-hind the scenes with a tour and honey flight tasting at **Sneaky Bee Backyard Honey**. Collect your latest comic issue at **Infinite Realities**. Get tickets to the latest community-run show at **Main Street Theatre**. Discover birds, wildlife, and native plants along over six miles of hiking trails at the 120-acre **Henderson Park**.





The Vibrary

AVONDALE ESTATES

The historic downtown Tudor Village of Avondale Estates was inspired by Shakespeare's birthplace, Stratford-Upon-Avon. Home of the original **Waffle House** (now a museum), the city offers delicious dining. **Banjo Coffee**, known for its canned cold brew, opened its first brick-and-mortar shop in Avondale Estates. Try counter-service sandwich shop the **Little Hippo** or **Olive + Pine**, a mixed-use community with a listening bar called **Commune** and other eateries. Voted the "#1 Best Small-town Beer Scene" in the country by *USA Today*, the "Dale Ale Trail" is a one-mile path exploring local breweries and pubs that deserves a top spot on your list of things to do. On the trail, you'll find 100 percent woman-owned **Lost Druid Brewery & Distillery** and **My Parent's Basement**, where you can order a cold drink while you play your favorite pinball games.

CANDLER PARK

Candler Park is best known for its 55-acre park, which includes a nine-hole golf course. Featured on the National Register of Historic Places, this happening neighborhood hosts an annual fall fest with food trucks, live music, and an artist's market in October. Enjoy high tea among vintage decor and furnishings at **Dr. Bombay's Underwater Tea Party**. **Bona Fide Deluxe** serves unique sandwiches and cocktails. **Gigi's Italian Kitchen** is "world famous" for its tiramisu. Taste Texas-style barbecue at **Fox Bros**.



The Little Hippo

CITY OF STONE MOUNTAIN

The City of Stone Mountain is full of surprises. Stop in the **Vibrary**, a local wine and book bar. Order cocktail-style coffees at **Gilly Brew Bar** (the former mayor's house) or small-batch brews at **Outrun Brewing Company**. See a show or view the galleries at **ART Station**. Highly anticipated events like the **Yellow Daisy Festival** happen annually and bring art vendors and entertainment to the park.



The EARL

CLARKSTON

Known as America's most diverse square mile, Clarkston has welcomed people from more than 50 countries to the area thanks to refugee resettlement programs. The **Clarkston Community Center** serves as the hub, with ESL classes, summer camps, and Uhuru dance groups. **Refuge Coffee Co.** trains recent immigrants on the job as they make favorite teas and coffee beverages. Experience a taste of Ethiopia at **Lambadina Cafe**. Mediterranean staples, like falafel and packed pitas, can be found at **Merhaba Shawarma**. Get outdoors at **Milam Park's** massive pool.

DRUID HILLS

Druid Hills is one of Atlanta's original suburbs. Founded in the 1890s, the city was designed by renowned Central Park architect Frederick Law Olmsted. Another city on the National Register of Historic Places list, Druid Hills is home to prominent Atlanta institutions such as the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** and **Emory University**. Attend concerts and art classes at **Callanwolde Fine Arts Center**, experience science and nature at **Fernbank Museum of Natural History**, or play a round at the 18-hole **Druid Hills Golf Club**. At the heart of Emory's campus, discover the **Depot by Kaldi's Coffee**, a full-service cafe in a historic train station.

EAST ATLANTA VILLAGE

East Atlanta Village is the hipster hangout. Nightlife and entertainment options are endless. Hear indie music at the **EARL** or **529 Atlanta**. Root for your favorite team at **Midway Pub**. Sing your heart out during karaoke at **Mary's East Atlanta**, known as "America's Favorite Gay Bar." Dance to theme nights at the **Basement**. Featured in Netflix's *Love is Blind*, sleep in the **Atlanta Alpaca Treehouse**. Dine on seasonal fare at **Banshee**, contemporary Korean at **Gaja Korean Bar**, or gastropub snacks and craft beers at **Argosy**. **Southern Feed Store** features local food vendors and live music. Stop at **Emerald City Bagels** for a morning-after morsel.

PINE LAKE

The tranquil natural atmosphere of Pine Lake has made the area a haven for artists. On the second Saturday of the month, hear local musicians at **Pine Lake Lounge** overlooking the lake. See visual artists' work at the **Public Works Art Wall**. Take a load off at **Pine Lake Beach**, which is open to swimmers from Memorial Day to Labor Day.



Refuge Coffee Co.

THE BIG 10



FROM OLD FAVORITES TO HIDDEN GEMS, CHECK OUT THE BEST SPOTS TO VISIT IN DEKALB

BY TESS MALONE

1 TAKE A HAUNTED HIKE

Trek through 1.6 miles of spooky scenery at Constitution Lakes Park's **Doll's Head Trail**. Found art, bricks, and—yes—dolls washed up from the South River and former brick factory line on the mostly flat path. Visitors are encouraged to make art as long as it's found on the trail. ↓



2 DRINK UP CULTURE

A great cocktail can be a work of art, and at Chamblee's **Distillery of Modern Art**, founder Seth Watson combines the two. In a 15,000-square-foot warehouse decorated with rotating local art, spirits like corn whiskey, peach vodka, and gin are made and mixed into cocktails. Don't miss the distillery tour. ↑

3 EXPLORE AVONDALE ESTATES

Inspired by William Shakespeare's birthplace, Stratford-upon-Avon, **Avondale Estates** was founded 100 years ago with iconic Tudor-Revival architecture. Now a foodie destination, find Southern breakfast at **Rising Son**, try Venezuelan street food at **Arepa Mia**, visit the new food hall **Olive & Pine**, or see the first **Waffle House**—now a museum. →





4 FOOD CRAWL ON BUFORD HIGHWAY
Taste the globe on Buford Highway, the iconic street running through Chamblee and Doraville. From Malaysian street food like spicy curry noodle soup at **Food Terminal** to giant taco plates and even bigger margaritas at **El Rey Del Taco**, almost every cuisine is represented. Or pick up ingredients to make it yourself at the Buford Highway Farmers Market. ←

5 IMMERSE YOURSELF IN ART
Starry Night swirls across the room at Doraville's **Exhibition Hub Art Center Atlanta**, where Vincent Van Gogh's paintings take up the entire room. Or transport back to the *Titanic's* fateful last night. Experiences are constantly changing at the space, where you can expect absorbing art and history displays from Monet to Ancient Egypt.



6 PLANE SPOT AND PLAY
Watch the vintage planes take off and land at **Peachtree-DeKalb Airport (PDK)**. The best place to plane peep? **Doc Manget Memorial Aviation Park**, named after a Georgia leader in aviation, is right next to the runway and modeled like a control tower, complete with swings, slides, and a hangar for parties. ←

7 STEP BACK IN TIME Learn about the history of one of Georgia's oldest black communities at the **Flat Rock Archives**. Nestled in the historic Stonecrest home of local leader T.A. Bryant Sr., peruse records and artifacts from the 150-year-old community. Guided tours around the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area also are available. →



9 WATCH MOVIES IN THE MOONLIGHT
Since 1949, the art deco **Starlight Drive-In** on Moreland Avenue has entertained moviegoers from the comfort of their cars. See the latest blockbusters on four screens with high-quality sound blasting right from the car stereo. Concessions are available, but feel free to pack a picnic. ↑

8 SLEEP IN THE TREES
Hidden away in a bamboo forest on an organic farm, **Atlanta Alpaca Treehouse** is made of vintage materials but has all the amenities of a modern hotel—plus alpacas and llamas. While the East Atlanta abode is a popular filming location, it's also the perfect couple's weekend getaway.

10 SAY HELLO TO THE HIVE
Meet the bees of Tucker's **Sneaky Bee Backyard Honey** during an interactive tour. Don a beekeeper suit and learn how to spot nectar, pollen, and developing bees—and even hold a tray of bees. Then taste nine different honeys and take home some of the apiary's wildflower honey. →





THAT'S

ENTERTAINMENT



VINMENT

BY JOYCE SIMMONS

O



ver the years, Georgia has undergone a transformation that reflects a profound commitment to diversity and inclusivity, creating a welcoming environment for a rich tapestry of cultures and talents. The state has redefined what it means to be Southern, embracing new voices and fresh perspectives. This spirit of openness and authenticity has fueled a renaissance, where a thriving creative economy stands as a testament to its inclusive vision. DeKalb County is at the forefront of this movement and has become a haven for content creation and storytelling in all its varying mediums. Here, dreams are nurtured, ambitions are realized, and innovation is celebrated. In fact, thanks to careful legislation, visionary leaders, and imaginative organizations, DeKalb is now a shining example of how creativity, diversity, and forward-thinking policies can transform a region into a vibrant hub of cultural and economic growth. If you have a talent, a dream, and the ambition to forge a career in creativity, you'll find what you're looking for in DeKalb, a burgeoning entertainment mecca.

A BOOMING FILM INDUSTRY

In just the past two years, Georgia has witnessed an astounding \$8.6 billion in direct spending from film and television productions. This surge, driven by the state's tax incentives, has propelled Georgia to second in the nation and third globally for dedicated film and TV production facilities. In addition to having an array of picturesque settings and potential filming locations, DeKalb County in particular stands out in the local industry with five bustling production studios. Each venue is uniquely equipped, offering filmmakers the perfect blend of cutting-edge tools and inspiring environments to bring cinematic dreams to life.

The first on the scene, opened in 2014, was **Eagle Rock Studios Atlanta**, which is located two miles from Stone Mountain Park. The facility, which has a sister location in Norcross, boasts two expansive 37,000 square-foot soundstages and has been the creative hub for hit series like *Devious Maids*,

Resurrection, *Just Beyond*, and the reboot of *The Wonder Years*.

