

macon

GEORGIA

Award-Winning
DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

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An advertisement for IngleSide Village Pizza. On the left is a cartoon character with a white face, a large 'G' on its forehead, and a multi-colored pointed hat. The text 'IngleSide Village Pizza' is written in a stylized font. To the right is a photograph of the restaurant's interior, which is decorated with colorful lights, hanging lanterns, and framed pictures. The text 'Macon's Largest Selection of Imported Beer' is written in a handwritten style above the photo. Below the photo, it says 'All Pizzas Made with Homemade Dough, Real Cheese, & Fresh Toppings'. At the bottom is the website 'www.inglesidevillagepizza.com' and the phone number '(478) 750-8488'. The entire advertisement is framed by a black and white checkered border.



Lane

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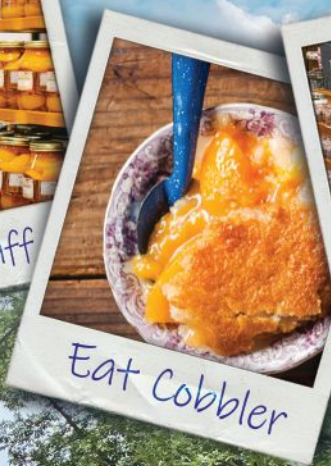
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Friendly Staff



Eat Cobbler



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Swing

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Welcome

Welcome to Macon, where soul lives. The essence of our city's soul has thrived for millennia. Before the rise of Capricorn Records produced the iconic sounds of Southern Rock—and legendary artists like Otis Redding, the Allman Brothers, and Little Richard planted roots here and gifted their vocals to the world—the spirit of soul traced back even further to the indigenous Mississippian culture, the ancestors of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation who likely laid the beat.

Now when you enter Macon's downtown corridor—named in 2024 as a Great American Main Street—you'll be greeted by the language of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation on our street signs. This historic heart of our city is alive with shops, eateries, and renovated outdoor public spaces like Cotton Avenue Plaza and Rosa Parks Square. Near H&H—a pioneering restaurant that fed the Allman Brothers Band—are storefront shops and small businesses begging to be explored.

Here, the future of soul is alive, promising visitors an extraordinary experience. Macon's music scene is thriving with rising stars recording at Capricorn. Bump into artists at legendary venues like Grant's Lounge or the Capitol Theatre. With sold out shows by artists like Macon-native Jason Aldean, the Atrium Health Amphitheater has become Central Georgia's premier music venue. Take advantage of Macon's All-Access Music Pass, which offers discounted admittance at our music museums and visitor attractions. Find out more at visitmacon.org/allaccess.

Visit Macon offers customized exploring through Rock Candy Tours, most of which depart from the downtown visitor center. Options include the Free

Birds & Night Owls Walking Tour, Macon Macabre Walking Tour, and the favorite Soul Sights Driving Tour. Don't miss our step-on-and-step-off experience tours, like the Kegs and Stills Tasting Tour of breweries and a distillery or the African American Music Experience.

Come discover your favorite new sport in Macon, known as the "center of the pickleverse" now that it has the world's largest indoor pickleball center with two levels and 32 courts. This facility, along with the largest outdoor court facility in Georgia at Tatnall Square Park, make us a premier hub for the sport.

Drop into our downtown visitor center, give us a call, or log onto visitmacon.org. We look forward to helping craft your soulful journey to Macon.



GARY WHEAT
President and CEO, Visit Macon

Relive Southern Rock History



In 1969 a revolution was launched from the streets of Macon, consisting of guitars, bass, keyboards, drums, and a uniquely spirited brotherhood. The revolutionaries of record were the Allman Brothers Band, who, as the founders of what became known as Southern rock, changed the course of popular American music and turned Macon into the recording hot bed of the 1970s.

Open: Thurs-Sat 11-6 & Sun 11-4 • Available for Rentals & Corporate Events
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thebighousemuseum.org



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macon

GEORGIA

VISIT MACON

DOWNTOWN VISITOR CENTER

450 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BOULEVARD

MACON, GA 31201

478-743-1074

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Celebrate!

Join us at Macon's annual festivals and events

March

INTERNATIONAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

Macon's signature annual event kicks off the spring season with hundreds of thousands of Yoshino cherry trees in bloom as well as family-friendly rides, games, festival eats, and all things pink. March 21-30



April

TUBMAN PAN AFRICAN FESTIVAL

Celebrate and learn at the same time at the Pan African Festival, which highlights African culture through music, dance, art, and cuisine. This vibrant event showcases the diversity and unity of the African diaspora.

MAGNOLIA SOAP BOX DERBY

This free, family-friendly annual event brings the excitement of a soap box derby to Washington Square Park, where hundreds come to watch creatively built cars race down Magnolia Street and to enjoy food, drinks, and kid-friendly activities.



JUST TAP'D CRAFT BEER FESTIVAL

Experience this festival that has become a local favorite in downtown Macon. Enjoy diverse craft brews from all over the country, live music, yard games like giant Jenga, and delicious artisan bites from local vendors.



FIRED WORKS CERAMIC EXHIBITION AND SALE

Discover thousands of unique ceramic pieces at Fired Works. This exhibition and sale feature functional and sculptural masterpieces crafted by regional artists, perfect for collectors and enthusiasts. This is the largest ceramic sale and exhibition in the state. *April 25–May 3*

July

BRAGG JAM

Rock out at Bragg Jam, Macon's premier music festival that was founded nearly 25 years ago to create, support, and promote live music in Macon. Featuring local and national artists, it offers two exciting nights of live performances across multiple venues like the Capitol Theatre, Capricorn Studios, and Grant's Lounge.



August

MACON FILM FESTIVAL

Explore independent cinema through screenings, workshops, and panels that offer an immersive experience for film lovers. Venues across town include the Douglass Theatre, Georgia Sports Hall of Fame, and the Museum of Arts and Sciences.



September

OCMULGEE INDIGENOUS CELEBRATION

Celebrate Southeastern indigenous communities through traditional music, dance, crafts, and storytelling. Held at the Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park, attendees can explore more than eight miles of beautiful trails and learn about 17,000 years of human history.

KING OF SOUL MUSIC FESTIVAL

Celebrate the King of Soul, the late Otis Redding, with a music festival in the city where he was raised. Featuring live performances and a fundraiser for the Otis Redding Center for the Arts, the Macon City Auditorium comes alive at this soulful showcase.

MACON PRIDE

Panels, parties, performances, and a pageant highlight the festivities honoring the LGBTQ+ community. Don't miss karaoke in the park, live concerts, jam sessions on Coleman Hill, and more.



MURAL FEST

Sponsored by the Macon Arts Alliance, popular local muralists paint Macon businesses while spectators walk around and enjoy watching the creative process. The public is invited to meet the artists at the Mural Celebration Party on Saturday night.

October

MACON BEYOND

Explore the spooky side of Macon with programming of all scare levels—from tiny haunts to terrifying treats. Enjoy more than 50 events such as movie showings, storytelling, corn mazes, haunted tours, or creepy cocktail experiences.

MACON BEER FEST

Raise a glass and sip samples from more than 100 varieties of craft beer (and wine), taste nibbles from food vendors, peruse arts and crafts, and listen to live music on two stages. One of Georgia's top beer celebrations, it's sponsored by the Rotary Club of Downtown Macon to bring awareness to men's prostate health.



November

FESTIVAL OF TREES

Celebrate the holidays with Macon's Festival of Trees at the Museum of Arts and Sciences. View more than 40 beautifully decorated trees by local artists, businesses, and community organizations. *Through January 1, 2026*



MACON BURGER WEEK

Get your official burger passport and get ready for beef, buns, and burger bliss. Indulge in nine days of creative, mouth-watering burgers created at local restaurants as chefs compete for bragging rights and a spot in the Burger Hall of Fame.



