

Augusta Georgia – A Hotbed of History

History buffs will find plenty to explore in Georgia's second oldest city, where historic homes and hotels once housed Presidents, one of the nation's first medical schools hid cadaver bones in the basement, and the Confederate Powderworks supplied the South with ammunition during the Civil War. Museums celebrate the city's connection to the sport of golf and the Godfather of Soul, while trolley tours and canal cruises offer engaging ways to journey through time.

Ezekiel Harris House

The 1797 Ezekiel Harris House is said to be "the finest eighteenth-century house surviving in Georgia." It is an excellent example of early Federal architecture. Fully restored in 1964 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Ezekiel Harris House is a reminder of the days when tobacco was the primary cash crop of Georgia. <http://www.augustamuseum.org/HarrisHouse>

Meadow Garden

Meadow Garden was the home of George Walton, one of the youngest signers of the Declaration of Independence. Guided tours are available Tuesday-Saturday, 10:00AM to 4:00. The home features 18th and 19th Century American and English furnishings, porcelains, paintings and primitive household equipment. <http://historicmeadowgarden.org/>

Sacred Heart Cultural Center

The first bricks were laid for Sacred Heart Church in 1897 and the church opened with the first service on December 2, 1900. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the building features towering twin spires, graceful arches, fifteen distinctive styles of brickwork, ninety-four stained glass windows, a barreled vaulted ceiling and intricately carved Italian marble altars. Unfortunately, due to a number of factors the last mass was held in Sacred Heart on July 3, 1971. After extensive renovations, the building was reopened in 1987 as Sacred Heart Cultural Center. The structure now serves as a unique venue for social and cultural events such as art exhibitions, theatrical events, an annual Garden Festival, choral concerts and is rented continuously throughout the year for celebrations, and civic functions. The old Rectory building and the Sacred Heart School building house the administrative offices of local arts groups and other non-profit organizations, including the Greater Augusta Arts Council, Augusta Ballet, Choral Society, Children's Chorale, Symphony Orchestra Augusta, the Augusta Players, and the Red Cross. <http://sacredheartaugusta.org/index.html>

Augusta Cotton Exchange Building

Designed by Enoch William Brown, the Augusta Cotton Exchange Building was constructed in the mid-1880s at the height of both the production and trade of cotton in Augusta. The ornate cast-iron entrance elements underneath the projecting round corner turret complement the vigorous brick and stone details of this significant High Victorian building. In 1988, Mr. Bill Moore of Aiken, South Carolina, noticed the decaying deserted building, which he purchased and restored. He had the third floor and original roofline replaced, scraped the paint off of the interior heart pine wood, and repaired the windows. The most important artifact still remaining from the exchange is the 45-foot blackboard, which still has chalk figures written on it dating back to the early 1900s. <https://www.visitaugusta.com/listing/augusta-cotton-exchange/43/>

Summerville Historic Homes District

A selection of interesting homes from a variety of periods includes the John Milledge House (Overton), c. 1799 and enlarged in the 20th century, at 635 Gary; the c. 1889 Queen Anne style Bryan Cumming House at 2231 Cumming Road; the Governor Charles Jones Jenkins House (Green Court) built c. 1823 at 2243 Cumming Road; and Salubrity Hall, a Tudor built in 1928 at 2259 Cumming Road. The Spanish Colonial at 704 Milledge Road was commissioned by George Sterns, president of Riverside Mill, and later became the home of novelist of African adventures, Edison Marshal. 19th-century statesman John Forsyth's house, c. 1818, is at 728 Milledge Road and Twin Gables, c. 1913, a Dutch Colonial Revival, sits at 920 Milledge Road. The imposing Lamar–Wallace House, 1006 Johns Road, was the former home of Joseph R. Lamar, who was Woodrow Wilson's boyhood friend, State Supreme Court Justice, and Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Montrose is at 2249 Walton Way and the Church of the Good Shepherd at 2230. The Stephen Vincent Benét House is at 2500 Walton Way on the campus of Augusta University. Summerville is also home to Augusta's historic Partridge Inn, where President Harding visited. <https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/augusta/summervillehd.html>

Augusta Museum of History

The museum curates the largest and most significant historical collection in the Central Savannah River Area, and is home to permanent exhibition Augusta's Story, a 12,000- year journey through the region's past. Additional Signature Exhibits include: Celebrating A Grand Tradition, The Story of Golf: This exhibition explores who, where, and how the game of golf has evolved over the centuries; Local Legends: From Brenda Lee to Oliver Lee and Hulk Hogan to Judy Woodruff, many famous people have called Augusta home; The Godfather of Soul. Mr. James Brown: This exhibition celebrates the man, his music, and his legacy. <http://www.augustamuseum.org/>

Augusta Canal National Heritage Area

Hikers, cyclists, and runners regularly head for the Augusta Canal's wide, level towpath, once used by mules to pull canal boats to the Canal head gates. Additional trails into wooded and urban areas add variety to the outdoor experience. Pick up a trail map at the Augusta Canal Discovery Center or download a map here. <https://augustacanal.com/>

History Tours

From civil war, to African-American to local haunts, whatever your interest, Augusta offers a variety of Trolley Tours to satiate your quest for knowledge:

- Historic Trolley Tour of Augusta, ticket to Augusta Museum of History included.
- Black History Trolley Tour, 25 black heritage sites and ticket to Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History included.
- Civil War Boat Tour: the behind-the-lines story of the Confederate Powder Works and Augusta's major role in supplying Southern troops during the Civil War.
- Tours of Boyhood Home of President Woodrow Wilson: Hear his story and tour the home where a future president showed his first signs of leadership.
- Augusta Ghost Trolley Tour: Tour Augusta's most haunted attractions and hear the tales behind their spooky origins.