

WHAT IS THE BEST NEIGHBORHOOD FOR ...

# NIGHTMARE

40

# RESTAURANTS

26

# TRANSIT SCHOOLS DIVERSITY

24

10

45

# CL CREATIVE LOAFING ULTIMATE NEIGHBORHOOD GUIDE

CLATL.COM/NEIGHBORHOODGUIDE

47

49

42

# WILD CARD CRIMINAL REBELLION

# ARTS & CULTURE

16

# GREENSPACES & AFFORDABILITY

16



INTRO  
-DUCING  
3-towns own  
PRIMAflyers.com  
LIMITED TIME LAUNCH  
5,000 4X6 FLYERS ONLY \$125!  
INFO@PRIMAFLYERS.COM OR CALL 404.477.0411  
\*OFFER GOOD FOR NEXT DAY PRINTING THROUGH APRIL 30, 2011

52

# CL CREATIVE LOAFING ULTIMATE NEIGHBORHOOD GUIDE

Our pretty damn scientific ranking of 26 Atlanta neighborhoods, based on affordability, transit, safety, greenspace, culture, diversity, dining, nightlife, schools, shopping and more!

If you think it's audacious of us to publish a neighborhood guide where we christen one neighborhood as the city's overall best, well ... you're right. What makes a neighborhood great for one person might make it straight-up unlivable for another. We get that.

But what can we say? We *really* like to rank things. And in this case, we think our rankings are highly useful. We didn't quantify a neighborhood's relative worth based on what we as a staff thought about a particular place. Rather, we adopted a scientific method for determining how a neighborhood stacks up on a scale of 1 to 10 when it comes to, say, the quality and diversity of its restaurants; its per-capita crime rate; the proximity of public transit; etc.

We then tallied those rankings to give each neighborhood an ultimate score — and were a bit surprised to find some of our favorite 'hoods landing low on the list, while others we might have overlooked snuck into the top 10. We also were surprised by some of the rankings themselves. Midtown finished second on our list, but ranked low for safety, which likely knocked it out of the top slot. Grant Park and Cabbagetown didn't make the top-10 cut, largely because they have so few retail options. And one OTP 'hood crept into the top 10, partly because of its surprisingly diverse population.

So be it. Whether you agree or not, you can't argue with science.

## **HOW WE CAME UP WITH OUR NEIGHBORHOOD RANKINGS:**

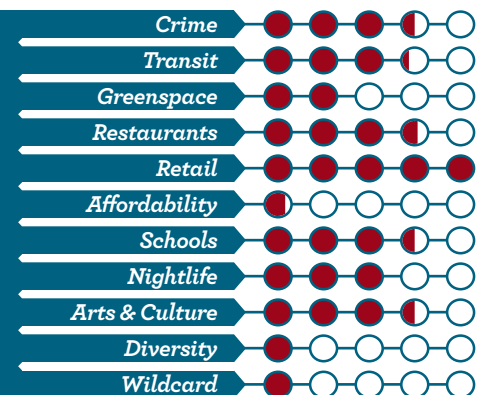
Each neighborhood received a reported and researched score of 1 to 10 in 11 different categories. For more on our methodology, including the breakdown of points awarded per category and per neighborhood, go to [clatl.com/neighborhoodguide](http://clatl.com/neighborhoodguide).

## **FIND YOUR PERFECT (NEIGHBORHOOD) MATCH:**

For the sake of this issue, we gave equal weight to each of the categories — from safety to greenspace to nightlife to schools — to give each neighborhood an ultimate score. But what's the best place to live if you don't care about walkability but care a lot about nightlife? Or if dining is paramount but shopping matters not? Go to [clatl.com/neighborhoodguide](http://clatl.com/neighborhoodguide) and weigh the importance of categories yourself. We'll then deliver your neighborhood soul mate!

# BUCKHEAD

Location » Intown/North, occupies much of the “V” formed by Interstates 75 and 85



## UPSIDES

*Many of the skyscrapers* are sidewalk-friendly, with ground-level restaurants, shops and cafes.

*If you’ve got the money*, you can get just about anything here, from Range Rovers to red-carpet fashions to \$500 steak-and-lobster dinners.

## DOWNSIDES

*Its very upscaleness* makes Buckhead a playground for gold-diggers and starfuckers.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **46.75**

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **5.58**

Property crimes per 1,000 residents: **41.17**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

**\$468,763**

Buckhead boasts some of the highest home prices in metro Atlanta.

**Average rental is \$1,000**

Thanks to the building boom, Buckhead is overflowing with apartments and condos.

### EDUCATION

**ABCD F**

Buckhead has more children attending private school than any other part of town, but is still replacing its high school because of overcrowding.

### GREENSPACE

To commune with nature and history, spend an afternoon at rustic Tanyard Creek, site of one of the Civil War’s bloodiest battles, and home to part of the Beltline bike trail.

**“I’ve lived here 34 years. It’s clean, beautiful, safe and there are so many things to enjoy. I wish there was a way to equalize it more with other parts of Atlanta.”**

— **ALAN HARRIS**, HOMELESS ADVOCATE



JOEY DAVIS

**Buckhead is no longer the epicenter** of Atlanta’s once buck-wild club scene — and that’s how most residents like it. The ritzy Streets of Buckhead development is still on hold, but the area remains among the Southeast’s top shopping destinations, with two high-end malls and tons of swanky boutiques. And Buckhead has more fancy hotels and restaurants than anywhere in Georgia — if that’s your thing.

### SHOPPING

#### *Fantasyland Records*

Relocated from its old Garden Hills home, this 35-year-old shop stocks thousands of discs, from post-punk to jazz to the city’s largest selection of classical. Posters, stickers and old porn mags, too. 360 Pharr Road. 404-237-3193.

#### *Jeffrey*

High-end women’s shop hawking Gucci, Prada, Manolo Blahnik, Jimmy Choo and Marc Jacobs. Phipps Plaza, 3500 Peachtree Road. 404-420-2997. [www.jeffreyfashioncares.com](http://www.jeffreyfashioncares.com).