BURGER: MAREN CARUSO GETTY

MACON CHRISTMAS LIGHT EXTRAVAGANZA

Experience the magic of the holidays during the city's Christmas Light Extravaganza. Stroll through four downtown historic blocks to admire more than one million twinkling lights, with displays synchronized to music arranged and performed by the Macon Pops. *November 25, 2025–January 1, 2026*

December

LITTLE RICHARD'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Celebrate the legacy of the "Architect of Rock 'n' Roll," Little Richard, in his hometown. Enjoy live performances, cultural tributes, and special events that celebrate his unique style and influential persona. *December 5*



*Scan to find more
festivals and events!*



Rollick Around Town

Macon offers plenty of family-friendly fun

BY DENISE K. JAMES





MUSEUM OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Learn and have fun at this comprehensive community museum, where visitors can explore a full-dome planetarium, visit animals like the Burmese python and chinchilla at the mini-zoo, interact with exhibits at Discovery House, and view Georgia's only Science on a Sphere installation. masmacon.org



MACON ROCKS

The name fits for this climbing and fitness facility, where even the most timid beginner can rent gear, take a class, and end up loving the view from the top! Already a seasoned climber? Take advantage of day passes or purchase a membership for unlimited visits. maconrocks.com



THE GEORGIA SPORTS HALL OF FAME

Located downtown, this whimsical, ballpark-style facility honors the Peach State's sports-related history, from amateur to college to pro. More than 400 inductees line the hall of fame, and visitors can nominate a favorite athlete or coach. georgiasportshalloffame.com



THE TUBMAN AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM

Open since 1985 and the largest in the region honoring African American culture, history, and arts, this downtown mainstay is a must-see. Exhibits have included filmmaker Tyler Perry and Black musicians of Atlanta, while events range from Juneteenth parties to grill cook-offs and more. tubmanmuseum.com



PIN STRIKES

Striking out on how to entertain the family? Head to this entertainment spot featuring bowling, laser tag, bumper cars, arcade games, and more. Grab a bite or beverage at the on-site restaurant, serving American favorites. pinstrikes2.com



LANE SOUTHERN ORCHARDS

This farm in nearby Fort Valley is a one-stop shop for Southern fare. Special events happen year-round, and visitors can witness the peach-packing process. Visit the cafe to nosh on a slow-roasted pulled pork sandwich, then indulge in homemade peach cobbler. lanesouthernorchards.com

RIGBY'S ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX

Rigby's has everything you need for a day of fun. Play mini golf, drive bumper cars, roller skate all night with DJ D-Whip, and more. Grab food with the family at the on-site restaurant or enjoy the view and upscale tapas at Gracie's Rooftop Bar. rigbysec.com



MUSEUM OF AVIATION

Lauded as the second-largest museum of the U.S. Air Force and the fourth most-visited museum of the Department of Defense, this sprawling facility includes four exhibit buildings, giving visitors an up-close look at military and aviation history. museumofaviation.org



OCMULGEE MOUNDS NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

View thousands of cultural artifacts and explore the trails of this surrounding park, where the largest archaeological dig in America took place. For kids in search of a challenge, the Ocmulgee Mounds junior ranger program is a way to learn, explore, and protect valuable resources. nps.gov/index.htm



ARTSPACE MACON

Skip pretentious and go straight to artsy with this neighborhood studio for all artists. Choose from classes and workshops including wreath-making, painting, and journaling, or book an artistic project in the DIY studio. artspacemacon.com



MACON GIGGLES AND WIGGLES

Don't pull your hair out on rainy days. Take those energized kids to this indoor playground founded by a Montessori teacher. The kids will do more than have a good time—they'll learn, engage, and boost their creativity. macongiggleswiggles.com



THE 567 CENTER

Looking for a hub to meet other artists? The 567 Center focuses on elevating Macon's creative core with regular exhibitions, classes, volunteer opportunities, and an annual "All Hands" art festival. Visit, share ideas, and make Macon more vibrant. the567center.org



THE WORLD'S LARGEST INDOOR PICKLEBALL FACILITY

Come visit and enjoy an amazing pickleball experience at Rhythm & Rally Sports & Events. Our state-of-the-art 32-court indoor facility is located in the heart of **Macon, Georgia**. Equipped with an on-site pro shop, we cater to everyone—from beginners in need of paddle rentals to seasoned players looking to explore the latest equipment. From classes, clinics, events, organized play, and nationally recognized tournaments, we offer something for all skill levels.



ALL WELCOME

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FOR EVERYONE

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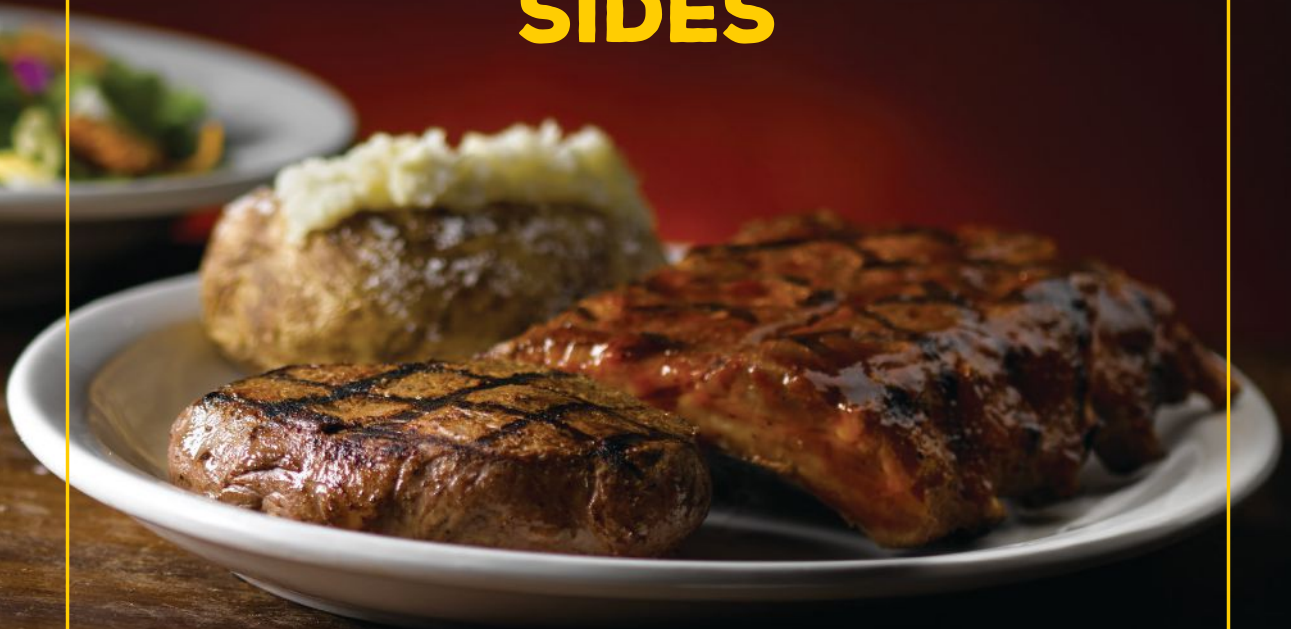