Following in Eagle Rock's footsteps was **Third Rail Studios** at Assembly Atlanta, which launched in 2016 and has contributed significantly to the economic revitalization of Doraville. The film studio, which was built on the grounds of a former General Motors assembly plant, offers more than 130,000 square feet of soundproof stages and support space. Hollywood hits like *Jumanji: Welcome to The Jungle* and *Rampage*, both starring Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, have filmed at Third Rail, as well as television series including *Atlanta*, *Ozark*, and *Stranger Things*.

In 2021, Gray Television acquired Third Rail Studios as part of a larger planned studio operation: **Assembly Atlanta**. Officially opened in Doraville in 2024, Assembly is an expansive state-of-the-art television and film studio complex that is part of a 135-acre, mixed-use development. It even includes a wet stage, which replicates the ocean for filming. Today, Assembly Atlanta is on track to become the second largest broadcaster in the U.S., having already secured a long-term lease agreement with NBC Universal and attracted other major production companies to the facility, which actually will be built in phases to accommodate filming everything from films to commercials and music videos.

Only 30 minutes away from Assembly Atlanta is **Shadowbox Studios**, formerly known as Blackhall Studios, which opened in 2017. Located in South DeKalb, the facility offers 850,000 square feet of space dedicated to nine soundstages; it also has plans to expand with the addition of 22 additional stages. The expansion is needed, as Shadowbox Studios is known for attracting big-budget films and television series, with past productions including *The Color Purple*, *Loki*, *Shazam*, *Dear Evan Hansen*, and *Black Adam*.

Joining the local industry in 2023 was **Electric Owl Studios** in Stone Mountain. Built with environmental stewardship in mind, Electric Owl Studios claims to be the “greenest studio on Earth,” having achieved LEED Gold certification. The facility’s goal is to help productions not only achieve exceptional storytelling with its 140,000 square feet of soundstage space, but also sustainability throughout every project. And it didn’t take long to begin production on a variety of movies and shows, including the much-anticipated *Naked Gun* remake starring Liam Neeson.



DEKALB COUNTY IN FILM: A BRIEF TIMELINE

Not only DeKalb County’s thirteen sound stages have been booked frequently over the last two decades, but sites across the area also have been used as backdrops for a wide variety of film and television productions. Here’s a glimpse at some of the most significant and memorable productions that have been fully or partially shot within DeKalb County.

2006

Into The Wild, an adaptation of Jon Krakauer’s famous book, had scenes shot at Emory University, capturing the spirit of adventure.

2008

The Blind Side, the heartwarming story that inspired millions, was primarily shot in Decatur and other parts of Atlanta, showcasing the area’s charm.

2009

The Vampire Diaries filmed extensively in the city of Covington, transforming local streets into scenes of supernatural drama.

2010

The Walking Dead frequently used DeKalb County for its post-apocalyptic settings, turning the area into a must-visit spot for fans and boosting local tourism.

2016

Stranger Things filmed in Stone Mountain Park and various schools around the county, capturing the eerie essence of the show. *Jumanji: Welcome to The Jungle*, while primarily shot in Hawaii, had several thrilling scenes in DeKalb.

2017

I, Tonya included key scenes in DeKalb, adding depth to the film’s storytelling.

2018

Ozark filmed several episodes using DeKalb’s scenic landscapes and local infrastructure to enhance the show’s dark, compelling narrative.

2020

Marvel’s *Loki* brought its intergalactic adventures to North DeKalb Mall, thrilling fans with scenes of intrigue and action.

2021

The Color Purple, partially filmed at South DeKalb’s Shadowbox Studios, added a layer of historical significance and cultural depth.

2024

Electric Owl Studios wrapped production on the *Naked Gun* remake starring Liam Neeson, continuing DeKalb’s tradition of hosting major productions.

MORE THAN THE HOLLYWOOD OF THE SOUTH



In recent years, Georgia's burgeoning film environment has prompted the state to be labeled the "Hollywood of the South." Of course, while DeKalb County's creative scene clearly is a powerhouse for feature films and television production, it also is much more. This thriving local economy includes music, esports, and various other interconnected industries, taking the county's entertainment business in unique and unparalleled directions.

"This is a new business of entertainment, and Georgia is paving its own way and not copying anything that's been done in the past because those rules are over," says Randy Davidson, founder and CEO of Georgia Entertainment. In fact, in DeKalb County, there is a distinct confluence between film and television production, music, and gaming—and the county has resources to bring all of them together.

For instance, esports has skyrocketed to become the world's most popular form of entertainment, eclipsing television, film, and music combined—with its \$200 billion global industry. Georgia is riding this wave, transforming it into a dynamic economic engine for the state. Ranking eighth in the nation for direct in-state employment from the video game industry, Georgia's foresight in including video game development in the Georgia Entertainment Industry Investment Act was pivotal.

"The legislature was very wise to recognize that games are the medium of the 21st century, just as film was the medium of the 20th century," says Andrew Greenberg, renowned video game designer, executive director of the Georgia Game Developers Association and chair of the DeKalb Entertainment Commission. And DeKalb County is taking advantage of that opportunity. Leading local gaming culture is Brookhaven-based **Skillshot Media**, a company that hosts experiential live events and live-stream productions, including DreamHack Atlanta, the wildly anticipated three-day-long gaming festival that was expected to draw 40,000 attendees to Atlanta in a single weekend in October of 2024.

Of course, while gaming or esports is a lifestyle that encompasses physical sports, music, and entertainment, it isn't just for gamers

anymore. The interdisciplinary skills required to game well are rapidly becoming essential in professions far beyond the creative economy, paving the way for innovations in business, education, and healthcare. "Lots of Georgians are getting into it, and the skills cross over to many other areas, like augmented reality (AR), extended reality (XR), and virtual reality (VR)," Greenberg observes, noting that local career opportunities abound for those who understand game development and programming, drawing many esports enthusiasts to DeKalb for both work and pleasure. "The film industry often hires people to work on the unreal game engine [the 3D computer graphics game engine developed by Epic Games] for virtual productions."

What's more, the synergy between gaming and feature films is continuing to evolve. Many

BIGSTOCK



blockbuster movies have already inspired popular video games, and the future promises an exciting reversal—video games turning into major motion pictures. “The feature films of tomorrow are going to be the games that kids are playing today. It won’t be Superman and Batman; it’ll be characters that we’re not even aware of,” Davidson notes. Preparing for this growth, Assembly Atlanta plans to build an esports facility on its campus.

This translates to the music industry as well, according to Greenberg. “Most people under the age of 30 hear their music in games,” he says, noting that the fusion of gaming and music is reshaping how young audiences experience sound. Fortunately, DeKalb County is home to a thriving music scene, reminiscent of Georgia’s overall legendary musical culture, which includes icons like Ray Charles, the B-52s, the Allman Brothers Band, and André 3000. With such local music production and recording facilities as **Soul Asylum Studios**, **Prescott Studios**, and **New Wave Recording Studios**, musicians from all genres have the chance to record, mix, and produce their own musical endeavors. And many of them may find opportunities across the creative economy throughout DeKalb, where they are choosing to both work and play. It’s this unique and seamless blend of creative sectors that underscores the dynamic and interconnected nature of DeKalb County’s creative economy, painting an exciting picture of a locale where music, technology, and innovation can—and will continue to—flourish together.



LET'S GO TO THE MOVIES

ANNUAL FILM FESTS AND SCREENINGS

With the film industry booming in DeKalb, it's no wonder the county plays host to an array of film festivals and screening opportunities throughout the year. Here, we look at just a few can't-miss opportunities for you to revel in DeKalb's cinematic offerings.

MARCH DEKALB ENTERTAINMENT COMMISSION'S STUDENT FILM FESTIVAL

DeKalb County high school students walk the red carpet and share their work on the big screen annually during this outstanding event.

AUGUST ATLANTA UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL

Held annually for more than 20 years, the Atlanta Underground Film Festival at the Limelight Theater showcases independent features and short films.

SEPTEMBER OUT ON FILM

An Oscar-qualifying festival, Out on Film is one of the nation's leading LGBTQ film festivals.

SEPTEMBER MOREHOUSE COLLEGE HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL

Selections shown during this outstanding film festival exemplify a mission to education, spark dialogue, and inspire.

BONUS EVENT

OCTOBER SHAOCON

Billed as the ultimate esports showdown, ShaoCon brings together thousands of high school and collegiate esports athletes to battle it out in eight game titles, including *League of Legends* and *Super Smash Brothers Ultimate*.

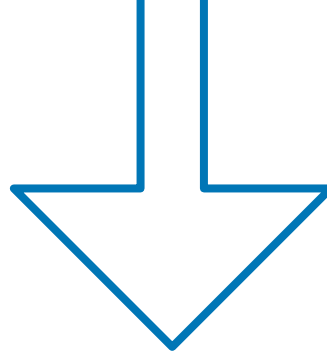
THE GREAT OUTDOORS



**20 SPOTS AND
ACTIVITIES THAT WILL
HELP YOU EXPLORE
DEKALB'S OUTSTANDING
OUTDOOR OFFERINGS**

BY LIA PICARD

Arabia Mountain PATH



1. GO FOR A BIKE RIDE

The **Arabia Mountain Path** consists of more than 19 miles of paved trails through its granite outcroppings, quarry ruins, and meadows blanketed in wildflowers. The 18-mile **Stone Mountain Trail** spans Centennial Park in downtown Atlanta to Stone Mountain Park. ←

2. SEE RARE FLORA ON ARABIA MOUNTAIN

Diamorpha explode with red blooms in spring on Arabia Mountain, the jewel of **Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve**. The granite outcrop is worth climbing any time of the year, however, thanks to a carpet of rare lichen and stunning views.

3. MAKE A SPLASH

It's easy to keep cool at **Browns Mill Waterpark** in Lithonia which, to kids, feels like a wonderland. The aquatic playground boasts a shallow pool, spraying contraptions, a lazy river, and water slides. Snacks are available for purchase at the concession stand.