#### *Pieces*

What looks like a impeccable housewares boutique is filled with pristine vintage culled from the world’s antique markets. 3234-A Roswell Road. 404-869-2476. [www.piecesinc.com](http://www.piecesinc.com).

### NIGHTLIFE

#### *Gold Room*

And you thought Buckhead excess went down with the Gold Club. 2416 Piedmont Road. 404-693-9693. [www.goldroomatl.com](http://www.goldroomatl.com).

#### *Johnny’s Hideaway*

Much of the cougar-iffic clientele is eligible for AARP. But everyone gets down. 3771 Roswell Road. 404-233-8026. [www.johnnyshideaway.com](http://www.johnnyshideaway.com).

#### *Prohibition*

A speakeasy-themed bar that requires a secret code and Matrix-like phone-booth theatrics to gain entry. 56 E. Andrews Dr. [www.prohibitionatl.com](http://www.prohibitionatl.com).

#### *St. Regis Bar*

St. Regis boasts the most over-the-top of the posh hotel bar scene. 88 W. Paces Ferry Road. 404-563-7900. [www.starwoodhotels.com/stregis](http://www.starwoodhotels.com/stregis).

## HIDDEN GEM

Little about Buckhead is hidden, but the Buckhead Branch library is still a gem. Covered with what looks like slate fish scales, it’s been a pilgrimage site for aspiring architects since ‘89. 269 Buckhead Ave. 404-814-3500. [www.afplweb.com](http://www.afplweb.com).

## WILD CARD

For most, Buckhead’s expense makes it a place to visit and not to live, earning it a mere two points.

### EATS

#### *Aria*

Aria oozes cool. Classic New American from Gerry Klaskala, with one of the best wine programs and sexiest dining rooms in town. 490 E. Paces Ferry Road. 404-233-7673. [www.aria-atl.com](http://www.aria-atl.com).

#### *Cafe Agora*

Owner Al Ozelci is as much reason to visit this Middle Eastern gem as the food itself. Open till 4 a.m. on the weekends! 262 E. Paces Ferry Road. 404-949-0900. [www.cafeagora.com](http://www.cafeagora.com).

#### *Holeman and Finch Public House*

Perhaps our favorite haunt in the city. Breathtaking cocktails. Groundbreaking format. (Is it a bar, restaurant or the coolest hangout ever?) Brains, balls and duck heads. 2277 Peachtree Road. 404-948-1175. [www.holeman-finch.com](http://www.holeman-finch.com).

### CULTURE

#### *Atlanta History Center*

More than 40,000 collectibles spanning the Civil War to Civil Rights. 130 W. Paces Ferry Road. 404-814-4000. [www.atlantahistorycenter.org](http://www.atlantahistorycenter.org).

#### *Jackson Fine Art*

A premiere photography gallery with work by local and New York artists. 3115 E. Shadowlawn Ave. 404-233-3739. [www.jacksonfineart.com](http://www.jacksonfineart.com).

#### *Museum of Contemporary Art of Georgia*

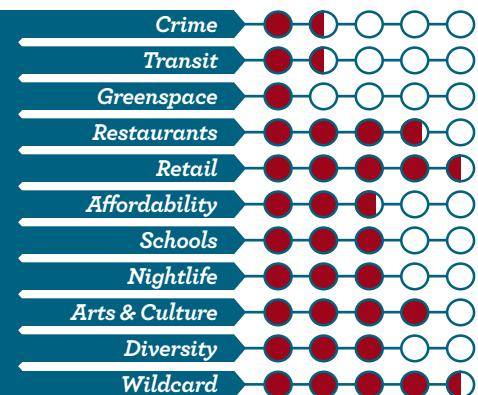
MOCA GA has embarked on an invaluable project archiving the work of local artists. 75 Bennett St. 404-367-8700. [www.mocaga.org](http://www.mocaga.org).



# WESTSIDE

RANKED  
**No. 6**

Location » Intown/West



## UPSIDES

*Great for the hip*, the young, artists and foodies, with great food, shopping and culture.

*Close to Midtown and downtown.*

## DOWNSIDES

*Low on certain amenities*, like grocery stores.

*The cost of a real loft space* has gotten steep, pricing out artists and other urban pioneers.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **114.7**

Total violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **24.46**

Total property crimes per 1,000 residents: **90.24**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

**\$169,900**

Like other parts of the city, the Westside has seen a condo boom that's turned the former industrial/warehouse into a true neighborhood.

*Average rental: \$700*

### EDUCATION

**AB C D F**

The Westside is home to two experimental single-gender public schools.

### GREENSPACE

There's Home Park and Knight Park. Or cross your fingers for Westside Reservoir Park, a proposed 350-acre Beltline greenspace centered around the 100-foot-deep Bellwood Quarry.

### DIVERSITY

The Westside is mostly white, but with notable black, Hispanic and Asian populations.

**"I can walk everywhere. I never cook at home because there are so many great restaurants around, and I see everyone out and about.**

**You can't beat that."**

— **JAY MOREL**, SIX-YEAR WESTSIDE RESIDENT  
NOW LIVING IN WHITE PROVISIONS LOFTS



**Once a wasteland of warehouses and drab industrial spaces**, Atlanta's Westside has been transformed into what's arguably the city's hottest 'hood for top-notch dining, loft living and highbrow shopping. Indie galleries also have taken up residence. Throw in the mixed-use, mega-shopping destination that is Atlantic Station — and the youthful brainpower of Georgia Tech — and you've got a section of town that's thriving despite tough economic times.

### NIGHTLIFE

#### Northside Tavern

An intown blues oasis, this tavern is the real deal, with live music nightly from the likes of local legend Mudcat. 1058 Howell Mill Road. 404-874-8745. [www.northsidetavern.com](http://www.northsidetavern.com).