Hand-Cut
STEAKS

Fall-off-the-Bone
STEAKS

Fresh-Baked
BREAD

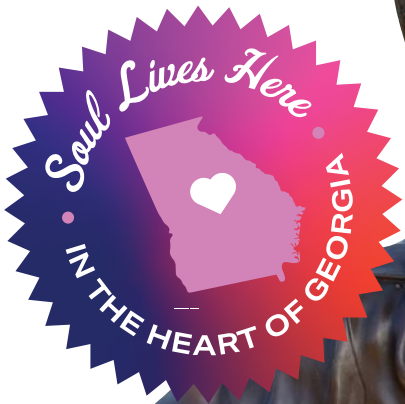
Made-from-Scratch
SIDES



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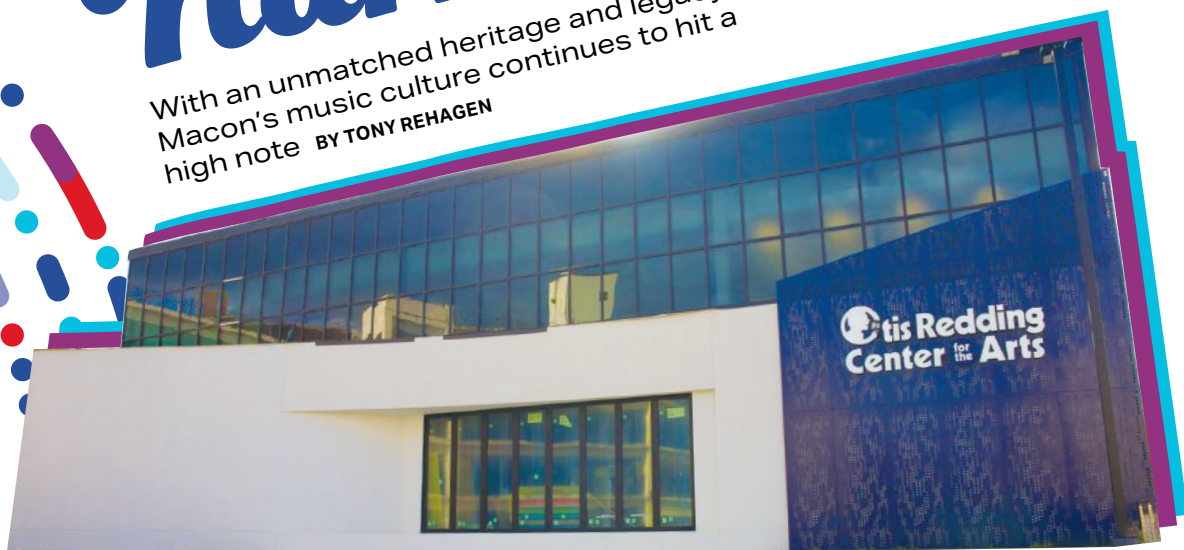
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RICHARD ELLIS / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Perfect Harmony

With an unmatched heritage and legacy, Macon's music culture continues to hit a high note **BY TONY REHAGEN**



SPOTLIGHT OTIS REDDING CENTER FOR THE ARTS

The legendary singer Otis Redding always understood the value of education—especially music education—to enrich one's life and community. Even before he died tragically at age 26, Redding was using his fame and fortune to fund scholarships for young students. And more than half a century since his passing, the foundation was started by Zelma Redding, his widow, using his name to continue that work through the Otis Redding Center for the Arts in his hometown of Macon.

"We want to give kids a state-of-the-art facility, and more importantly, a safe space, to explore music and the arts," says Justin Andrews, the center's development director and Redding's grandson. "Every kid doesn't sing or play an instrument—but everyone has a talent for artistic expression. We want to give them an outlet."

Opening this year, The Otis Redding Center for the Arts will be a multipurpose facility with lab space for private lessons, rehearsals, workshops, and studying theory in music, dance, and performing arts. There are also world-class studios where budding young artists can not only record their works, but they can also learn production and engineering on cutting-edge software and equipment.

The Center will be an extension and new home of

the programming the Otis Redding Foundation has been leading since 2007. For instance, Camp Dream is a week-long event that introduces young children, ages 5 to 11, to music, visual arts, and dance as forms of self-expression. Meanwhile, Otis Music Camp is a two-week retreat for older students ages 12 to 18, designed to empower them as musicians. This includes working with them on songwriting and exposing them to the music business, teaching them to navigate an ever-changing industry as well as imparting invaluable skills that will serve them in

any field. "We want them to take it deeper," says Andrews. "Our kids understand writing music, production, mixing, and mastering, but they also learn about licensing and copyright and financial literacy."

The Center won't just be for kids. There will also be interactive exhibits and kiosks where visitors

can learn about Georgia music history and, of course, Otis Redding history. A 250-seat outdoor amphitheater in front of the building will be open to the public and provide an epicenter of music for downtown Macon. But even these things are partially meant to draw artists to the area so they might instill their wisdom, experience, and inspiration to the children. "We want to reach as many children as we possibly can," says Andrews. "We want to enrich their lives on a daily basis."

**"WE WANT TO
GIVE KIDS A SAFE SPACE
TO EXPLORE *music*
AND THE *arts*."**



ALLMAN BROTHERS PILGRIMAGE

There are few acts in rock history who were as down-to-earth as the Allman Brothers Band—so grounded that fans can essentially retrace their history in Macon. Start at the **Big House museum**, a Tudor-style home where bassist Berry Oakley, his family, and Duane and Gregg Allman lived when the band first came to Georgia in 1970. Now a museum, the home features guitars, clothing, posters, trophies, other band memorabilia, and a recreation of Duane's bedroom.

Then head down to **H&H Restaurant**, the band's frequent source for soul food (try the fried chicken and collards). Visit the final resting places of Duane, Gregg, and Oakley in **Rose Hill Cemetery**, where hardcore Allman enthusiasts seek out the statue of 12-year-old Martha Ellis, which inspired their song "Little Martha," and the grave of Elizabeth Reed Napier, inspiration for their classic song, "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed."

CAPRICORN RECORDS

Known as the birthplace of Southern Rock, the significance of Capricorn stretches back to Soul, when none other than Otis Redding was a partial owner of the building. His partners Phil Walden and Jerry Wexler eventually built the studio, which captured and fostered the seminal sounds of the Allman Brothers Band and a wide array of artists from Percy Sledge to the Charlie Daniels Band. Today, the museum features a self-guided tour of letters, photos, interviews, and artwork, and more impressively, a digital record bin with sample tracks from Capricorn's vast discography.

TRAILS/TOURS

Macon is an easy town to get around on your own. And if you are into the self-guided tour, you can download the free **Tour Macon app** from Google Play or Apple to follow at your own pace. But if you'd still prefer a guide, there are also plenty of great tours you can book. For instance, **Rock Candy Tours powered by Visit Macon** offers customized experiences based on your interest, including music. Their **Free Birds & Night Owls Walking Tour** features stops at all the city's music heritage sites, and the **Rock & Soul Riding Tour** is a broader tour on wheels. You can also see performances by the hottest acts currently touring,





Piedmont Grand Opera House

like The Black Crowes, Jason Aldean, and Koe Wetzel, by grabbing tickets at **Atrium Health Amphitheater**, the area's newest outdoor music venue.



MERCER SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The **Robert McDuffie Center for Strings** at Mercer's Townsend School of Music is renowned for producing world-class musicians. Four times a year, these students join forces with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and celebrity guests to perform at Macon's **Piedmont Grand Opera House**. Come hear these prodigies pluck and bow through Brahms, Beethoven, Coplan, and Haydn—as well as some contemporary surprises (including hip-hop). These quarterly concerts sell out fast; the venue also hosts a season of nationally touring Broadway shows.