4. KAYAK ON THE SOUTH RIVER

Cool off in the shade on the South River in southern DeKalb, where a series of public access water trails make it easy to paddle. In the summer, the **South River Watershed Alliance** leads guided, beginner-friendly paddles. ↓



South River Watershed



Chamblee Rail Trail

5. BLAZE A TRAIL

What was once an underpass is now the **Chamblee Rail Trail**, an inviting nearly two-mile walkway linking to retail, transit, and greenspaces. Beneath the bridge, you can play ping-pong, foosball, and bocce or play the outdoor piano named “Irvin.” ↑

6. GO BIRDING

Grab your binoculars and head to Clarkston’s **Friendship Forest** or the **Songbird Habitat at Stone Mountain Park**; both are chock full of bird-attracting native plants. In Tucker’s **Henderson Park**, the half-mile Native Plant and Wildlife Walk offers tons of bird sighting opportunities too. ↓

7. EXPLORE AN OLD-GROWTH FOREST

After visiting **Fernbank Museum**, there’s even more to explore in the **Fernbank Forest** with 65 acres of old growth. Wind through the ancient trees on the ground or on the elevated trail. In Chamblee, **Keswick Forest** has even more trees to see.

8. GET DOLLED UP

Lovers of the macabre will get a kick out of the **Doll’s Head Trail** in a southwestern DeKalb preserve. The 1.6-mile trek winds through the woods and wetlands and is adorned with folk art and dolls along the way.

9. BOOK A TEE TIME

Golf lovers will find no shortage of public golf courses in DeKalb, such as Tucker’s **Smoke Rise Country Club** and **Heritage Golf Links**, with three nine-hole courses along a 20-acre lake. Meanwhile, **Stone Mountain Golf Club** has two championship courses. ↓



Stone Mountain Golf Club

10. HAVE LUNCH AT CHINATOWN MALL

A palatial setting hides within the courtyard of **Chinatown Mall** in Chamblee. The food court sells all things delicious, from dumplings to noodle soup, which can be enjoyed in the courtyard adorned with sculpted trees, statues, and a koi pond.

11. ENJOY SOME FLOWER POWER AT THE YELLOW DAISY FESTIVAL

Every September, over 400 artisans set up their booths beneath the trees in Stone Mountain Park for the **Yellow Daisy Festival**. Buy crafts like pottery and jewelry, nosh on fair food, and enjoy live music over the course of four days.

12. LET THE DOGS OUT

Treat your canine to a day out at one of DeKalb's dog-friendly spots, like the trails of **Arabia Mountain** or the shaded sanctuary of **Lullwater Park's** paths. Tucker's **Henderson Park** features an off-leash dog park and plenty of trails.



GO GREEN *(spaces)*

The outdoors are calling, and DeKalb is ready to answer. With plenty of greenspaces across the county, there's something for every type of nature lover.

In Lithonia, the **Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area** comprises granite outcrops, wetlands, and forests among 2,000 acres that are home to native plants and wildlife. Nearby, the 2,500-acre **Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve** features hiking and biking trails; the park hosts events throughout the year like guided hikes, yoga, and educational programming.

For a shady stroll, head to **Fernbank Forest** in Druid Hills. The 65-acre old-growth forest is accessible through Fernbank Museum (a ticket is required) and offers two miles of trails. Walkers may spy wildlife like birds and deer. While you're there, check out **WildWoods**, the museum's elevated walkway through the trees.

In Decatur, the **East Decatur Greenway** makes it easy to get from the Avondale Estates MARTA station to the Friends School, with neighborhoods along the way. Signs line the paved path with information on the local ecosystem.

Green thumbs, or green thumb hopefuls, can get their hands dirty at the **Oakhurst Community Garden at Wylde Center** in Decatur. Garden plots are available for rental, but even without one, it's worth visiting to check out the greenhouse and chickens. Or you can volunteer with the master gardeners and learn about native plants (workshops are also available). The adjacent Wylde Woods make a shady respite from sunrise to sundown.

Tucked away in Decatur, **Little Creek Farm Conservancy** is home to an equestrian facility, but you don't have to ride horses to appreciate it. The paths, which run by the pastures and creek, are open to the public. You can also bring a picnic and enjoy it in one of the pavilions.



Tucker Farmers Market

14. PLAY THE MARKETS

Enjoy the best of locally grown produce and handmade crafts at open-air farmers markets. The **Stone Mountain Farmers Market** meets on Wednesday evenings from May to November, and the **Tucker Farmers Market**, with more than 35 vendors, meets Thursday evenings from April to November. ↑

13. HAVE A RETRO MOVIE EXPERIENCE

Movies at the **Starlight Drive-In Theatre** on Moreland Avenue have been an Atlanta tradition since 1949. The venue broadcasts movies seven days a week with popcorn sold at the concession stand (and your ticket includes a double feature).

15. TAKE AN AERIAL TOUR

From **PDK Airport**, you can get a sky-high view of the city with companies like **Prestige Helicopters** or **Biplane Rides Over Atlanta**, which has open cockpits. Kids can enjoy the playground at the airport too and catch takeoffs and landings.

16. PARK IT

Parks abound in DeKalb, like **Olmsted Linear Park** (six small

parks designed by Frederick Law Olmsted in Druid Hills) and **Clairmont Park** near PDK Airport. **Mason Mill Park** boasts an awesome playground for kids and a boardwalk connecting it to **Medlock Park**.

17. PICNIC AT PINE LAKE PARK

Pack a picnic and head to **Pine Lake Park** in Pine Lake, DeKalb's smallest city. While you're there, peep the turtles and wildlife that hang out in the tranquil greenspace. There's even a beach from which to swim in the lake during the summer months. ↓



Pine Lake Park

SHOP AND EAT SUSTAINABLY

Buying secondhand clothing, furniture, and decor is a sustainable practice. At **Kudzu Antiques + Modern**, located in Decatur, you could easily spend hours browsing the 26,000-square-foot antique mall's many stalls packed with these exact items and so much more, from vintage records to handcrafted accessories. You never know what you'll find, and each time is a little different. Even some of the new items they carry, such as outdoor rugs, are made with upcycled materials.

At **Farm Burger** in Decatur, sustainability is more than just a buzzword. The brainchild of farmer Jason Mann and restaurateur George Frangos, Farm Burger opened in 2008 with a forward way of eco-thinking. The restaurant serves up burgers with grass-fed and grass-finished beef from small-scale farmers and sources locally grown produce for its sides. They also use biodegradable packaging whenever possible.





Jazz on the Lawn at Callanwolde Fine Arts Center

18. LISTEN TO THE MUSIC AT CALLANWOLDE

Decatur's **Callanwolde Fine Arts Center**, a Tudor estate built in 1917, comes to life during spring and summer evenings for Jazz on the Lawn. For a series of performances in the amphitheater, guests are encouraged to bring their own food and drink and sprawl out on blankets. ↑

19. CRAFT A GREAT NIGHT IN A BEER GARDEN

A small-scale brewer in Stone Mountain, **Outrun Brewing Company** produces fun beers like Sarasota Summer, a fruit-tinged sour ale, and even nonalcoholic beverages like the tangerine mojito mocktail. The taproom, or the spot's spacious patio, makes for an inviting pet-friendly hangout spot.

20. HAVE FAMILY FUN AT STONE MOUNTAIN PARK

It's Georgia's most-visited attraction for a reason: There's so much to do at **Stone Mountain Park**. With 3,200 acres to explore, including the famed trail up the mountain, a splash park, and a laser show, there's something for everyone in the family. ➔



Laser Show at Stone Mountain Park



TAKE FIVE

Whatever your travel personality, there's something for everyone in DeKalb

BY LAURA SCHOLZ

Whether you're traveling alone or with a group, you'll find everything you could need or want when you come to DeKalb County. Here are some spectacular spots to help you make the most of whatever type of adventure you happen to be on.

1

SWITCHYARDS CHAMBLEE

Grab a table at this light-filled, plant-strewn co-working club for focused time and unlimited coffee to power through that to-do list. Like other metro area locations, the downtown Chamblee outpost is open 24/7 and has bookable private booths for important calls.

2

MOONBIRD COFFEE

Order an espresso, Mexican mocha, or seasonal specialty drink like a tiramisu latte at Southbound's lower-level coffee shop. Post up with a laptop inside the bright space filled with hanging indoor plants or on the outdoor patio with plenty of shade.

3

REFUGE COFFEE CO. CLARKSTON

Sip good coffee and soak up good vibes at this Clarkston shop, which supports job training for local refugees and immigrants. Order coffee or a pastry from the red truck, then snag a seat inside the converted garage decorated with string lights or on the covered patio.

4

THE CORNER CUP COFFEE

Visit either the Decatur or Tucker location of this sunny cafe for cozy tables, locally roasted coffee, and seasonal drinks like iced hibiscus chai. Both outposts sell excellent baked goods from local favorites like Alon's Bakery and Emerald City Bagels.

FOR THE CORPORATE TRAVELER

5

PRIVI STONECREST

Take a few moments for yourself at east metro Atlanta's new hub for culinary delights, entertainment, and cultural experiences. Enjoy a meal at the 40,000-square-foot, chef-driven food hall, rejuvenate with a massage at Hand & Stone, and explore your creativity at the on-site bookstore, art gallery, and mixed media studio.

FOR THE FAMILY



Browns Mill Aquatic Center



Starlight Drive-In Theatre

1 EXHIBITION HUB ATLANTA ARTS CENTER

Experience history and culture in 3D at this immersive destination. Part digital art gallery, part interactive theatre, the Exhibition Hub hosts rotating exhibits that include a one-of-a-kind virtual reality journey on the *Titanic* and larger-than-life artworks from legendary artists like Claude Monet.

2 STONE MOUNTAIN PARK

Hike a 1.5-mile trail to the mountain's summit for panoramic views, then climb aboard an open-air train for a scenic ride around the park. Experience an array of annual events, from the Yellow Daisy Festival in September to the highly anticipated Stone Mountain Christmas.

3 ARABIA MOUNTAIN NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

Explore this striking landscape, known for its iconic granite outcrops and the striking crimson-and-white diamorpha plants that bloom each spring. Climb to the top for sweeping vistas or peddle down a 30-mile paved path past historic sites like a 19th-century African American homestead.