#### Ormsby's

Hidden-from-sight downstairs bar boasts shuffleboard, pool, bocce ball and darts — in addition to craft beers. 1170 Howell Mill Road. 404-968-2033. [www.ormsbysatlanta.com](http://www.ormsbysatlanta.com).

#### Swinging Richards

Don't even think about throwing your little bachelorette party at this all-male strip club, boo. Richards is strictly dicky. 1400 Northside Drive. 404-352-0532. [www.swingingrichards.com](http://www.swingingrichards.com).

### SHOPPING

#### Anthropologie

Oozes good taste in its women's clothing, as well as charming housewares. 1207 Howell Mill Road. 404-355-4889. [www.anthropologie.com](http://www.anthropologie.com).

#### Perrine's Wine Shop

The former sommelier at Joël offers a nicely rounded selection of varietals for all price points in an airy space. 1168 Howell Mill Road, Suite B. 404-254-5077. [www.perrineswine.com](http://www.perrineswine.com).

#### Bungalow Classic

Couches, lamps and high-end linens in muted colors and simple shapes. Low-key swank. 1197 Howell Mill Road. 404-351-9120. [www.bungalowclassic.com](http://www.bungalowclassic.com).

## HIDDEN GEM

At the rustic, 12-acre Goat Farm, you'll find roosters, artists and, yes, goats. Recently, the former cotton mill has served as a venue for concerts, art happenings and film shoots. 1200 Foster St.

## WILD CARD

Nine points for utter coolness. We love this 'hood.

### EATS

#### Abattoir

This upscale but lower-priced restaurant from the owners of Bacchanalia is a smart response to the recession. Adventurous foodies will be drawn to the offal dishes. 1170 Howell Mill Road. 404-892-3335. [www.starprovisions.com](http://www.starprovisions.com).

#### Bocado

The soothing, minimalist space is as delightful as the menu, which was created to be sharable and speaks to the aspirations and inspirations of talented chef Todd Ginsberg. The burger is among the best in town. 887 Howell Mill Road. 404-815-1399. [www.bocadoatlanta.com](http://www.bocadoatlanta.com).

#### Miller Union

Watershed sous chef Steven Satterfield and Sotto Sotto manager Neal McCarthy have delivered a truly regional restaurant, serving Southern food without shtick or embellishment. 999 Brady Ave. 678-733-8550. [www.millerunion.com](http://www.millerunion.com).

### CULTURE

#### Westside Arts District

Officially including 10 galleries, WAD has emerged as the city's most cohesive arts 'hood. Its daytime third Saturday art stroll is a monthly highlight. [www.wadatlanta.org](http://www.wadatlanta.org).

#### Actor's Express

Possibly Atlanta's most exciting theater company, specializing in finding bold new plays and rediscovering classics. 887 W. Marietta St. 404-875-1606. [www.actorexpress.com](http://www.actorexpress.com).

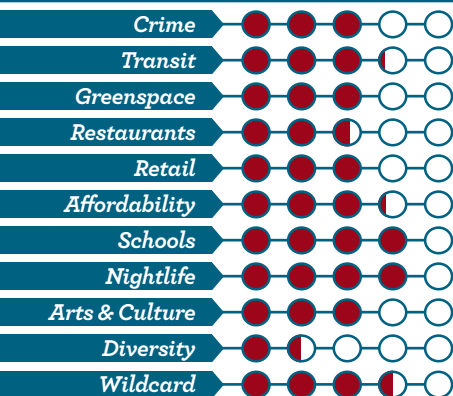
#### Relapse Theater

Located in a renovated church, it showcases burgeoning local comics, artists-in-residence and strong improv impresarios. 380 14th St. 404-343-0347. [www.relapsecomedy.com](http://www.relapsecomedy.com).

# PONCEY-HIGHLAND

RANKED  
No. 4

Location » Intown/Northeast, sandwiched between Ponce de Leon and North avenues



## UPSIDES

*It's the one of the few neighborhoods* where you can survive (comfortably) without a car.

*There's a never-ending supply* of colorful street characters along Ponce de Leon Avenue.

*One word: King of Pops* (We know it's three.)

## DOWNSIDES

*Because it's so tiny*, finding digs in Poncey-Highland-proper can be a chore.

*The 'hood's burgeoning street-food* corridor has been temporarily shut down by the county.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **79.97**

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **3.57**

Property crimes per 1,000 residents: **76.4**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

**\$173,300**

The houses are nice, but apartments can run from decent to scroungy.

*Average rental: \$900*

### EDUCATION

AB C D F

Served by roughly the same schools as Virginia-Highland.

## HIDDEN GEM

There's a Japanese garden and pond tucked away at the Carter Center and a community garden in Freedom Park (who knew?).



JOEY DAVIS

For a relatively small neighborhood, Poncey-Highland has a hell of a lot going on, from movies at the deco-chic Plaza Theatre to drinks at true-blue political haunt Manuel's Tavern to meals post-midnight at the Majestic Diner to middle-aged jubbies at the Clermont Lounge. The best part — everything's within walking distance.

## WILD CARD

Seven points for Blondie.

### DIVERSITY

Poncey-Highland is a predominantly white neighborhood.

"It's really the most walkable neighborhood in the city. We've got a movie theater, four-star restaurants — and then you have the Clermont Lounge."

— ANNA FOOTE, NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION MEMBER AND LONGTIME RESIDENT

### GREENSPACE

This summer, the Beltline's eastside trail between 10th Street and Monroe and DeKalb avenues will connect to the Freedom Park PATH. What's more, the newly opened Historic Fourth Ward Park provides a western retreat for residents. [www.beltline.org](http://www.beltline.org). [www.h4wpc.com](http://www.h4wpc.com).

### EATS

#### Super Pan

Hector Santiago's Super Pan Latino Sandwich Shop is the love child of street food and gastro genius. 1057 Blue Ridge Ave. 404-477-0379. [www.superpanlatino.com](http://www.superpanlatino.com). [sandwichshop.com](http://sandwichshop.com).