The soul of Macon

MACON MUSIC REVUE

As wonderful as the library of recorded Macon music is, there's nothing like hearing it live. Unfortunately, many of our greatest artists are no longer with us or performing. But the next best thing is the **Macon Music Review**, a group of local musicians that breathes life into the city's ultimate playlist. Every Wednesday night at **Grant's Lounge**, this Preservation Hall–style collective (including two graduates of the Otis Redding Center for Arts) plays the hits and deep cuts from Macon mainstays like Little Richard, Otis Redding, and the Allman Brothers Band, along with covers from other bands with connections to the city, like R.E.M.

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MUSIC HERITAGE
TO CREATE MACON'S
MUSIC FUTURE

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FRIDAY – SATURDAY: 10 A.M. – 6 P.M.
SUNDAY: 10 A.M. – 3 P.M.

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FRIDAY – SUNDAY: 10 A.M.

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GET OUTSIDE



In the Wild

A short trip from downtown, the city's natural attractions are packed with serene adventures and ancient wonders

BY JOSH GREEN



Ocmulgee Indigenous Celebration

SPOTLIGHT OCMULGEE MOUNDS

A visit to Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park, situated within easy biking distance of downtown Macon, is a revelatory, educational, and culturally enriching experience in an ancient setting. But in terms of tourism and international recognition, all indications are the park is just getting started.

Once home to the largest archeological dig America's ever seen, the prehistoric American Indian site with deep ties to today's Muscogee (Creek) Nation has counted 17,000 years* of continuous human habitation. Handmade earthworks tower up to nine stories, with a wider base than the Great Pyramids of Giza. A vast collection of more than 2,000 artifacts and other objects dating back from 12,000 BCE are at the visitor center's museum. And there are about eight miles of hiking and biking trails.

Now, after a century of trying, Georgia's first national park has never been closer to fruition. A Congressional bill with bipartisan, bicameral support is set to establish the historically protected, 2,800-acre Ocmulgee Mounds memorial site and surrounding areas as the 64th National Park and Preserve in the U.S. This designation will elevate the Macon attraction among the likes of Yellowstone, Yosemite, Grand Canyon, Joshua Tree, and Great Smoky Mountains national parks.

According to Tracie Revis, director of advocacy for the Ocmulgee National Park and Preserve Initiative (ONPPI), a conservationist group that has spearheaded the designation effort, this status is an opportunity for the country to acknowledge a tumultuous history and begin to heal a large-standing inequality for all the peoples represented in the history of the land. Annual attendance is expected to

"There's a lot here that goes into the history and founding of this country."



swell from an average of 250,000 visitors to roughly 1.4 million, with an additional \$33 million in annual revenue for the Macon area—potentially an economic game-changer.

"People travel from all over the world to see ancient civilizations," says Revis, a Muscogee (Creek) Nation citizen. "That's what we had here. We had the infrastructure of the roads, the commerce, and we traded with settlers for hundreds of years before removal. There's a lot here that goes into the history and founding of this country."

To help accommodate crowds, the national park would increase to more than four times its current

* While this figure is contested, it's what Ocmulgee National Park and Preserve Initiative uses.



Amerson River Park

size by incorporating Bond Swamp National Wildlife Refuge into its planned 35,000-acre boundaries. The swamp is eight miles away, so ONPPI and its partners have been acquiring acreage in between to form a contiguous, protected park that would be woven with hiking and biking trails and other attractions. “Bond Swamp can feel as thick and wet and diverse as a Central American jungle,” says Seth Clark, ONPPI’s executive director and Macon’s mayor pro-tem. “It’s just very deep down there. It’s awesome.”



AMERSON RIVER PARK

Craving an outdoor experience that’s a little more manicured? Amerson River Park, a multifaceted and beautiful city park situated three miles northwest of downtown, is about the size of Atlanta’s marquee greenspace, Piedmont Park, but with three access points to the Ocmulgee River for adventurous types. There’s plenty of fun to be had on land, too.

Beyond the park’s grand stone entrance, visitors will find lush meadows, an expansive playground, and more than four miles of paved and mulched trails through woods and around park loops, some of them with lovely river views. Five distinctive pavilions are available to rent (from \$100 for a few hours, up to \$1,000 for full-day access to larger spaces) along with picnic areas under the trees, while The Overlook perched above the Ocmulgee is considered the park’s scenic centerpiece. Collectively, it’s a grade A (and award-winning) destination for reconnecting with nature—and getting those steps in.



OCMULGEE RIVER

The Ocmulgee’s waters are the recreational lifeblood of Macon. The river’s relaxed pace is especially family-friendly and kind to beginners, whether they choose canoes, kayaks, or their own flotation devices. Options with outfitter Ocmulgee River Expeditions, a

***“The Ocmulgee’s
waters are the
recreational
lifeblood of Macon.”***



popular choice, range from \$25 (a bus drop-off with no gear provided) to multiday excursions. There's even a two-hour nighttime adventure called the Full Moon Float, during which boats are bedecked with glow sticks.

"We don't have the shoals or whitewater that downtown Columbus does," notes Seth Clark, "but we have a nice, calmer lazy river paddle. Paddling the river is huge." Several landings for getting on and off the river are dotted throughout the city, with wildlife ranging from wild hogs and deer to osprey and even bald eagles frequently spotted. Yes, there are signs warning of alligators, but according to the aforementioned outfitters, not a single one has been spotted on their trips between Lake Jackson's dam and Macon's Spring Street Bridge.



NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES: BOND SWAMP & PIEDMONT

Both Bond Swamp and Piedmont are part of nearly 560 National Wildlife Refuges across the country, but they offer wildly different attractions and terrain on opposite sides of Macon.

Established in 1989 to protect Ocmulgee River floodplain wetlands and adjacent upland habitats, the Bond Swamp National Wildlife Refuge is a year-round fishing and hunting paradise with three miles of public hiking trails. Expect about 8,600 acres of pure wilderness around this blackwater swamp, with old-growth tupelo and cypress trees, Spanish moss, alligators, and incredible biodiversity that includes

endangered and threatened species.

Twenty-five minutes north of downtown on the same river, Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge is much larger (35,000 acres) and part of the hillier, more granite-heavy Middle Georgia ecosystem with loblolly pines and hardwoods. Highlights include 50 miles of gravel roads through a variety of habitats that are open to public vehicles most of the year, and seven miles of hiking trails for every skill level. Find maps for navigating it all at the refuge's visitors' center.



LAKE TOBESOFKEE

Situated just beyond Macon's city limits, due west of downtown, picturesque Lake Tobesofkee provides outdoor recreation every month of the year, whether that means sailing, camping, fishing, swimming, waterskiing, or just hanging out at one of three parks with white-sand beaches. Spread across almost 1,800 acres, with 35 miles of shoreline and three campsites (at Claystone, Arrowhead, and Sandy Beach parks), the lake is a perennial hit with the bass fishing community in particular.

One unique attraction is in the pipeline for an area called the Duck Ponds at Lake Tobesofkee's northernmost coves and tributary; that's where Macon officials will soon build a glamping retreat for visitors on city-owned land. "It's all off the grid, with treehouses, and there won't be sewer lines or anything," says Clark. "We're developing that, with a bunch of cool mazes. It's really integrated into the landscape, and it's just very pretty."

Lake Tobesofkee





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Overlook

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484 1ST STREET | MACON
THEOVERLOOKONFIRST.COM

A photograph of the interior of Fall Line Station, a restaurant and bar. The space features a high ceiling with exposed wooden beams and string lights. The floor is light-colored wood. Several round tables are set with white tablecloths, red napkins, and menus. The background shows a brick wall and a staircase.