4 STARLIGHT DRIVE-IN THEATRE

Pack blankets and snacks and head to this classic Atlanta drive-in for a night of movies under the stars. The digital screen plays double features of recent hits and classic films seven days a week, 365 days a year.

BROWNS MILL AQUATIC CENTER

Take a dip in the beach-entry pool, float along the lazy river, or get your thrills on two exciting slides at this family-friendly summer hot spot in Stonecrest. Splash around together in the kiddie activity pool to make the most of the warmest days of the year.

FOR THE ANIMAL LOVER



1 KESWICK PARK

Walk nearly two miles of paved dog-friendly trails at the largest greenspace in Chamblee. Four-legged companions can frolic off-leash and make friends at a small fenced-in dog park, equipped with obstacle equipment like an A-frame and see-saw.

2 ADAIR DOG PARK

Play at this picturesque, four-acre park in the heart of downtown Decatur. Walk the trails or let dogs roam in the large fenced dog park, which also features a shady tree canopy for animals and their humans and ample seating and water bowls.

3 BROCKETT BARK PARK

Stroll along a shaded walking trail around a scenic pond before heading to the secure off-leash park, with separate play areas for larger and smaller dogs. Both offer plenty of space for romping and splash pads for cooling off on hot days.

4 OUTRUN BREWING COMPANY

Relax on the large dog-friendly patio at this Stone Mountain taproom outfitted with heaters for cooler months and umbrellas for shade in warmer ones. Humans can enjoy the brewery's signature beers while dogs get free treats and clean water bowls.

5 CHAMBLEE RAIL TRAIL

Walk along this scenic multiuse trail past lush trees and several dog-friendly local restaurants and businesses. At the northern end, stop at Keswick Park, which has a dog park, benches, and water stations for people and their furry companions.



1 **BUFORD HIGHWAY INTERNATIONAL CORRIDOR**

Head to this iconic highway for some of Dekalb's best international fare. Can't-miss dishes include pork and chive steamed dumplings at Northern China Eatery, al pastor tacos at Mexican mainstay El Rey Del Taco, and the Filipino feast at Michelin-recommend hot spot Kamayan ATL.

2 **DECATUR FOOD HUB**

Get food on the go from over 15 separate restaurants under one roof at this modern food hall. Feast on everything from Philly-style cheesesteaks and gourmet grilled cheese sandwiches to comfort food like vegan biscuits. Order online or on-site at touchscreen kiosks for quick pick-up.

3 **ATLANTA CHINATOWN FOOD COURT**

Step into Georgia's own Chinatown, complete with a food court serving several types of regional cuisines. Try hand-pulled noodles at New Lan Zhou Noodle, beef Malay curry at Hong Kong BBQ, master dumplings at China Kitchen, and wontons and mapo tofu at Top One Gourmet.

4 **SOUTHERN FEEDSTORE**

Visit several food and drink stalls inside this community gathering space in a historic building in East Atlanta Village. Choose from savory chicken and waffles, traditional Brazilian pizzas, or cheesesteaks from Atlanta favorite Woody's, plus specialty coffees and cocktails from Buteco.

5 **EAST ATLANTA VILLAGE**

Choose your own dining adventure in this eclectic walkable neighborhood. Don't miss pizzas and beer at elevated pub Argosy, New York City-style bagel sandwiches at Emerald City Bagels, seasonal dishes and craft cocktails at Banshee, and nachos and other comfort food at the EARL.







Shades OF DeKalb

Here are 35 ways to soak in the diverse
culture of our exceptional county

BY BLAKE GUTHRIE



he well-woven tapestry of culture in DeKalb County features threads of many shades and hues in intricate design, thanks to a diverse population and a rich history that predates the founding of Atlanta itself. You can drive down Buford Highway and feel like you've traveled the world in a day of shopping and dining. On the Stone Mountain walk-up trail—the community's front porch—you'll encounter people from around the globe who now call DeKalb home. Other spots to get away in nature abound in this suburban county with solid agrarian roots. And in DeKalb's small towns and cities, there's no shortage of international restaurants, arts venues, unique marketplaces, eye-opening museums, and annual cultural festivals offering fun for the whole family. Color us impressed.



1

Alif Institute

A nonprofit organization formed in 2004 by the Arab American Fund of Georgia, the Alif Institute strives to foster an understanding and appreciation of Arab cultures with a host of educational programs and cultural events. From Arabic language courses and cooking courses to art workshops and highly anticipated festivals, the organization allows everyone to explore Arab culture in unique and entertaining ways.



4

Your DeKalb Farmers Market

A true world market, YDFM receives direct shipments from around the globe daily and employs people from 40 countries who speak 50 different languages and dialects. It's quite a challenge to traverse the enormous 140,000-square-foot facility on E. Ponce De Leon Avenue in Decatur, where the flags of 184 countries are displayed above the market.

2

New Black Wall Street Market

In what has to be the best repurposing of a big box store in metro Atlanta, the New Black Wall Street Market in Stonecrest supports 100 percent minority- and women-owned retail businesses in a mall setting. It also hosts special cultural events and entrepreneurial workshops throughout the year. Top-caliber musical acts appear weekly at the Pink Lion Jazz Club.

Desta Ethiopian Kitchen

Husband-and-wife team Ash Nega and Titi Demissie hail from Ethiopia but met in Atlanta and opened their dream restaurant on Briarcliff Road in 2006. They've since expanded to include another location but still operate on Briarcliff, serving a wide-ranging and healthy menu of Ethiopian fare with choices for vegetarians and meat lovers.

3

5

Stone Mountain Park

Stone Mountain has become the crossroads of a New South where people of all races, creeds, and cultures come to enjoy the park's many activities, attractions, and festivals. For a modern perspective, check out the independent website I Am the Mountain (iamthemountain.org), showcasing cross-cultural encounters on the walk-up trail.

6

Pho Dai Loi

This unassuming Vietnamese restaurant sits in the corner of a tiny strip mall just south of Peachtree DeKalb Airport. It's known for serving hearty bowls of pho, which many critics have called the best in Atlanta. Bun (a cold noodle dish topped with grilled meats and veggies) is another specialty.

Taqueria El Tesoro

Unwind on a large patio area with authentic Mexican street tacos, mulitas, tamales, and more at this casual neighborhood spot in Edgewood. There are games for the kids and cervezas and margaritas for the adults, and a border-style brunch is served on the weekends.

7



8

Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area

Nature and culture combine in this National Heritage Area to celebrate the rural and agricultural traditions around the massive rock outcroppings of Panola and Arabia mountains. Included within the area's boundaries are Flat Rock, one of the oldest African American settlements in Georgia, and the Monastery of the Holy Spirit, a community of Trappist monks.

9

The Clarkston Community

Called "the Ellis Island of the South," Clarkston has been held up as a model of successful integration since the 1990s when it was identified by asylum refugee programs as a good place for new arrivals to the country to settle. Today, over half of the residents are foreign born, and 60 languages are spoken within the city limits.

10

Kathmandu Kitchen & Grill

In the heart of Clarkston, Kathmandu serves traditional dishes from Nepal and northern India. Soups, curries, and tikka masala dishes populate the menu, and there's an all-you-can-eat buffet. Don't skip the momos, a Nepalese specialty of steamed dumplings filled with minced meat and veggies and served with achar sauce.

11

Clarkston Culture Fest

Immerse yourself in the multicultural panoply that is Clarkston at this one-day festival with a mission "to bring people together to educate, appreciate, and celebrate each other." In the Culture Village, multiple booths provide an opportunity to learn about different cultures and experience a variety of food, music, and arts.



12

Clarkston Community Center

Clarkston has been called "the most diverse square mile in America," and the Clarkston Community Center exists to serve residents, over half of whom are foreign-born. The center offers immersive programs in the arts, language, healthy living, and technology, along with multicultural community gatherings such as the Clarkston Culture Fest.



13

Michael C. Carlos Museum

Get your classical art fix at this gem of a museum on the Emory University campus. The permanent collections feature artifacts from many different cultures and eras of history (even prehistory). Galleries include antiquities from ancient Greece, Rome, Egypt, the Americas, Africa, Asia, and the Near East.



15

Fernbank Museum of Natural History

One of the largest tracts of urban forest in the United States, the biggest movie screen in the Atlanta area, and giant dinosaur skeletons (yes, dinosaurs once roamed in what is now Georgia)—there's a lot to love about Fernbank. This is *the* place to learn about (and be amazed by) Georgia's natural history through the eons.

14

Callanwolde Fine Arts Center

Providing quality arts education to the community at affordable rates—that's Callanwolde's primary mission. Housed in a historic mansion on a 12.5-acre estate, the center helps to fund its mission through ticketed events such the popular Jazz on the Lawn series, which celebrates its 25th anniversary season in 2024.



16

Zyka

Open on Scott Boulevard in Decatur since 1997, Zyka: The Taste serves authentic Indian dishes with a focus on Northern Indian cuisine. Marinated and grilled chicken dishes will delight the taste buds. Vegetarians will find plenty of options, too. The veggie samosas are a favorite with regulars.

17

Black History Month Events at the DeKalb History Center

Each year, the DeKalb History Center honors Black History Month with an array of celebratory programming, including explorations of Black church music, journeys into the Jazz Age, tributes to DeKalb County's African American pioneers, and much more. The 17th Annual Black History Month Celebration at the DeKalb History Center on Decatur Square will take place in February 2025.

18

Atlanta Chinatown Mall

For the best in Chinese food and culture, head to the Atlanta Chinatown Mall in Chamblee. Statues of lions serve as sentries at the entrance of this mall containing retail shops, but the main draw is the food court with numerous stalls serving authentic dishes around a traditional Chinese garden.

Shoya Izakaya

In Japanese culture, izakaya refers to an informal type of establishment for gathering, drinking, and snacking after the work day is done. Shoya Izakaya in Doraville fits that bill nicely, serving saké, shōchū, sushi, kushiyaki, ramen, tapas-style dishes, and much more during the evening hours.