#### Two Urban Licks

A restaurant of bold exuberance, where eye-popping design and satisfying small plates work together to produce a long wait for dinner. 820 Ralph McGill Blvd. 404-522-4622. [www.twourbanlicks.com](http://www.twourbanlicks.com).

#### Babette's Cafe

Comforting French-American classics in a charming bungalow setting. 573 N. Highland Ave. 404-523-9121. [www.babettescafe.com](http://www.babettescafe.com).

### SHOPPING

#### Urban Outfitters

The hipster lifestyle chain lands at the corner of Ponce de Leon and North Highland avenues. Youthquake results. 1061 Ponce de Leon Ave. 404-541-9256. [www.urbanoutfitters.com](http://www.urbanoutfitters.com).

#### Highland Row Antiques

Two levels full of mid-century furniture finds and vintage clothing. 628 N. Highland Ave. 404-815-8830. [www.highlandrowantiques.com](http://www.highlandrowantiques.com).

#### Videodrome

Houses an eclectic collection of hard-to-find movies, foreign films, cult classics, anime and mainstream titles. 617 N. Highland Ave. 404-885-1117. [www.videodromeatl.com](http://www.videodromeatl.com).

### NIGHTLIFE

#### MJQ/Drunken Unicorn

This former parking garage-turned-nightclub hosts dance parties and hip-hop events on the MJQ side, and live indie rock next door at the Drunken Unicorn. 736 Ponce de Leon Ave. [www.thedrunkenunicorn.net](http://www.thedrunkenunicorn.net).

#### Masquerade

Divided into Heaven, Hell and Purgatory, it books dubstep/electro DJs, extreme metal, poster-boy pop punk and national touring acts. 695 North Ave. 404-577-8178. [www.masq.com](http://www.masq.com).

#### Clermont Lounge

Our city's oldest strip club, with aging strippers to match, is truly the delightfully debauched underbelly of Atlanta. 789 Ponce de Leon Ave. 404-874-4783. [www.clermontlounge.net](http://www.clermontlounge.net).

#### Highland Inn Ballroom

Live music spot that feels like it's teeming with ghosts and hosts a full schedule of local music. 644 N. Highland Ave. 404-874-5756. [www.thehighlandinn.com/highlandballroom](http://www.thehighlandinn.com/highlandballroom).

### CULTURE

#### Plaza Theatre

Scruffy movie house specializing in art-house films, local movie-related events and revival screenings. 1049 Ponce de Leon Ave. 404-873-1939. [www.plazaatlanta.com](http://www.plazaatlanta.com).

#### Ponce Crush

The folks behind indie mainstays Young Blood, Kibbee and Beep Beep galleries officially joined forces to coordinate their openings in 2011. [poncecrush.wordpress.com](http://poncecrush.wordpress.com).

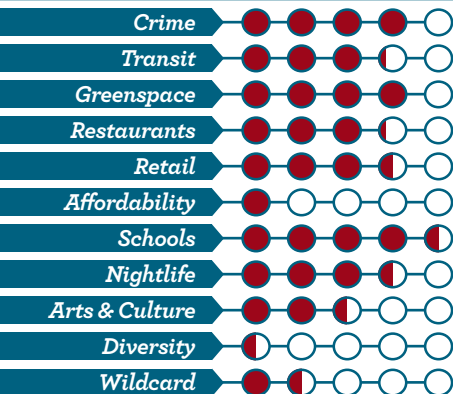


# VIRGINIA-HIGHLAND

+MORNINGSIDE

RANKED  
No. 7

Location » Intown/Northeast



## UPSIDES

The neighborhood is picturesque, active, safe and eminently walkable.

## DOWNSIDES

High-priced real estate, very competitive parking situation and stop-and-go traffic on North Highland Avenue.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **35.24**

Total violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **2.135**

Total property crimes per 1,000 residents: **33.105**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

## \$437,000

Houses here are top-dollar, but near Briarcliff Road and Ponce de Leon Avenue are scores of apartment buildings brimming with character.

**Average rental: \$800**

### EDUCATION

## ABCDF

Brand-new Springdale Park Elementary won an award from Atlanta's Urban Design Commission for its context-sensitive, LEED-certified design.

"I live in Virginia-Highland because I like the neighborhood feel. There's a great social scene here, even during the day. You can walk around with your dog and everywhere is pet-friendly."

— NICOLE HESS, 25, SALES ASSOCIATE AT BILL HALLMAN AND LOCAL DESIGNER



JOEY DAVIS, CL FILE

Where else can Atlanta residents walk to restaurants, boutiques, bars, grocery stores and even a neighborhood movie theater with the monthly Silver Scream Spook Show? There are few places in Virginia-Highland you can't reach by way of a pleasant stroll along tree-shaded sidewalks or a quick bike ride. To the north, Morningside remains a dreamy — albeit pricey — destination for families.

### GREENSPACE

Residents are just a short walk from Piedmont Park and this year, Morningsiders are expected to also be able to access the park — and the Beltline, which runs along its eastern edge — via its expanded borders near Ansley Mall.

### DIVERSITY

Virginia-Highland is a predominantly white neighborhood.

## HIDDEN GEM

The city-owned 30-acre Morningside Nature Preserve is a little-known haven for hiking and mild off-road cycling. Thanks to a new suspended bridge spanning Peachtree Creek, it now links to other nearby parks. 1941 Wellbourne Drive. 404-817-6740. [www.atlantaga.gov](http://www.atlantaga.gov).

## WILD CARD

A low three points because the neighborhood bars are weekend magnets for a largely frat-boy crowd.

### EATS

#### Alon's Bakery and Market

Alon's is justly renowned for its baked goods and desserts, but don't miss out on the prepared food offerings. Succulent sandwiches, deli treats, wine, cheese, and some of the best cookies around. 1394 N. Highland Ave. 404-872-6000. [www.alons.com](http://www.alons.com).