FALL LINE

STATION

567 PLUM STREET | MACON
FALLLINESTATION.COM

A photograph of the interior of Fall Line Brewing Co. The space is dark with large, polished metal brewing tanks in the background. Three people are seated at a wooden table, smiling and holding glasses of beer. A man in the center is wearing a black t-shirt with the Fall Line Brewing Co. logo. A woman on the left is wearing a white top, and a man on the right is wearing a white shirt. There is food on the table, including a sandwich and fries.

FALL LINE

BREWING CO.

567 PLUM STREET | MACON
FALLLINEBREWINGCO.COM





Stunning Structures

Recognized for its remarkable buildings,
Macon boasts more sites on the National
Register of Historic Places than any city
in Georgia BY BETSY RILEY

SPOTLIGHT SOUL SIGHTS TOUR

Hop aboard Macon's "Soul Sights" van tour to get a fast overview of one of the South's best preserved historic cities, founded in 1823. Departing from the Visitor's Center, you'll first pass **Terminal Station**, the c. 1916 railroad hub designed by Alfred T. Fellheimer, an architect who also helped design New York's Grand Central Station. Next up is the century-old **Douglass Theater**, an African American-founded venue which hosted jazz and blues stars like Otis Redding, Bessie Smith, James Brown, Ma Rainey, and Little Richard. However, the third stop is by far the tour's oldest architectural wonder—the **Ocmulgee Mounds**. Native Americans built these earthen structures as ceremonial, meeting, and burial places beginning around 900 CE. The landmark represents more than 12,000 years of human habitation and is set to be designated Georgia's first National Park.

The 60-minute tour then winds back downtown, where you'll view a city thoughtfully designed to be green and walkable from the very beginning. Its strategic location on the Ocmulgee River and then as a railroad hub made Macon a commercial center in the 19th century. Wealthy manufacturing, agricultural, and transportation families settled here and built grand homes, churches, and public buildings. Local flooding kept General Sherman's troops at a distance during his fiery march, leaving the town relatively intact. And, fortunately, visionary 20th-century Maconites recognized their architectural heritage

and organized to preserve it.

The tour route passes some of Macon's 70 or so historic homes, such as the iconic **McCaw-Massee House**, a turn-of-the-century Beaux-Arts beauty often called the "Crisco House" because its original owner, manufacturer Wallace E. McCaw, invented the popular shortening. He supposedly chose the exterior's pale-yellow brick because it was the color of cottonseed oil, his product's original key ingredient. A later owner, William Jordan Massee Sr., is said to have inspired the iconic character "Big Daddy" in the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, written by family friend and frequent visitor Tennessee Williams.

Macon's sophisticated citizenry built equally impressive public buildings. **Mercer University's** campus is downtown, with its many historic buildings next to **Tattnall Square Park**, one of the oldest urban parks in the nation. The city's **Grand Opera House** started life as the Academy of Music in the 1800s. Looking more like a church than a theater, the first building even had a stained-glass rose window. It was replaced in 1904 with a state-of-the-art theater, which originally had the largest stage in the South (a production of *Ben Hur* included chariot races with live horses!). The sprawling **Macon City Auditorium**, built in 1925, was also designed to impress, wrapped in a grand Doric-style colonnade like a Greek temple. It's hard to know which came first in Macon—the spectacular stages or the amazing performers.



St. Joseph Catholic Church

Houses of Worship

The structures belonging to Macon's faith community are varied and historic

CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

While the church is proudly celebrating its bicentennial this year, the current Gothic structure was built in 1852. Noted poet Sidney Lanier was married in the church.



MULBERRY STREET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

A staple on its corner of Macon since 1826, the church was devastated by fire in 1965. Miraculously, the stained glass windows survived and one of the first female architects in Georgia, Ellamae Ellis League, designed the renovated interior sanctuary.



ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH

This Romanesque, Neo-Gothic church, dedicated in 1903, has twin cross-topped spires that rise majestically above Macon's skyline.



WASHINGTON AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Founded in 1838, this is believed to be the oldest African American Presbyterian Church in Georgia. The current brick structure was completed in 1904.



TEMPLE BETH ISRAEL

This congregation traces its roots to 1859. The current temple, dedicated in 1902, has grand columns, stained-glass windows, and a stained-glass dome.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

This church was founded in 1826, just three years after the city of Macon itself. Its 183-foot spire has soared above downtown since 1858.



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF MACON

Established by African Americans in 1826, the church served both Black and white members for its first eight years but was then deeded to its founding congregation. The current Gothic-style building was dedicated in 1887.

Performance Halls

Macon's music venues are nearly as historic as its roster of legendary performers. The towering **Piedmont Grand Opera House** was an acoustically and technically innovative theater when it was built in 1904, hosting international stars like Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova and folk humorist Will Rogers. Live music gave way to cinema by the 1930s, and the building barely escaped demolition in the '60s. Fortunately, with visionary support from Mercer University and the city, it has survived and thrived. The c. 1928 Ritz Theatre, once a movie palace, has been preserved and is now home to **Theatre Macon**, a community group founded in 1986. The c. 1916

Capitol Theatre, also formerly a movie house, is now a vibrant modern venue used solely for musical performances. Grandest of all is the c. 1925 **Macon City Auditorium**. Its copper dome is reportedly the largest in the world, and it is surrounded on three sides by a Doric limestone colonnade. The Southeast's oldest continuously running community theater with the same name is **Macon Little Theatre**, which launched in 1934. And, finally, the c.1921 **Douglass Theatre**—once featured in the Green Book, a historic guidebook for African American tourists—still hosts a variety of events, from films to children's performances.



Macon City Auditorium



Hay House

Historic Homes

Macon is home to more than 6,000 historic buildings, including more than 70 spectacular homes. View private residences such as the **McCaw-Massee**, an elaborate Beaux-Arts home built in 1901 for Wallace E. McCaw, the manufacturer who invented Crisco. Or admire the **Carmichael House**, a Greek Revival home built in the late 1840s that is laid out in the shape of a cross. A few of the grandest houses are now museums. The **Cannonball House**, another Greek Revival built in 1853, was damaged by a Union cannonball during the Civil War. But perhaps the most iconic is the **Hay House**, completed in 1859. This Italian Renaissance Revival mansion features elegant interiors, grand ballrooms, and period furnishings with cutting-edge 19th-century conveniences like hot and cold running water, central heat, gas lighting, and a speaker-tube system. Both the Carmichael House and the Hay House are National Landmarks.

Macon's varied landmarks include more than 6,000 historic buildings and 70 remarkably preserved homes.

Higher Education

Macon is home to 15 districts on the National Register of Historic Places. Academic buildings belonging to both Mercer University and Wesleyan College are among the highlights.

The **R. Kirby Godsey Administration Building**, a grand Victorian Gothic building designed by Chicago architect Gurdon P. Randall and completed in 1874, was the first structure on Mercer's Macon campus.

Willingham Hall, built in 1890, was the second building on Mercer University's campus. The Gothic Revival facility served as the chapel and still hosts convocation.

Woodruff House, which has 18 columns and was designed to look like a Greek temple, was built in 1836. (During the Civil War, it briefly served as headquarters for the U.S. Army. The homeowners stored their private belongings in a closet, which the troops left untouched.) It is now owned by Mercer and used for special events.

The **Bell House** is a Victorian-style home built by Nathan Beall in 1855. Eighteen Corinthian-style columns were added in 1900. It is now home to the renowned Robert McDuffie Center for Strings, part of Mercer's Townsend School of Music.

Mercer Law School is located on Coleman Hill overlooking downtown, in a grand brick structure built in the 1950s and modeled after Independence Hall in Philadelphia, where the Declaration of Independence was signed.