19

20

H-Mart

H-Mart is an international grocery store chain with one DeKalb County location in Doraville. This Super H-Mart, located in a shopping plaza next to Assembly Studios, sells a wide variety of Korean and other Asian products and has a popular food court with many delicious quick dining options.

21

Cherians International Groceries

Cherians in Decatur specializes in Indo-Pak (Indian and Pakistani) groceries and spices. The market has expanded since its founding in 1983 to include a variety of other international foods. It also sells items such as luggage and cookware, along with all the fresh fruits, vegetables, and snacks you'll find lining the shelves and display counters.

22

Mamak

Named one of the best restaurants in Atlanta by *Atlanta* magazine, Makak brings traditional Malaysian food and street stall favorites to a small dining room in Doraville. Highlights from the menu are snacking foods such as satay, roti canai served with curry sauce, and entrees like chicken laksa and beef rendang.

23

Buford Highway Farmers Market

Opened in 1974 by a Korean immigrant as a food shopping option for DeKalb's booming Asian population, the BHFMM has since expanded to 100,000 square feet and now features culinary delights from around the globe. Shop for exotic fruits, vegetables, and other hard-to-find products from 71 countries.

24

Taste of Chamblee

Taking place in front of the handsome new city hall complex, the Taste of Chamblee showcases not only Chamblee restaurants, but also nearby eateries with a heavy focus on international cuisine. Craft vendors sell their handmade wares, and the Wine Down Tent spotlights local jazz and acoustic music acts.

Downtown Chamblee

Entertainment is the central theme for downtown Chamblee, a dynamic urban spot with international flair that has become DeKalb County's fastest-growing city. The downtown area features a wide array of outstanding restaurants and bars, as well as a recently enacted open container policy that allows diners to take full advantage of the district's notable walkability factor and social atmosphere.

25

CHAMBLEE

26

Downtown Tucker

Downtown Tucker enjoyed a significant renaissance in 2010 when it downsized instead of expanded. Led by the Main Street Tucker Alliance, the initiative brought the main thoroughfare from four lanes to two and overhauled the downtown area to include vintage lampposts, brick pavers, and a walkable environment that welcomes residents and visitors to enjoy a vibrant dining scene, charming small businesses, annual Main Street events, and more.

Mediterranean Grill

This longtime Decatur favorite has been serving authentic Mediterranean fare from its location in North Decatur Plaza near Emory since 2000. Classic and healthy dishes include hummus, baba ganouj, falafel, tabbouleh, Greek salad, gyros, and grilled kabob sandwiches. Don't forget the pistachio baklava for dessert.

27

28



Oakhurst Porchfest

The Oakhurst Porchfest was ahead of its time when it debuted in October of 2015. Local musical acts of all stripes perform on porches in the Oakhurst section of Decatur when the neighborhood becomes a block party during an annual event where “radical generosity and good will rule the day,” according to organizers.

Decatur Arts Festival

The streets around Decatur Square are closed off to become exhibition space for the Artist Market at this beloved arts festival held over one weekend each spring. The Decatur Community Bandstand stages a variety of live music, with comedy, dance, and theater performances held on other stages throughout the festival grounds.

29

MATT ODOM, BIGSTOCK

Tucker Day

This decades-old springtime street festival begins with its famous come-one, come-all parade down Main Street featuring a battle of the marching bands. The all-volunteer run event also has a wide array of food vendors, live entertainment, and community events throughout the day.

30



Rainbow Park Amphitheater

31

Patel Brothers

The nation's largest Indian grocery chain was founded in Chicago in 1974 and has a location on Church Street in Decatur.

Patel stocks the finest South Asian

products, fresh produce, spices, eggs, dairy, frozen foods, and everything else you'll need to prepare classic Indian dishes at home. Check out recipes on their website to help prepare a shopping list.

33

Talpa Supermercados

The biggest Hispanic and Latino grocery store chain in Georgia, Talpa Supermercados has 11 locations, including one in Chamblee just south of PDK airport. It has a large bakery, full butcher shop, taqueria, tortilleria, fresh produce, aisles of groceries, and unique products from Central and South America.

MATT ODDM

DeKalb History Center

Tucked inside the Historic DeKalb Courthouse on Decatur Square, this center covers the 200-year history of the county. It also has exhibits that go back even further to when this spot was part of the ancestral homeland to indigenous peoples at the intersection of main trading paths.

32



34

Athens Pizza House

Founded by two Greek immigrants in Connecticut in 1966, the Athens Pizza House moved to Decatur in 1977. It introduced Greek-style pizza to the South and remains in the hands of the same family today. Other Greek specialties like gyros, souvlaki, moussaka, and an array of Italian pasta dishes help fill out a wide-ranging menu at this longtime family favorite.

35

Porter Sanford III Performing Arts and Community Center

This "community first" venue in the Historic Candler Road district of southern DeKalb County stages high-end productions in a state-of-the-art, 500-seat theater year round. The adjacent 1,000-person-capacity Rainbow Park Amphitheater brings in top national touring acts between April and September.



First-Class Cuisine

Don't miss these Michelin Bib Gourmand
award-winning dining locales

BY SUCHETA RAWAL

THE COVETED MICHELIN GUIDE IS NOT ONLY ABOUT EXPENSIVE FINE DINING.

In fact, there is an entire category of restaurants that offer high quality food at affordable prices and have earned the Michelin Bib Gourmand Award. The good news is you can sample globally inspired cuisines at Michelin-rated restaurants right here in DeKalb County.



Chai Pani



➔ To start, you can try fresh and flavorful homestyle Venezuelan dishes at the lively bar, restaurant, and patio at Bib Gourmand winner **Arepa Mia**. Chef-owner Lis Hernandez uses locally sourced organic ingredients to make her family recipes, such as cornmeal flour grilled arepas; sweet, salty, and savory guayañes; cheese-stuffed corn cachapas; and golden fried empanadas stuffed with slow roasted pork and caramelized onion.

At Michelin Bib Gourmand winner **Banshee**, exposed brick walls and dark velvet curtains create a chic-casual atmosphere where you can enjoy an evening of handcrafted cocktails and artful food. Exciting fry bread and pepperoni butter, vegan fried artichokes in a lime pickle and coconut chutney, and a dessert of pistachio cheesecake, grilled pineapple, and chocolate sauce will arouse your taste buds.

Practically award-winning are 12 additional Bib Gourmand-recommend restaurants in DeKalb. For instance, at the **Alden**, you can dig into a five-course chef's tasting menu using local ingredients and international flavors.

If you love seafood, indulge in the extensive raw bar selection at **Kimball House**. The sleek French-accented restaurant offers a variety of caviar, oysters, seafood, and steak dinners paired with thoughtfully selected wines.

Gather with friends at the homely **Poor Hendrix**, where you can spend hours sipping on bourbon-tea punches and nibbling on buffalo cauliflower, Moroccan-spiced lamb skewers, and spicy peanut cold noodles.

You'll feel like you're at a rustic farmhouse when biting into a rich sausage, gamey dry aged squab, or intense grilled beef tongue at the **Deer and The Dove**.

Farm-forward Italian restaurant **White Bull** offers plenty of fresh pasta and vegetarian options in a modern-rustic dining room and an airy patio.

The cured pastrami stacked on rye and open-faced gravlax bagel sandwiches at the **General Muir** will remind you of classic Jewish American delis.



For a tasteful journey around Asia, try the magazine-style menu showcasing authentic street foods from around the continent at **Food Terminal**.

Embark on a journey to the Philippines with a communal kamayan dinner at **Kamayan ATL**, where an array of colorful dishes are laid out on banana leaves. If you're not up for the full feast, opt for individual portions of stuffed lumpia, slow-roasted lechon, or eggplant coconut curry.

LanZhou Ramen's hand-pulled noodles from the namesake city are the star attraction here; taste owner Fu Li Zhang's famous pot stickers, tender roast duck, and Sichuan-spiced chicken noodle soup.

The longstanding family-run establishment **Han Il Kwan** resembles a traditional hanok in Korea, where you can master your grilling skills at the table.

At **Nam Phuong**, the family dinner is the way to go if you want to sample authentic Vietnamese flavors; you can gather a group and feast on lotus salad, caramelized catfish, shaking beef, spare ribs, and more.

Finally, **Chai Pani's** hip Bollywood vibe and remarkable balance of Indian spices has earned itself many national accolades. Don't miss the matchstick okra fries, butter chicken, and vada pav, along with a refreshing rose- and saffron-topped lassi.

Where the Locals Eat

Three DeKalb residents share their favorite neighborhood restaurants

BY JENNIFER SENATOR

McKenzie Manor

Dance instructor, DeKalb County Schools

Brookhaven resident McKenzie Manor describes herself as passionate and committed, both in her job as a dance teacher and in supporting local restaurants. “We have so many hidden gems,” she says. “There’s such a diverse range of authentic, delicious options without the overwhelming crowds of more popular areas.” She especially appreciates restaurants that feel welcoming and foster a sense of community.



ALL-AROUND FAVORITE RESTAURANT: Milk & Honey in Decatur is guaranteed great food. I order the Mr. Benny Crab Cake Benedict with jumbo crab cakes, fried egg, creamed spinach, and toasted English muffins.

BEST SPECIAL OCCASION RESTAURANT: Dinner at **Batsi** on Buford Highway includes live performances by Brazilian samba dancers. It’s an unforgettable experience. I love their crab and watermelon salad and crab-stuffed shrimp with the Lady Lychee cocktail.

BEST DATE NIGHT SPOT: I love sharing the birria pizza at **Rreal Tacos** in Chamblee. It’s a tortilla filled with birria barbacoa, cilantro, and onions with consommé on the side. Add a strawberry margarita on the rocks with a Tajin rim.

BEST LUNCH SPOT: I’m a seafood lover, so I love the **Shaking Crawfish** in Doraville. I build my own boil with crab legs, shrimp, extra potatoes, and corn tossed in the Cajun garlic butter sauce.