#### La Tavola Trattoria

A true neighborhood restaurant, from its glass storefront location to its cozy, 55-seat dining room and tiny bar. The regular menu consists of classic, carefully coddled Italian fare. 992 Virginia Ave. 404-873-5430. [www.latavolatrattoria.com](http://www.latavolatrattoria.com)

#### Murphy's

For more than 25 years, Murphy's has been serving classic American fare. Also serving brunch, with a bakery and wine shop attached. 997 Virginia Ave. 404-872-0904. [www.murphys-atlanta-restaurant.com](http://www.murphys-atlanta-restaurant.com).

### SHOPPING

#### Bill Hallman Boutique

Designer jeans and ultra-hip labels for men and women, as well as a vintage collection. 792 N. Highland Ave. 404-876-6055. [www.billhallman.com](http://www.billhallman.com).

#### Paris on Ponce

Part antique shop, part housewares store and part event facility in a sprawling, eccentric, Gallic-flavored space. 716 Ponce de Leon Place. 404-249-9965. [www.parisonponce.com](http://www.parisonponce.com).

#### Morningside Farmers Market

Organic produce sold year-round by the folks who grew it, as well as local beef and pork, flowers and soaps. 1393 N. Highland Ave. 404-313-5784. [www.morningsidemarket.com](http://www.morningsidemarket.com).

### NIGHTLIFE

#### Blind Willie's

For 25 years, Blind Willies has kept rockin' with a roster of local and national blues, roots, jazz and soul acts. 828 N. Highland Ave. 404-873-2583. [www.blindwilliesblues.com](http://www.blindwilliesblues.com).

#### Dark Horse/10 High

Knock back a few Jäger Bombs with your bros upstairs or check out the tunes in 10 High's cozy basement confines. 816 N. Highland Ave. 404-873-3607. [www.darkhorseatlanta.com](http://www.darkhorseatlanta.com).

#### Moe's & Joe's

With Tuesdays and Thursdays designated as cheap beer nights, Moe's & Joe's is a staple Emory hangout. 1033 N. Highland Ave. 404-873-6090. [www.moesandjoes.com](http://www.moesandjoes.com).

### CULTURE

#### Callanwolde Fine Arts Center

A community arts center in a gorgeous old Coke-money mansion. 980 Briarcliff Road. 404-872-5338. [www.callanwolde.org](http://www.callanwolde.org).

#### Virginia-Highland SummerFest

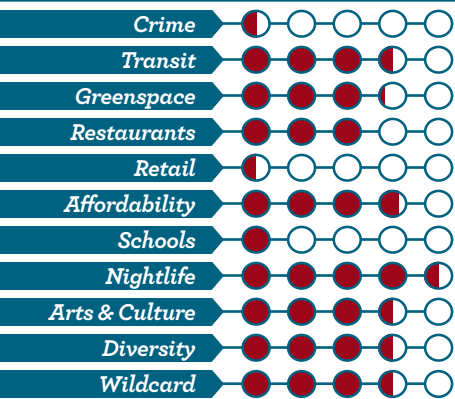
Annual festival featuring live music, kid's events and an expansive outdoor artists market. June 3-5. [www.vahi.org/summerfest.html](http://www.vahi.org/summerfest.html).

#### Solomon Projects

This contemporary art gallery encourages experimentation, larger-scale work and video installations. 1037 Monroe Drive. 404-875-7100. [www.solomonprojects.com](http://www.solomonprojects.com).

# OLD FOURTH WARD

Location » Intown/Central, just east of downtown



## UPSIDES

A thriving restaurant and nightlife scene and a perfect destination for urban pioneers.

## DOWNSIDES

Some blocks are downright sketchy, and decent retail can't seem to get a foothold here.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents:	184.5
Violent crimes per 1,000 residents:	18.57
Property crimes per 1,000 residents:	165.94

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

**\$107,754**

Houses vary wildly in quality, from the restored mansions of the MLK Historic District to ramshackle capholes a few blocks away.

**Average rental: \$1,000**

### EDUCATION

**ABCD F**

Cook Elementary boasts a Boys to Men community service program, but schools here are among the least diverse in Atlanta.

### GREENSPACE

In addition to the newly opened Historic Fourth Ward Park near City Hall East, residents can look forward to the city's first public skate park and 11 more acres of greenspace later this year.



Though less-gentrified than nearby Inman Park and Midtown, the Old Fourth Ward's crop of hip bars and restaurants along lovably grungy Auburn and Edgewood avenues has secured its place as one of the most exciting 'hoods in Atlanta.

"I live in the Fourth Ward because some of the **old houses are funky and cool**, it's still affordable and it's close to everything."

— SUSIE MERCER,  
GRADY HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER

## HIDDEN GEM

The quirky Madam C.J. Walker's Beauty Shoppe Museum, in a former salon once owned by an African-American entrepreneur, preserves tress relics dating back to the '50s. 54 Hilliard St. [www.madamecjwalkermuseumatl.com](http://www.madamecjwalkermuseumatl.com).

## WILD CARD

Seven points for its cultural scene, the Historic Fourth Ward Park and the cool quotient.

### CULTURE

#### King Center

Organization founded by MLK's late widow, Coretta Scott King. The crypt for the Civil Rights leader is in the stately plaza. 449 Auburn Ave. 404-526-8900. [www.thekingcenter.org](http://www.thekingcenter.org).

#### Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site

The MLK birth home and other houses along the street where he grew up are maintained by the National Park System, which operates an impressive visitor's center/museum. 450 Auburn Ave. 404-331-5190. [www.nps.gov/malu](http://www.nps.gov/malu).

#### Mint Gallery

An indie gallery with a penchant for all things DIY and big support for local artists. 145-B Sampson St. 404-946-8982. [www.mintatl.org](http://www.mintatl.org).

#### Studioplex

The former cotton warehouse turned lofts/artist studios/office and retail spaces located right along the Beltline-to-be. Stop by for the fourth Friday artwalk. 659 Auburn Ave. 404-733-6000. [www.studioplexlofts.com](http://www.studioplexlofts.com).