Chartered as the Georgia Female College in 1836, **Wesleyan College** was the world's first college to grant degrees to women. In 1928 it moved to its present campus, where the Wesleyan College Historic District now includes approximately 30 buildings, most of them of the Georgian Revival style.

HAY HOUSE

THE PALACE OF THE SOUTH



A splendid mansion which can truly be called "The Palace of the South." Completed in 1859, the Johnston-Felton-Hay House, a National Historic Landmark is considered one of the of the most outstanding examples of Italian Renaissance Revival architecture in the country. Plan your visit to explore the history, architecture, and wonder of Hay House.

Hay House is open Wednesday thru Sunday from 10:00-3:00.

*Guided Tours • Behind-the-Scenes Tours • Special Events • Museum Store
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Longleaf Distillery

KEVIN GARRETT



Palate Pleaser

From meat-and-threes to gourmet restaurants, and craft beer to chic cocktails, Macon's dining scene does not disappoint **BY CARLY COOPER**

SPOTLIGHT LONGLEAF DISTILLERY

With two Double Gold medals at the San Francisco World Spirits Competition this year, Longleaf is calling attention to Macon's cocktail culture. Launched in 2023, this quirky distillery has released more than 20 spirits and liqueurs—everything from the basics (vodka, gin, whiskey, bourbon) to Thistle, an herbal liqueur inspired by a creation in Alba, Italy. All are sold by the bottle, and monthly mixology classes are offered to teach patrons how to best utilize Longleaf products.

The distillery offers 45-minute complimentary tours on Saturday and Sunday afternoons, during which attendees go inside the production area to learn how the spirits are made. Afterward, all are invited for \$15 tastings—with an etched take-home glass included. The tastings feature five rotating, quarter-ounce pours. Prefer cocktails? The bar is open Wednesday through Sunday featuring drinks like Cucumber Collins, made with 57 percent ABV Navy gin, and False Fall, a mix of Heirloom whiskey,

Liqueur of Life, Crème de Cacao, angostura, and orange bitters. A selection of zero-proof beverages is available as well.

The bar menu includes seasonal small plates like smoked trout dip, hummus and focaccia, and a small charcuterie platter. Patrons can relax on soft seating, banquettes, or at the bar, and let the waitstaff do the rest. An 800-square-foot patio offers fresh air when weather allows.

Co-owner Will Robinson describes the space as "eccentric" and "granny chic." Expect pops of green and yellow with "garage sale art" adorning the walls. "I wanted something that didn't feel like an industrial space or warehouse," he explains.

Longleaf is the first stop on Macon's Kegs & Stills Trail, attracting many to its top-sellers like High Tea flavored vodka, which was developed for Longleaf's now-best-selling cocktail, the John Daly. As a bonus, a longleaf pine tree is planted with the sale of every bottle. longleafdistillingco.com

Sip & Savor

Don't miss Macon's top-shelf watering holes and speakeasies

QUILL AT THE WOODWARD

Located at the Woodward Hotel, Quill takes inspiration from history and literature for its creatively named craft cocktails and mocktails. Guests can sip indoors or on the rooftop patio among eye-catching painted murals of famous authors.

thewoodwardhotel.com/quill



THE ROSE ROOM

Located next to the Capitol Theatre, the Rose Room offers unique creations like the Always Forever—a mix of cachaca, watermelon balsamic shrub, and Cocchi di Torino—in addition to classic cocktails.

roseroommacon.com



MONKEY'S PAW TROPICAL TAPAS

This reservation-only tiki bar (upstairs serves tapas) is known for its over-the-top cocktails, often topped with fruit. Try the Scorpion Bowl, a literal bowl of gin, Puerto Rican rum, brandy, lime, orange juice, and orgeat—it's big enough for three. monkeyspawtikibar.com



BLACK CAT LIQUOR AND LIBATIONS

Head back in time to this underground speakeasy, adorned with crystal chandeliers and antique Victorian decor. This 31-seat cocktail parlor is the place for intimate conversation, sensual jazz, and stiff, hand-crafted drinks. kinjokitchen.com/black-cat-2



THE MAN UPSTAIRS

Hidden above Downtown Grill, this speakeasy boasts cocktails with forgotten liquors from the late 1800s. From bitters to mixers, nearly everything is made in house. Ask for a Miracle Berry and see how your taste buds play tricks on you. themanupstairsbar.com



JBA

Rough day? Let off some steam at JBA, where live jazz, karaoke, darts tournaments, and DJs take a night out to the next level. Sip craft cocktails or one of the rotating craft beer selections. Can't get off work? JBA frequently streams its shows. jbamacon.com

SOCIETY GARDEN

Grab the dog, bring the family; this picturesque beer garden, wine bar, and live music venue features ping-pong, cornhole, and even giant troll statues. Choose from more than 100 craft beers, cocktail slushies, and one of the largest bourbon lists in town. thesocietygarden.com

Special-Occasion Stalwart

NATALIA'S

In 1984, Natalia del Brasso Orsini brought the Old-World fare she grew up with in Abruzzo, Italy, to Macon, creating a white-tablecloth restaurant that would go on to host countless birthdays, anniversaries, and engagements. Originally located on Riverside Drive, Natalia's moved to North Macon Street in 2010, a space with a more casual patio and two private dining rooms. Eight years later, Wes and Betsy Griffith of the Moonhanger Group (known for Dovetail, the Rookery, Woodward Hotel, and more) took over, preserving long-time favorites like veal scallopini and Dover sole fileted tableside, and adding butternut squash ravioli and seared scallops with avocado mousse. natalias.net

Meat & Threes

BEAR'S DEN

A downtown staple for more than three decades, this favorite serves Southern home cookin' like no other. The lunch-only spot offers so many choices, it's best to come with a group to sample them all. The quintessential order here is meat-and-three with daily-changing options like fried chicken, meatloaf, smothered pork chops, and beef liver. Sides include stick-to-your ribs items including mac and cheese, fried okra, creamed corn, and squash casserole. thebearsdenmacon.com

Plus

For other great meat-and-threes, don't miss **Dawson's Kitchen** (stop by the market and bakery, too), **S&S Cafeterias** (try the banana pudding), and **H&H Soul Food** (also known for amazing breakfast).



Chef Q&A Jayson Reynolds

Chef Jayson Reynolds, at the helm of Loom inside Hotel Forty Five, aims for a unique, yet approachable take on Southern fare.



Loom

How has Loom changed since you took over?

Hopefully for the better! I've been looking at different vendors and ingredient quality. A lot of restaurants copy each other—I want to break the mold and do something different. For example, we're doing duck wings instead of chicken wings.



What's your inspiration for the food and drinks?

I'm trying to be part of the community spirit. I love the Southern culture. I'm looking at bringing back lost traditions like heirloom rice. The idea is to be simple, but refined and elevated.



Which menu items are you most proud of?

We've elevated breakfast with items like fried oysters and grits, hanger steak and eggs, salmon with a poached egg on top, and duck fat potatoes.



What special events does Loom offer?

Once a week, we have a whiskey and specialty burger pairing. We also have Ladies Night with drink specials and charcuterie every other Saturday.