BEST INTERNATIONAL CUISINE: **Mamak** in Doraville is locally owned and serves authentic Malaysian cuisine. I like their black pepper beef, curry laksa soup, and spicy chili shrimp.

BEST COCKTAILS: My all-time favorite cocktail is the lychee martini at **Katch Kitchen & Cocktails** in Tucker.

BEST DESSERT: I try all the weekly cookie flavors at **Munster Cravings** in Tucker, but my favorite is their cinnamon roll cookie.

BEST BURGERS: My favorite is the Bacon Cheeseburger on Steroids at **Big Daddy’s Burger Bar** in Decatur with a side of their sweet potato fries.



Ayla Crippen

Senior Account Executive, WXIA-TV/WATL

For East Lake resident Ayla Crippen, living in a neighborhood with farm-to-table restaurants takes her back to childhood. “I grew up visiting my grandparents’ tobacco farm in south Georgia, where my grandmother cooked every day for the workers,” she recalls. “All of the vegetables came from their garden, and it made me appreciate where food is grown.” Now, Crippen says she does her best to support farm-friendly restaurants.

BEST BREAKFAST/BRUNCH: **Sun in My Belly** in Kirkwood has the best French toast on brioche. And the pimiento cheese omelet is out of this world.

BEST LOCAL HANGOUT: I love **Universal Joint** in Oakhurst. This is my go-to for burgers, gyros, and chicken wings. Plus it’s kid- and dog-friendly, and there’s live music. It’s just a laid-back, cool vibe.

BEST SPECIAL OCCASION RESTAURANT: I do a lot of work dinners at **Arnette’s Chop Shop** in Brookhaven. They have a huge selection of steaks, and it feels very elegant but relaxed. We always go up to the rooftop bar before our meal.

BEST BARBECUE: Hands down, **Fox Bros. Bar-B-Q**. I love their brisket, chopped pork, mac and cheese, baked beans—I can go on and on about this place.

BEST DESSERT: I love riding bikes with the kids up to Decatur to get ice cream at **Butter and Cream**. It’s got a line out the door on the weekends.

BEST HIDDEN GEM: The secret garden at the **Brick Store** in Decatur. You go down an alley next to the restaurant and there’s a quiet spot with a few tables. It’s a good place to stop if you’re walking around downtown.

BEST LUNCH SPOT: I love **Havana Sandwich Shop** for their Cuban sandwich. Get a side of plantains and the batido de mamey, a fruity milkshake.

BEST HANGOUT: **Twain’s** in Decatur has great games, like darts and shuffleboard, and offers organic food, which you don’t see a lot in a brewery. I love having dinner there before a show at Eddie’s Attic.

Charles Anderson

Photographer

For Lithonia resident Charles Anderson, one of the perks of traveling around the city as a portrait and special event photographer is that he gets to try lots of new restaurants. “I do a lot of weddings, and there are so many great chefs and venues just in DeKalb County,” he says. “Unfortunately a lot of Lithonia’s mom-and-pop restaurants didn’t survive after Covid. But there are great restaurants close by, especially in Tucker and Decatur, and there’s always something new to try.”

BEST BREAKFAST/BRUNCH: I love the grits at **Rising Son** in Avondale Estates. I also like their fried chicken and collard greens.

BEST TACOS: When my wife and I go walking around Stone Mountain, we always go to the **Front Porch**. I like their chicken tacos and oxtails tacos; I grew up on oxtails, and if you’ve never had it, you have to try it—the meat just falls off the bone.

BEST BARBECUE: No question, the pulled pork or brisket sandwiches at **Ford’s BBQ** in Tucker. I like their homemade banana pudding, too.

BEST LUNCH SPOT: **Fresh to Order** in Decatur is great for lunch. I order the grilled salmon with black bean orange sauce, and it comes with roasted corn relish, a great salad, and rice.



BEST SOUL FOOD: When I want old-school soul food, I go to **Magnolia Room Cafeteria** in Tucker. I love their collard greens, cornbread, fried chicken, and especially their baked chicken. It’s fun to see so many generations of people there.

Raise Your Glass

Wet your whistle at these DeKalb County watering holes

BY RICHARD L. ELDRIDGE



SPOILER ALERT: You may require a ride share to properly sample all of the diverse and locally owned watering holes across DeKalb County. From quaint Stone Mountain Village and Chamblee's fast-growing international scene to the award-winning Avondale Estates and the walkable Decatur Square, here are five of the best drinking establishments for you to try.

THE BRICK STORE PUB

A mainstay on Decatur Square since 1997, locals love the community beer garden ("down the alley and to the left"), cask bar featuring cask ales, and darts, plus live daytime European football TV matches. A cozy and rustic space, this spot is a must-visit for beer enthusiasts, who can enjoy an extensive selection of drafts that include the Monday Night Raptor and Creature Comforts' A Little Bit of Both. Menu favorites include the house-smoked wings, the herby and dense chicken pot pie, and the succulently sauced pierogi primavera.

↓ HOPSTIX

An Atlanta/Asian fusion mashup from founder and brew master Andy Tan, who grew up in the vibrant Indonesian food scene, Hopstix offers

one of Chamblee's best selections of craft beers, Asian-inspired cocktails (including the renowned rum punch), and saké. After falling in love with Georgia's capital, Tan was inspired to offer his Indonesian food to the community in his new home. The locale's beers pair perfectly with menu favorites, such as the Miso Ramen and Thai Spaghetti.

THE TUCKER BREWING COMPANY →

This family-owned and operated business is best known for its heated-in-winter 8,500-square-foot beer garden, which was ranked as the #4 Best Beer Garden in America by *USA Today*. An extensive menu of brews includes the award-winning Tucker Lager and the hazy, hoppy



Kellerbier. The European-inspired menu pairs perfectly with the German-influenced beers, including such delectable dishes as the addictive deep-fried sauerkraut bites and TKR pilsner-battered fish and chips.

THE LOST DRUID BREWERY & DISTILLERY

Included in *USA Today's* Best Small Town Beer Scene, the Lost Druid Brewery & Distillery, located in Avondale Estates, is a 100 percent woman-owned and family-operated craft brewery and small plate artisan kitchen. The industrial-chic spot's best and most innovative sips include the Beast of Scanlaste Imperial Stout and the rum-fueled adult juice box cocktail Capris in the Sun. After sharing a plate of the crave-worthy Ahi tuna fried wonton strips with Ponzu sauce, be sure to save room for dessert: pretzels served with house-made icing and a fruit coulis.

OUTRUN BREWING COMPANY

Opened in Stone Mountain in 2020 by Josh Miller and Ryan Silva (who first met as brewers at Decatur's Three Tavern), the Outrun Brewing Company blends retro fun with some of the best craft beers around. Miller and Silva dreamed of owning a spot to flex their small batch creativity, and the result was a must-visit community spot featuring a pet-friendly taproom with lots of outdoor seating that is perfect for soaking in the sun. Favorite libations include the Sarasota Summer sour ale and the nonalcoholic tangerine mojito, which can be complemented with tastes from the local food trucks featured regularly at Outrun.



Hopstix

Buford Highway Farmers Market

Take a trip across the world through the aisles of DeKalb's beloved international market

BY NICOLE LETTS

Herbaceous aromas tickle your nostrils and colorful produce teases your eyes while a bustling atmosphere and lively conversations in various languages set the tone for the experience to come. This is your first glimpse upon entering Buford Highway Farmers Market, an international cuisine epicenter in Doraville.

First-time shoppers will immediately notice the diverse selection of global ingredients organized in an approachable manner. The expansive market might feature new-to-you components, but it flows like a traditional grocery store. Aisles are packed with shelf-stable staples, and endcaps feature unique deals and finds. Enter the market through the doors on the far right, picking up a shopping cart, small rolling cart, or handheld basket along your way. The extensive produce section includes exotic fruits and vegetables from Asia, Latin America, Africa, and Europe, making it a go-to destination for hard-to-find ingredients. Don't be surprised when you find bamboo stalks, ginkgo nuts, or any number of other rare items. As you



round the corner, stacks of dried herbs and baked goods come into view. Kollaches, magdalenas, cheese Danishes, and croissants are just a selection of the spoils. Be sure to check the tables near the Spanish cheeses—almost all available to sample—for fresh tortillas kept hot in foam coolers. The back of the market is home to the meat and seafood sections, and if you can imagine a protein, it is likely available.

The center aisles, which are organized by global influence and separated specifically into countries and regions, provide even more opportunities for discovery. Labels at the beginning of each aisle lead you

on an edible journey across the world. From the back of the store, Spanish items are to your left while Asian items are to your right. Everything else, including French, Dutch, British, and even familiar American goods, are in the middle. In total, the market features items from more than 70 countries. There also are an array of additional items, from bath and body offerings such as shaving cream and lotions to children's books in various languages. A hot bar cafe and a small plant and flower section complete the market's sections.

Throughout the year, Buford Highway Farmers Market celebrates

various cultural events and festivals that immerse visitors in the represented cultures through food, as well as music and dance. The venue also regularly hosts cooking demonstrations using the unique ingredients found on-site while teaching traditional recipes from around the world.

Buford Highway Farmers Market is not just a grocery shopping destination; it's a welcoming community hub where customers can broaden their cooking imaginations, find an assortment of global ingredients, and learn about the world around them—all without ever leaving Dekalb County.



YOUR DEKALB FARMERS MARKET

Your Dekalb Farmers Market in Decatur is Dekalb County's second global market. Here, the warehouse-style store spans over 140,000 square feet, making it one of the largest indoor farmers markets in the Southeast. Spices are sold by weight, cheese from around the world is separated by country of origin, fresh pressed juice is squeezed on-site, and fish and meat are butchered to your liking. Each section of the market offers something else to discover from more than 180 countries, whether it's an international ingredient or a loaf of locally baked bread. Fill your cart with a cornucopia of items to inspire your next meal.