### EATS

#### Noni's Bar and Deli

Homey Italian food, a raucous party scene, vintage photos, blond wood and great wine. Sound fun? It is. 357 Edgewood Ave. 404-343-1808. [www.nonisdeli.com](http://www.nonisdeli.com).

#### The Sound Table

There's better food in town, but not in such a cool, casual setting. There's a better dance scene in town, but not a more homegrown one. There aren't better cocktails anywhere. 483 Edgewood Ave. 404-835-2534. [www.thesoundtable.com](http://www.thesoundtable.com).

### SHOPPING

#### Fixie Bicycle Gallery

Specializing in fixed-gear and single-speed bicycles, with new and vintage frames. 415 Edgewood Ave. 404-221-8898. [www.fixieb.com](http://www.fixieb.com).

#### LottaFrutta

Heavenly fruit cups with fanciful names like dolce vitta and cremolatta, with a freezer case of homemade tropical fruit pops. 590 Auburn Ave. 404-588-0857. [www.lottafruta.com](http://www.lottafruta.com).

### NIGHTLIFE

#### Café Circa

Nothing bohemian about the soul aficionados that pack this upscale bar/restaurant on weekend nights and puff hookahs on the rooftop deck. 464 Edgewood Ave. 404-477-0008. [www.cafecircaatl.com](http://www.cafecircaatl.com).

#### The Music Room

The basement of Pizzeria Vesuvius gets noisy after closing time when local bands take over, blasting everything from punk to electronica. 327 Edgewood Ave. 404-343-4404. [www.pizzeriavesuvius.com/themusicroom](http://www.pizzeriavesuvius.com/themusicroom).

#### P'cheen

An "international bistro" with DJs spinning into the a.m. 701 Highland Ave., Suite 5. 404-529-8800. [www.pcheen.com](http://www.pcheen.com).

#### Sister Louisa's Church of the Living Room and Ping-Pong Emporium

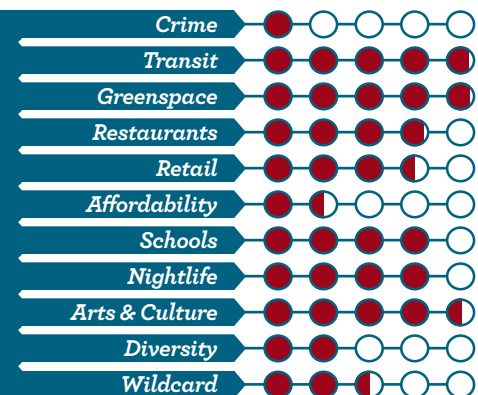
Grant Henry's surreal vision of a bar/gallery, decorated with alter-ego Sister Louisa's ironic artwork, is good for cheap beer and cheaper laughs. 466 Edgewood Ave. 404-522-8275.



# MIDTOWN

RANKED  
No. 2

Location » Intown/Central



## UPSIDES

The 189-acre **Piedmont Park** is reason enough to live here, never mind that it's close to everything, exceedingly walkable and super cultured.

## DOWNSIDES

**Bottleneck traffic** on Peachtree Street and high property crime are downers.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **129.58**

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **16**

Property crimes per 1,000 residents: **113.58**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

# \$339,900

Possibly the city's most walkable 'hood, Midtown's housing options run from the mansions of Ansley Park to condo skyscrapers overlooking Peachtree Street to the funky old houses and apartments around Piedmont Park.

**Average rental: \$850**

### EDUCATION

# ABCDF

Grady High's stadium just got a fresh face-lift. Plus, the school has the city's top journalism program — now there's a growth industry!

## HIDDEN GEM

Embrace locavorism at the Piedmont Park Green Market, an outdoor market that sells Georgia-grown produce every Saturday from May 7 through Dec. 10. 1071 Piedmont Ave. 404-876-4024. [www.piedmontpark.org](http://www.piedmontpark.org).

**"I live in Midtown because I love being near Piedmont Park. This is where I first felt safe enough to wear the green dress. Now I wear it everywhere."**

— **ANGEL LUIS POVENTUD**, COMMUNITY DO-GOODER OFTEN SPOTTED ROLLER-BLADING AROUND THE CITY IN HIS DRESS



JOE DAVIS

**No part of the city has evolved more dramatically over the past two decades than Midtown.** Impersonal office buildings, imposing parking decks and cold asphalt have given way to high-rise living and an explosion of street life. The city's art institutions (the High Museum, SCAD-Atlanta, and the newly relocated MODA) are all anchored in here. Where once there was a wasteland, now there are restaurants, groceries, shops, townhouses, lofts and ... people.

## WILD CARD

Five points for the high percentage of recently out gay men.

### CULTURE

## Atlanta Pride Festival

A weekend-long celebration of all things LGBT. Oct. 8-9. Piedmont Park, Piedmont Avenue and 14th Street. 404-733-4444. [www.atlantapride.org](http://www.atlantapride.org).

## Center for Puppetry Arts

Entertainment comes with strings attached at this theater and museum that features creative puppet plays both for adults and kids. 1404 Spring St. 404-873-3089. [www.puppet.org](http://www.puppet.org).

### SHOPPING

## Outwrite Bookstore and Coffeehouse

The epicenter of Atlanta's LGBT scene is one of the city's best indie bookstores. 991 Piedmont Ave. 404-607-0082. [www.outwritebooks.com](http://www.outwritebooks.com).

## CB2

The urban sibling of Crate and Barrel anchors the revitalized Midtown Mile. 1080 Peachtree St. 404-894-3763. [www.cb2.com](http://www.cb2.com).

## Drew Lewis

It's not exactly budget shopping, but a few purchases can form the basis of your ideal wardrobe. Dog-friendly to boot! 935 Peachtree St. 404-881-5359. [www.drewlewis-atl.com](http://www.drewlewis-atl.com).

### EATS

## Top Flr

Top Flr is what happens when the kids who used to wait tables and bartend grow up and become their own bosses: a user-friendly restaurant with a menu that is short and sweet. 674 Myrtle St. 404-685-3110. [www.topflr.com](http://www.topflr.com).