The Bohemian Den

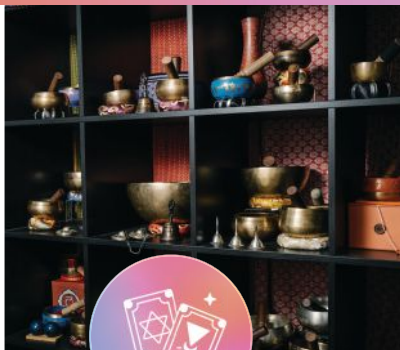
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Taste of the Town

Don't miss these 10 must-try dishes that help define Macon's culinary landscape

BY SARAH BISACCA



Miramar Raw Bar and Tapas

Oysters Rockefeller MIRAMAR RAW BAR AND TAPAS

Make the evening at this sleek restaurant even more memorable with a plate of Oysters Rockefeller, charbroiled and topped with lemon garlic butter and bubbly Parmesan cheese. maconmiramar.com



Solid Gold Soul Rolls ROOKERY

Rookery has served comfort food classics with a twist since 1976. Its signature Southern-fried eggrolls—packed with fried chicken, pimento cheese, and collard greens and served with peach chili sauce—are a stand-out. rookerymacon.com



Jam Pups KUDZU SEAFOOD COMPANY

The must-try bite at this downtown spot is the Jam Pup jambalaya hushpuppy—a blend of Bayou goodness packed with Gulf shrimp and sausage, deep-fried, and drizzled with tangy remoulade sauce. kudzuseafood.com



Tonkotsu Ramen Bowl KINJO KITCHEN & COCKTAILS

Among the favorites at this Asian-Southern fusion spot is the signature Tonkotsu ramen, a comforting soup packed with pork belly, noodles, fresh and

pickled vegetables, and topped with a soy-marinated egg. kinjokitchen.com



Out-of-Towner MACON BAGELS

Freshly baked, hand-rolled bagels every morning also means delicious bagel sandwiches. Among the most popular? The NYC-inspired Out-of-Towner, packed with cream cheese, lox, capers, pickled red onion, and fresh cucumber. maconbagels.com



Daily Rind FALL LINE BREWING COMPANY

The signature beer tastes like summer in a glass, thanks to an infusion of tangerine purée and orange. The refreshing wheat ale is best enjoyed in the brewery's breezy courtyard. falllinebrewingco.com



Breadsticks INGLESIDE VILLAGE PIZZA

These mouthwatering breadsticks are made from scratch. Each order comes smothered in garlic butter and Parmesan cheese, and you can get them made "sloppy" (i.e. extra toppings) for a small fee. inglesidevillagepizza.com



Hot Dog All The Way NU-WAY WIENERS

This 100-plus-year-old local chain is beloved for its wieners, but the top dog on the menu is the original chili-smothered link. The simple Hot Dog All The Way recipe has never changed—and that's just the way locals like it. nu-wayweiners.com



Soul Bowl GROW

This lunch-only eatery offers seasonal, homegrown fare. One of the standbys is the Soul Bowl, a hearty Southern combo of smoked sausage, collards, black-eyed peas, and pico de gallo served over rice with a side of cornbread. growfreshlocalfood.com



Smoked Wings PIEDMONT BREWERY AND KITCHEN

Tender, juicy, and deliciously flavored with your choice of sauce (Yum Yum and lemon pepper are top picks), these morsels are a hometown favorite for a reason. piedmontbrewery.com



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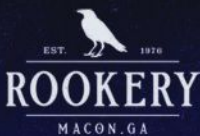
H&H

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DOVETAIL

543 Cherry St, Macon, GA (Above Rookery)



Natalia's



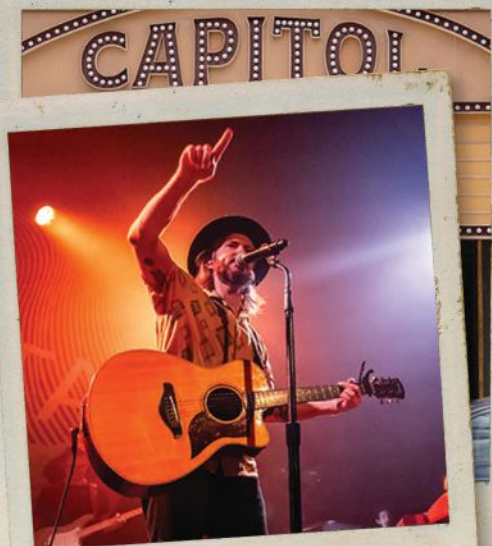
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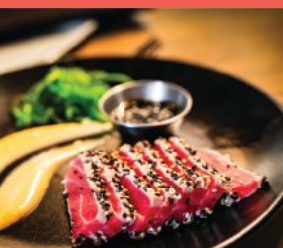
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Sport Center

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SPOTLIGHT COURT DATE: PICKLEBALL & TENNIS

If you haven't heard about pickleball, you might be living under a soundproof rock. Macon has not only embraced the craze—it's taken the sport to a whole new level, literally. **Rhythm and Rally Sports and Events** is the world's largest indoor pickleball complex, spanning more than 150,000 square feet in what used to be a Belk department store at the revamped Macon Mall. This state-of-the-art facility offers 32 climate-controlled courts spread across two levels.

Whether you're a pickleball prodigy or still figuring out which end of the paddle to hold, Rhythm and Rally serves up everything from day-use lockers and showers to a pro shop where you can gear up and show off your pickleball swag. They even offer expert coaching. Since it opened in 2023, the complex has drawn players from around the nation for tournaments. With its passionate community and regular tournaments, it's easy to see why this facility is a beacon for pickleball enthusiasts across the Southeast.

Macon's pickleball scene isn't confined to the indoors, though. If you prefer fresh air with your volley, **Tattnall Square Park** offers a 28-court outdoor pickleball playground. You'll spot seasoned pros with laser-precise shots rubbing shoulders with newcomers still mastering the basics. And thanks to the park's ample court space, finding a game is rarely a challenge. You can easily join a casual game or test your skills against some local talent.

Beyond pickleball, Macon's tennis scene is thriving as well, thanks to two premier facilities: the **John Drew Smith Tennis Center** and the **Randy Stephens Tennis Center**. The John Drew Smith center features 24 lighted hard courts and is recognized as one of the top 25 public municipal facilities in the country by *Tennis* magazine and the USTA. It caters to everyone from beginners to pros with lessons, leagues, and tournaments. The Randy Stephens center offers another high-quality venue for both recreational play and competitive events. Whether you prefer a paddle or a racquet, Macon has a court for you.



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MACON ROCKS CLIMBING GYM

It isn't just a clever name—Macon Rocks is a 6,000-square-foot climbing haven catering to all skill levels and styles, from beginners to seasoned cliff-hangers, with auto-belay, top-rope, lead climbing, and bouldering options. Their routes range from an easy 5.6 to a challenging 5.13, with bouldering problems from V0 to V10. Macon Rocks is also the only climbing gym in Georgia featuring a large number of auto-belay routes, perfect for both novices and experienced climbers who want to ascend without a partner. If you're looking to level up your skills or introduce the kids to the joys of defying gravity, they offer classes and youth programs. There's even a fitness area for anyone who prefers their workouts a little closer to the ground.



SPECTATOR SPORTS

Macon's sports scene offers a combination of baseball, hockey, and college football for fans to cheer on local teams year-round. The **Macon Bacon** brings summer fun to the ballpark from late May through early August with their baseball games at historic **Luther Williams Field**. For ice hockey fans, the

Macon Mayhem heat things up from October to April at the **Macon Coliseum**. Each home game of this Southern Professional Hockey League team features a theme like Salute to Service, Hockey Fights Cancer, Star Wars, or Superhero Nights. College football enthusiasts can cheer on the **Mercer Bears** from August to November at **Five Star Stadium**, where Mercer University's team competes in the NCAA Division I Southern Conference. Each team's games offer a lively atmosphere, making Macon a fantastic spot to root for the home team.