Titanic Exhibit

You're Surrounded

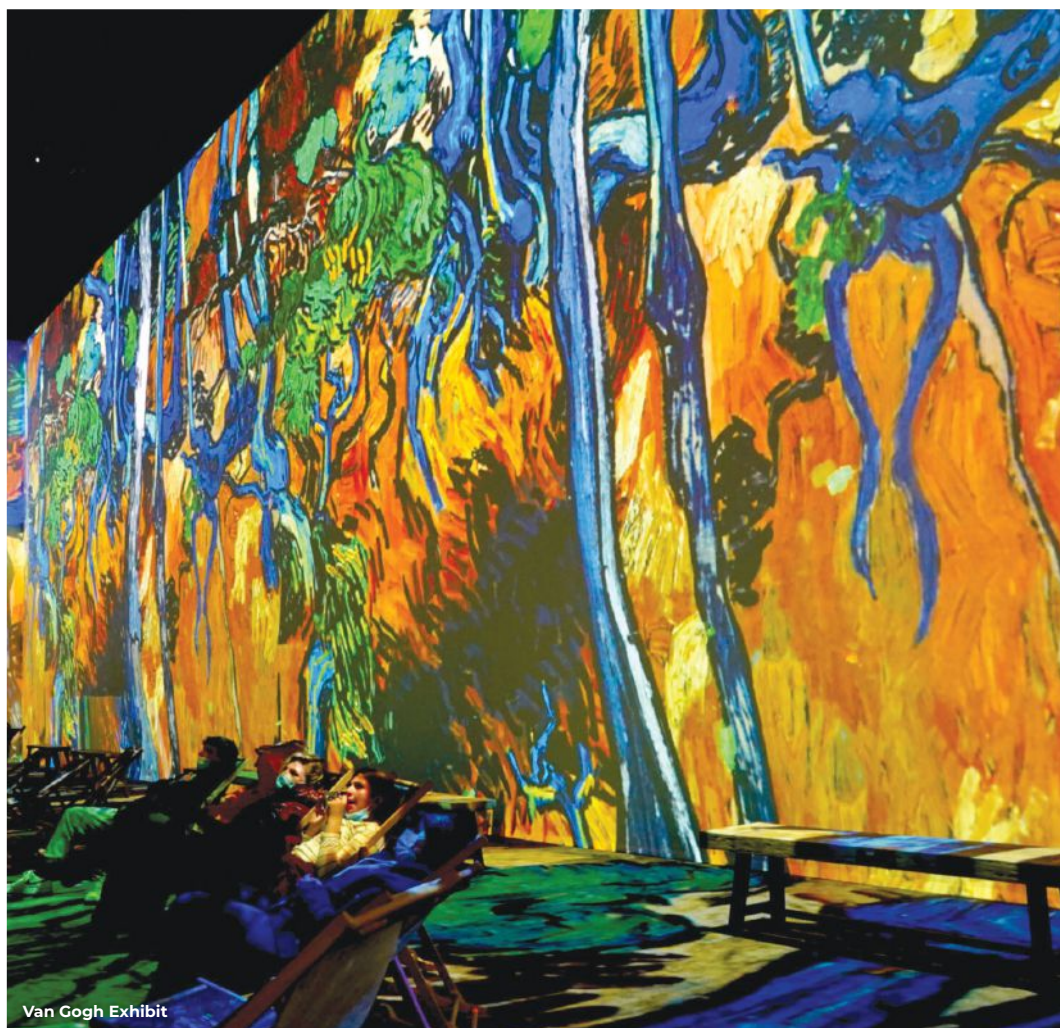
Immerse yourself in art at the Exhibition Hub Atlanta Art Center

BY SARAH BISACCA

TUCKED AWAY INSIDE AN UNASSUMING STARK WHITE STRUCTURE off of DeKalb's stretch of Buford Highway is a museum experience of Willy Wonka-esque proportions. Like something out of a fever dream, the Exhibition Hub Atlanta Art Center transforms ordinary spaces into living works of art through all-encompassing exhibits like *Van Gogh: The Immersive Experience* or *Titanic: An Immersive Voyage*. It's exactly this blend of diverse exhibits and dynamic limited-time events that make the venue a must-visit destination for art enthusiasts and casual visitors from all over the metro Atlanta area and beyond.

The Exhibition Hub Atlanta Art Center opened its doors in 2022, transforming a once-neglected industrial space into a thriving hub of artistic activity. With a five-acre footprint and more than 250 parking spaces, the venue is well-equipped to host the larger-than-life "edutainment" (a curated blend of education and entertainment) exhibits and special events for which it has become known.

One of the defining features of the Exhibition Hub is its integration of technology within the classic showroom-style experience. Whether the subject matter is human-sized sculptures built from thousands of tiny Legos or a retrospective on the life of Claude Monet, the venue embraces technology as an art form and education tool through interactive multimedia displays and larger-than-life projection-mapped storytelling devices. These tech-forward exhibits



allow guests of all ages and interests to dive deeper into the subject matter, experiencing the evolution of artistic styles or a first-person perspective on historical events.

Among the highlights of any exhibit at the Exhibition Hub Atlanta Art Center is the immersive room. This 20,000-square-foot, two-story space allows you to step inside a painting or historical event as you're completely enveloped in an all-encompassing, projection-mapped mini-film. During the Van Gogh exhibit, for example, you could recline in a slingback or beanbag chair as the room filled with the iconic yellow sunflowers, deep violet irises, or vivid orange hues of the famed painter's striking self-portraits,

all accompanied by entrancing surround sound.

Of course, it's not all about the high-tech extras. The carefully curated exhibits feature physical specimens like painstakingly collected artifacts and replicas that help bring the subject matter to life. A recent exhibition featuring the treasures of King Tut's tomb was made extra regal with dramatically lit displays of ancient chariots, statues, and gold furnishings—delicately recreated by experts to protect the fragile originals—that immersed guests into the boy king's larger-than-life world. Replicas of Van Gogh's bedroom or Claude Monet's studio help you step into the shoes of the artists and enjoy a seemingly up-close and personal

interaction with the famous figures.

In addition to the ever-popular exhibits, the Exhibition Hub Atlanta Art Center often hosts events that make the most of the venue's immersive nature. During the recent Van Gogh exhibition, for example, a local yoga teacher offered a series of vinyasa flow classes inside the immersive room, pairing sun salutations with the vibrant navy and gold hues of *Starry Night*. The spectacular space also plays host to private events, from intimate birthday parties in the art gallery to after-work hangouts surrounded by the immersive room's incredible colors. It's just one more way that this unique venue helps visitors enjoy art on an entirely new level.

On Stage

DeKalb's performing arts scene captivates with creative productions and classes

BY KARINA ANTENUCCI



ART Station Theatre

FROM LOCAL MUSIC AND DANCE VENUES TO COMMUNITY THEATERS, DeKalb is full of vibrant and diverse opportunities to explore the performing arts. Here are seven locales to add to your bucket list for watching, listening, and learning this year.

ACTING OUT

Area theaters offer something for everyone

TUCKER RECREATION CENTER

Originally built as an elementary school, Tucker Recreation Center now brings the community together in many other ways, including for local theater productions and performing arts events. Interested in performing yourself or just learning a new skill? Sign up for classes in dancing, West African drumming, and acting at this center for arts and rec.

PORTER SANFORD III PERFORMING ARTS & COMMUNITY CENTER

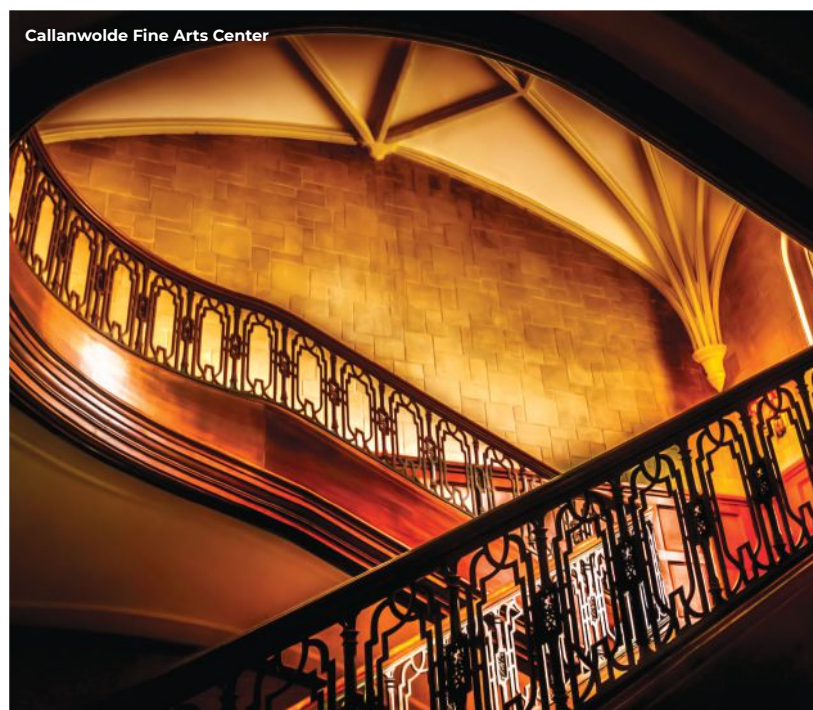
This 500-seat theater in Panthersville hosts a plethora of theater productions, dance performances, and community events throughout the year. The center's state-of-the-art space is equipped with advanced digital audio and lighting to make its musicals, ballets, concerts, and plays all the more extraordinary.

ART STATION THEATRE

Check out a performance at this local theater in historic Stone Mountain Village that celebrates its diverse community of actors and audiences. Its plays often center on the Southern experience and present topics intended to inspire social change in modern society.

PUSH PUSH ARTS

Founded by longtime Atlanta artists Tim Habeger and Shelby Hofer, PushPush Arts serves as an incubator hub for artists across disciplines. Its experimental theater in College Park provides thought-provoking plays, music and comedy productions, film screenings, creative workshops, and more in its unique spaces.