## Ecco

A fashionable spot that remains one of the best in the city. Chef Micah Willix's menu is perfect for grazing on house-cured meats, cheeses, small plates and wood-fired pizzas. 40 Seventh St. 404-347-9555. [www.ecco-atlanta.com](http://www.ecco-atlanta.com).

## Empire State South

Hugh Acheson has brought his magic from Athens to Atlanta, and chef Ryan Smith sees it through. Retro-modern feel, next-generation Southern cooking and the best wine list in the city. One of the most exciting things to happen to Atlanta eating in ages. 999 Peachtree St. 404-541-1105. [www.empirestatesouth.com](http://www.empirestatesouth.com).

### NIGHTLIFE

## Opera

The last of the Midtown megaclubs, which plays host to big-name DJs and bigger hairdos; bring your ego. 1150 Crescent Ave. 404-874-3006. [www.operaatlanta.com](http://www.operaatlanta.com).

## Halo

A down-tempo lounge with a serious cool-out aesthetic for electro/trance heads and tragically hip converts. 817 W. Peachtree St. 404-962-7333. [www.halolounge.com](http://www.halolounge.com).

## Aurum Lounge

A spiffy space catering to a casual but mature, well-manicured set. 915 Peachtree St. 404-815-9426. [www.aurumlounge.com](http://www.aurumlounge.com).

## Cheetah Lounge

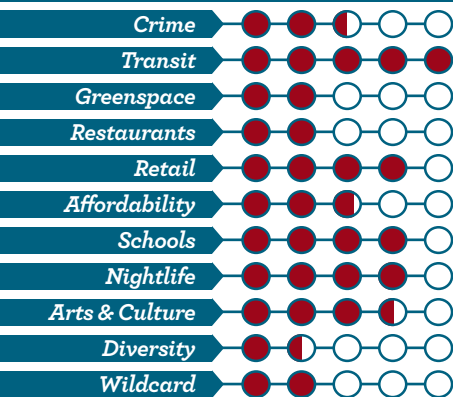
When a strip club is this upscale — complete with valet parking and fine-dining — it's called a gentlemen's club. Bring your bank. 887 Spring St. 404-892-3037. [www.thecheetah.com](http://www.thecheetah.com).



# LITTLE FIVE POINTS

RANKED No. 5

Location » Intown/Central between Inman Park and Candler Park, north of the MARTA line



## UPSIDES

**L5P is a destination** for intowners, suburbanites and tourists to get a taste of local nightlife, shopping and Bohemian culture.

## DOWNSIDES

**The traffic is a real bear**, especially on the weekends.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **91.37**

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **4.32**

Property crimes per 1,000 residents: **87.05**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

**\$350,000**

Homes in Little Five Points are in the same pricey price range as Inman Park.

**Average rental: \$900**

### EDUCATION

**A B C D F**

Kids from L5P go to Inman Middle School and Grady High School.

**“This is the most convenient place that I have ever lived. If I have visitors staying with me, I don’t have to entertain them — I just send them out into the neighborhood.”**

— **EMILY KARCHER**, ASSISTANT MANAGER AT STEFAN’S



SARAH WOODS

**Little Five Points is Atlanta’s answer to Haight-Ashbury**, where suburban kids, hipsters and discerning celebs come to buy cool shoes and cheap used records, or to just sit and slum it with an iced coffee for a while. At night, it’s a good place to grab a beer or two while checking out a few bands, and although the bars, head shops and restaurants come and go, L5P retains its gritty/chic charm.

## HIDDEN GEM

There aren’t too many nooks and crannies in L5P these days, but there is the Elvis Presley vault tucked away in an unassuming corner of the Star Bar. Before it was a local rock dive it was a bank, and when it became the Star Bar in the ‘90s, it was ground zero for Atlanta’s flourishing rockabilly and redneck underground scenes. The bar has diversified since then, but the converted Elvis vault remains a cluttered treasure trove that’s filled with a dizzying array of Southern-fried memorabilia including photos, a jukebox and an alter where you can bow, kneel and hail to the king. 437 Moreland Ave. [www.starbaratlanta.com](http://www.starbaratlanta.com).

## WILD CARD

Four points for our love for Little Five Points, but it’s kind of ... old news?

### NIGHTLIFE

#### Variety Playhouse

The finest midsize music venue in town books everything from jam bands to acclaimed national acts. 1099 Euclid Ave. 404-524-7354. [www.variety-playhouse.com](http://www.variety-playhouse.com).

#### The Euclid Avenue Yacht Club

Where locals come to take a load off, have a drink and escape the bustling sidewalks. 1136 Euclid Ave. 404-688-2582. [www.theeayc.com](http://www.theeayc.com).

#### The Five Spot

Hippy-dippy hangout that hosts a variety of roots, jazz, rock, soul and rap acts. 1123 Euclid Ave. 404-223-1100. [www.fivespot-atl.com](http://www.fivespot-atl.com).

#### Star Bar

A Little Five institution that sports a diverse lineup of punk, indie rock, garage acts and DJs. 437 Moreland Ave. [www.starbar.net](http://www.starbar.net).

### EATS

#### The Porter

A dynamic menu, 100-plus beer list and Anglophile aesthetic offers fine dining with good drinking for cheapskates. 1156 Euclid Ave. 404-223-0393. [www.theporterbeerbar.com](http://www.theporterbeerbar.com).

#### El Myr

Questions of authenticity aside, the ginormous tacos, burritos and vegan- and veggie-friendly options are Atlanta staples. 1091 Euclid Ave. 404-588-0250. [www.elmyr.com](http://www.elmyr.com).

### SHOPPING

#### Criminal Records

Vintage and new vinyl, CDs, magazines, toys and in-stores make for hipster heaven. 1154-A Euclid Ave. 404-215-9511. [www.criminalatl.com](http://www.criminalatl.com).