GEORGIA SPORTS HALL OF FAME

As America's largest state sports museum, the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame offers an interactive journey through the state's athletic legacy, bringing history to life with engaging hands-on exhibits and prized memorabilia. Visitors can explore themed galleries showcasing Georgia's sporting greats, from gridiron heroes like Bill Stanfill to diamond stars like Hank Aaron. With a 14,000-square-foot exhibit space, a Hall of Fame corridor that honors more than 400 inductees, and 205-seat theater, the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame provides a winning experience for everyone.



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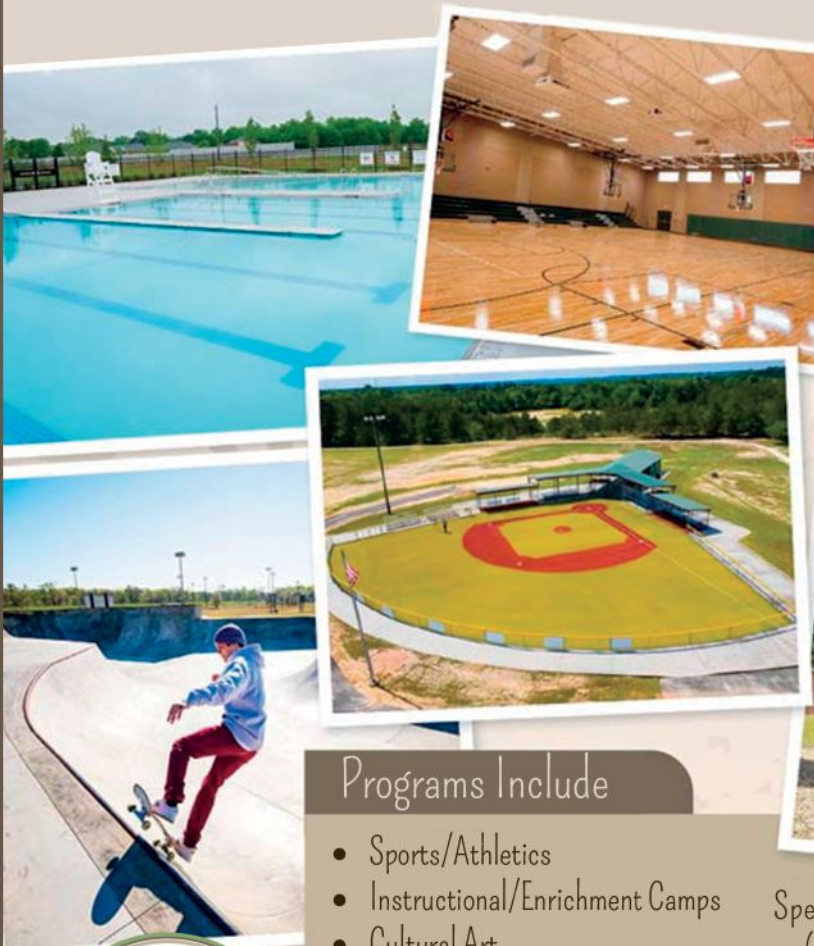
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Freedom Park (Boxing Center)
John Drew Smith Tennis Center
Randy Stephens Tennis Center
Skate Park (Carolyn Crayton Park)
Tattnall Square Pickleball Center

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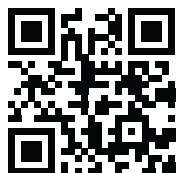
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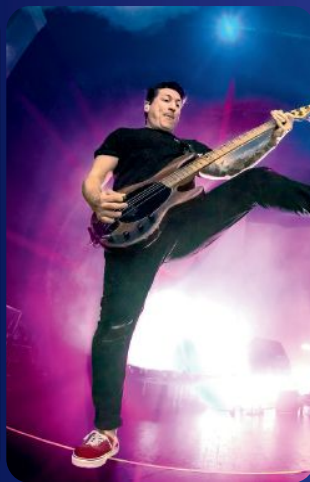
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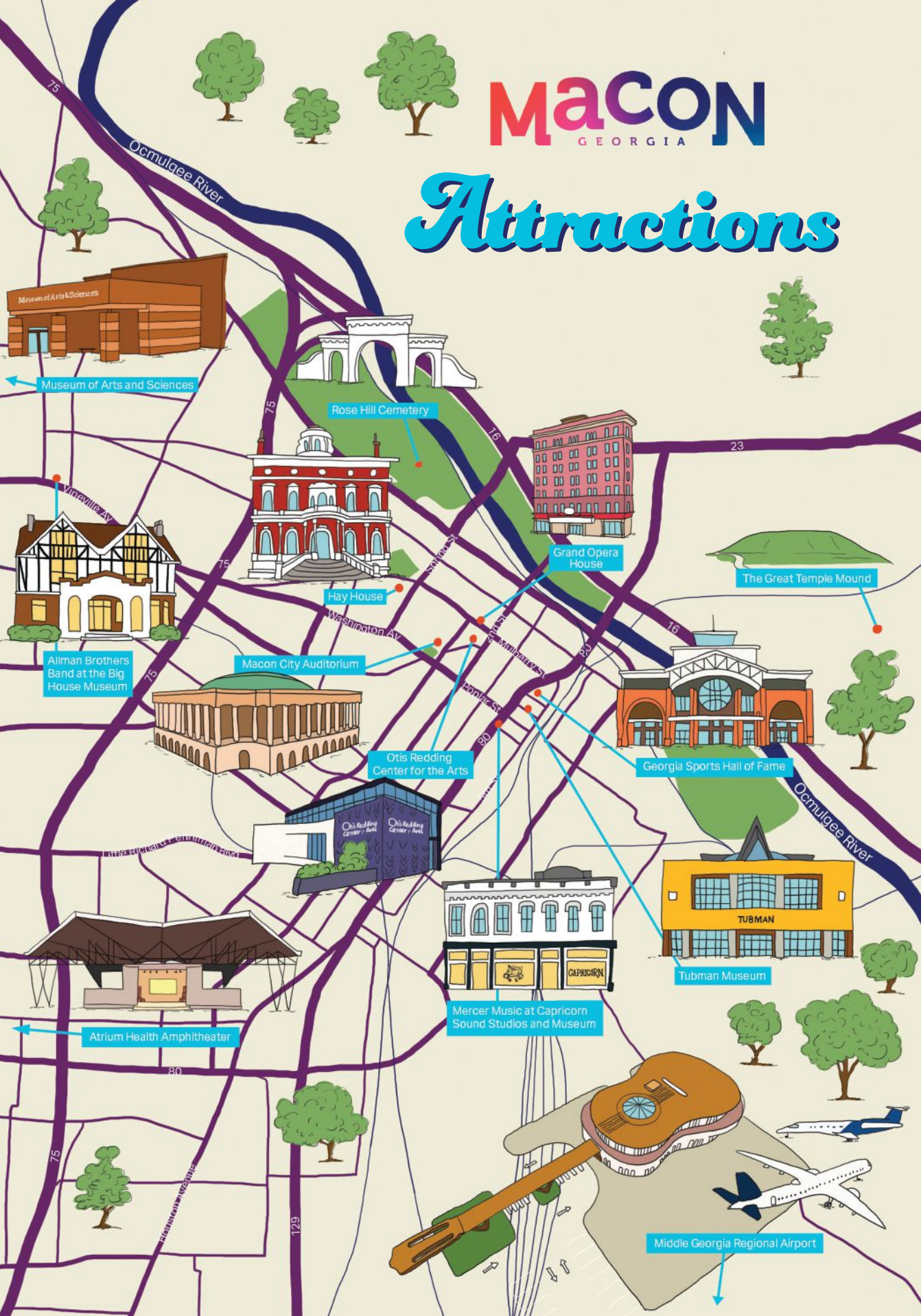


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