JUST DANCE

Delightful spots are open for dance classes

CALLANWOLDE FINE ARTS CENTER

Simply walking around the lush, 12-acre estate and historic mansion at Callanwolde Fine Arts Center provides much visual stimulation. Yet the community arts center on Briarcliff Road in Atlanta also provides endless entertainment in the form of dance instruction for all ages, live music, poetry readings, and lots more. The movement classes offer something for many interests, including ballet, tap, jazz, hip-hop, modern, and pointe.

DANCE FOR JOI DANCE COMPANY

This dance school in Stone Mountain offers different styles for students ages 18 months to 17 years to move their bodies and fine-tune techniques. Choose from jazz, ballet, acro (which incorporates gymnastic tricks), hip-hop, contemporary, creative movement, and more. Each recreational class participates in a year-end recital to showcase their moves. For those students who want to step it up a notch and perform more regularly, the studio has a competition team that requires an audition to join.

MUSICAL NUMBER

DeKalb is alive with the sound of music

EDDIE'S ATTIC

A renowned intimate listening room in Decatur, Eddie's Attic hosts music enthusiasts from all over the world and welcomes both emerging and established songwriters and bands. Widely recognized talents who have graced its stage include Sheryl Crow, Brandi Carlile, John Mayer, India.Arie, and others. The cozy music venue with a capacity of just 175 also offers food service so you can enjoy dinner with your show.



Ongoing Exploration

Fernbank Museum of Natural History fascinates kids and adults

BY DENISE K. JAMES

Much like science itself, the Fernbank Museum of Natural History is constantly evolving to better tell the stories of nature and culture. Families will discover exhibits on a variety of interests, and events for kids, teens, and adults make Fernbank a great place to socialize and learn something new. Named for founder and naturalist Emily Harrison's beloved creek bank covered in ferns, the museum, open since the early 1990s, honors Harrison's vision of preserving Fernbank Forest as a "school in the woods" for all ages.

Intriguing Exhibits

One of Fernbank's most popular permanent exhibits is *Giants of the Mesozoic*, where even the tallest adult is dwarfed by dinosaurs from prehistoric Patagonia, roughly 145 to 165 million years ago. Other exhibits highlighting our state's natural beauty include *World of Shells*, a collection from coastal Georgia and across the globe; *Skyhigh*, highlighting Georgia's diverse assortment of birds; *Fantastic Forces*, all about the science of earthquakes, tornadoes, lightning, and other phenomena; and *A Walk Through Time*, showcasing the state's history and development.

For an interactive exhibit, visit *NatureQuest*, which turns kids (and parents) into adventurous explorers in the natural ecosystem. Meanwhile, the STEAM Lab offers a hands-on educational hub for science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics.

Fernbank also offers a selection of must-see temporary exhibits indoors and out. The *Mirror Maze*, on view until fall 2024, reveals numbers and patterns by using life-sized mirrors. In *Armored Animals*, visitors learn how fish, insects, crocodiles, and more use armor to protect themselves from the elements and potential danger. For fans of art, *Golden Opportunity* includes works from the Denver

Botanic Gardens' School of Botanical Art & Illustration and shows how yellow pigments are sourced from nature.

Coming soon at Fernbank, guests will get a close look at the intricate lives of arachnids in an exhibition called *Spiders: From Fear to Fascination* and learn more about the early oceanic adventures of Europeans in an exhibit titled *Vikings: Warriors of the Sea*.

Even more to see and do at Fernbank

Beyond Fernbank's educational and inspiring exhibits, the museum offers a slew of other fun activities. For every regular admission ticket, audiences can see a science documentary in the on-site Giant Screen Theater. Topics range from prehistoric creatures to the marvels of the human body, and images leap off the screen with ease, thanks to 3D capabilities.

Adults seeking something a little more than the standard dinner date will love Fernbank's popular After Dark series. On the second Friday of every month, Fernbank transitions into a science-themed party with live music, delicious tapas, and a full bar, as well as special demonstrations and access to the museum's exhibits. Themes are designed to bring out that childlike sense of wonder and include topics such as geology, science fair experiments, and more.

Fernbank is proud to be part of the Atlanta artscape with its very own Tiny Door, part of artist Karen Anderson Singer's Tiny Doors ATL project. Each Tiny Door in the city is different and speaks to its location, and Fernbank's door is located on the rock retaining wall along the outdoor nature path in Wild-Woods. Created from Giganotosaurus claws, the seven-inch door relates to the museum's beloved *Giants of the Mesozoic* permanent exhibit and was installed in 2022. Two years later, it continues to symbolize the importance of the Fernbank Museum of Natural History in DeKalb County and beyond.



A Flying Start

10 fun facts to help you get to know PDK Airport

BY BLAKE GUTHRIE



After moving to Decatur in 1997, one of the first things I did was head up Clairmont Road to Peachtree DeKalb Airport (PDK) in Chamblee. Someone had told me there was a restaurant and lounge there called the Downwind where you could watch planes take off and land. It became a regular haunt for me. Later, I would take lunch breaks there when I worked nearby so I could enjoy the airport. Recently, I realized that not everyone knows PDK like I do. So, here are ten tidbits that will help you become familiar with “Atlanta’s Gateway to the South.”



1 IT'S A CELEBRITY HOT SPOT . . . MAYBE

Celebrity sightings have been known to happen at PDK, usually around the time of big events in metro Atlanta. For instance, when Superbowl LIII was played in Atlanta in 2019, many sports stars and NFL team planes were sighted. And it's been said that Oprah Winfrey's “Harpo” plane has made its own landings at the reliever airport.

2 IT GETS BUSY

PDK is the second-busiest airport in Georgia behind Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. With four runways and an average of 230,000 aircraft operations annually, it's one of the busiest general aviation airports in the country.

3 MEALS MEET MUSIC HERE

The Downwind Restaurant & Lounge hosts live music while also serving up great burgers, seafood, and more. Each weekend, local bands—playing everything from classic rock and country to 1980s and 1990s hits—take the makeshift stage for free shows in the evening hours.

4 IT HAS A FASCINATING MILITARY HISTORY

The PDK site was an army training facility in World War I—the original home of the famed 82nd Airborne Division—and a naval air station during World War II. Alvin York, better known as the WWI hero whose story was told in the 1941 award-winning film *Sergeant York*, trained here.



Peachtree DeKalb Airport

5 YOU CAN EXPERIENCE THE 57TH

Situated at the south end of the runway, the 57th Fighter Group Restaurant is a destination eatery that serves lunch, dinner, and a Sunday brunch buffet while giving diners a chance to step back in time with vintage planes and other military items on display.

6 KIDS LOVE IT HERE

Parents who are in the know bring their children to PDK's Doc Magnet Memorial Aviation Park, which features a playground right next to the runway. The park also has picnic tables in a hanger and bleachers for watching the planes take off and land.



Downwind Restaurant

7 IT'S THE ULTIMATE DATE NIGHT SPOT

Couples can take a flight with Biplane Rides Over Atlanta to see the city skyline at sunset. They'll even let you bring a glass of wine aboard as long as you purchase it from the 57th Fighter Group Restaurant, their base of operations.

8 YOU CAN GET CERTIFIED

PDK serves as a base for various aviation education and training programs, helping to foster the next generation of aviation professionals. Whether you want to learn to fly a fixed-wing aircraft or a helicopter, a number of aviation companies at the airport offer pilot certification programs.

9 GOOD NEIGHBORLY FUN AWAITS

The most highly anticipated annual event at PDK is the Good Neighbor Day Airshow each spring. It includes flyovers by precision flight teams, parachute team demonstrations, plane rides, a classic car show, and a kid zone with bounce houses and carnival rides.

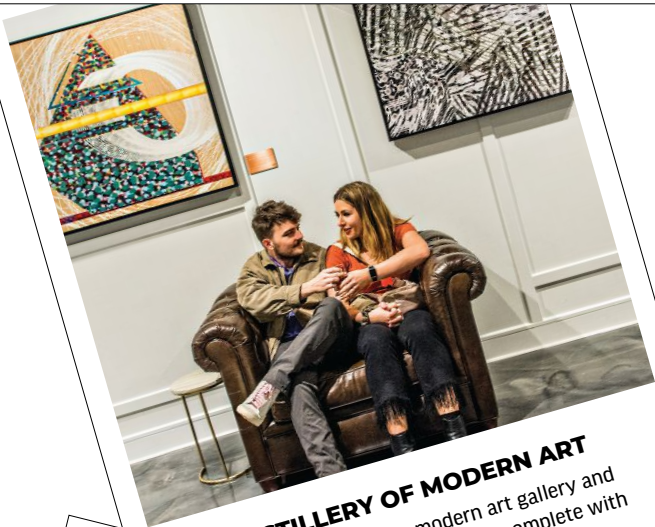
10 HOLLYWOOD COMES CALLING

PDK has served as the backdrop for numerous movies and television shows. Scenes from *The Walking Dead* and *Anchorman 2* were shot here, as well as the new Netflix series *Fight Night: The Million Dollar Heist*, starring Kevin Hart and Samuel L. Jackson.



Doc Magnet Memorial Aviation Park

INSTAGRAMMABLE DEKALB



DISTILLERY OF MODERN ART
The combination of a modern art gallery and a sophisticated cocktail lounge complete with a working distillery



AIRSTREAM ISLAND
A mid-century tropical hideaway surrounded by banana trees and featuring a rare 1956 airstream for a one-of-a-kind camping experience



THE TENTS AT RAMSDEN LAKE
Taking glamping to the next level with boutique camping accommodations in a gorgeous setting near Stone Mountain

Check out these five picturesque locales to capture the perfect social media pic



THE VICTORIAN ATLANTA
Part coffee shop, part nursery and a truly unique space for a fantastic experience and a great photo



KAYAKING AT STONE MOUNTAIN
Located right within Stone Mountain Park and offering a snapshot-worthy backdrop from July through September



DEKALB TALKS TOURISM PODCAST



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