#### Junkman’s Daughter

Superstore for T-shirts, hipster housewares, retro clothing and devices for smokin’ that wacky tobacky. 464 Moreland Ave. 404.577-3188.

#### Stefan’s

Granddaddy of intown’s high-end vintage shops. Great for formal wear. 1160 Euclid Ave. 404-688-4929. [www.stefansvintage.com](http://www.stefansvintage.com).

#### Wish

A space every bit as cool as its clothes, carrying apparel for fashionable hipsters. 447 Moreland Ave. 404-880-0402. [www.wishatl.com](http://www.wishatl.com).

### CULTURE

#### Horizon Theatre

This scrappy L5P playhouse hosts intriguing new voices in Southern theater. 1083 Austin Ave. 404-523-1477. [www.horizontheatre.com](http://www.horizontheatre.com).

#### Little Five Points Halloween Parade

A delightfully freakish assortment of zombies, monsters and ghouls, who congregate by the hundreds in mid-October. [www.l5phalloween.com](http://www.l5phalloween.com).

#### 7 Stages

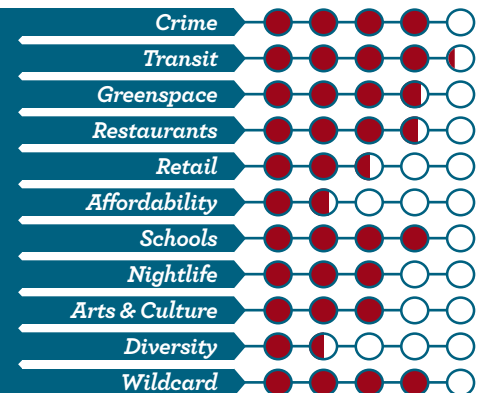
Avant-garde playhouse enjoys a sterling reputation for stylistic daring and moral urgency. 1105 Euclid Ave. 404-523-7647. [www.7stages.org](http://www.7stages.org).



RANKED  
No. 3

# INMAN PARK

Location » Intown/Northeast; between Little Five Points and Old Fourth Ward



## UPSIDES

**Gorgeous homes** and plenty of greenspace.  
**Great restaurants** within walking distance.  
**A location squarely between** the nightlife districts of Little Five and Edgewood Avenue.

## DOWNSIDES

**Expensive** and not particularly diverse.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **32.52**

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **2.54**

Property crimes per 1,000 residents: **29.98**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

**\$328,800**

Atlanta's first suburb, Inman Park boasts some of the city's most picturesque Victorian mansions, but also has smaller homes and apartments.

**Average rental: \$1,100**

### EDUCATION

**A B C D F**

Inman Middle School has a computer for every two children.

### GREENSPACE

Take your pick between Springvale Park, a quaint, off-the-road oasis with a pond, or the multiuse fields and bike trails of Freedom Park. [www.inmanpark.org](http://www.inmanpark.org). [www.freedompark.org](http://www.freedompark.org).

"I love the fact that I live in a walking neighborhood and we have all these beautiful trees. **We don't have to get in the car to go to a shopping center.**"

— **SUSAN BRIDGES**,  
OWNER OF WHITESPACE GALLERY



JAMES CAMP

Inman Park is where members of the city's **creative class** go when they hit the big time — or where those seeking the refuge of quaint coach houses or partitioned Victorians go to fake it. It's the perfect mix of resplendence and cool.

## WILD CARD

Eight points for bragging rights associated with living in Atlanta's loveliest 'hood.

### EATS

#### Sotto Sotto

Nowhere in town is the room more comforting in its simplicity, the service more astute, or the risotto more delicious. 313 N. Highland Ave. 404-523-6678. [www.sottosotto-restaurant.com](http://www.sottosotto-restaurant.com).

#### Parish

The glorious redo of this historic brick building brings us one of the most beautiful restaurants in town. Louisiana-inspired fine dining upstairs, bakery and café downstairs. 240 N. Highland Ave. 404-681-4434. [www.parishatl.com](http://www.parishatl.com).

#### Krog Bar

The wine is great, the tapas are fun, but the chill patio and warm glowing interior of this fancy shed makes it a favorite. 112 Krog Street. 404-524-1618. [www.krogbar.com](http://www.krogbar.com).

### SHOPPING

#### City Issue

Treasure chest for lovers of vintage and mid-century modern. 325 Elizabeth St. 678-999-9075. [www.cityissue.com](http://www.cityissue.com).

#### Adaptation Floral Design

Think green raspberries, mini purple cabbages, elegant orchids and dainty hellebores instead of the typical carnations, plus they deliver. 316 N. Highland Ave. 404-577-1910. [www.adaptationfloraldesign.com](http://www.adaptationfloraldesign.com).

### NIGHTLIFE

#### The Albert

As chill as the neighborhood, with pool tables and Tuesday ping-pong tournaments. 918 Austin Ave. 404-872-4990. [www.thealbertatlanta.com](http://www.thealbertatlanta.com).

#### Sauced

Southern comfort with a twist, DJs in the later hours and a fun roster of creative and classic cocktails. 753 Edgewood Ave. 404-688-6554. [www.saucedatlanta.com](http://www.saucedatlanta.com).

### CULTURE

#### Whitespace Gallery

Local art maven Susan Bridges' Inman Park carriage-house-turned-gallery is at once nostalgic and modern. 814 Edgewood Ave. 404-688-1892. [www.whitespace814.com](http://www.whitespace814.com).

#### Dad's Garage

A fun playhouse with high-spirited theatrical hijinks and late-night improv. 280 Elizabeth St. 404-523-3141. [www.dadsgarage.com](http://www.dadsgarage.com).

#### Inman Park Festival

Atlanta's see-and-be-seen neighborhood festival, with an eccentric parade, two days of live bands, a sprawling artists market and a tour of Victorian homes. Last full April weekend. [www.inmanpark.org](http://www.inmanpark.org).



Look for the sign of distinction in Inman Park...

sanctuary  
REAL ESTATE™



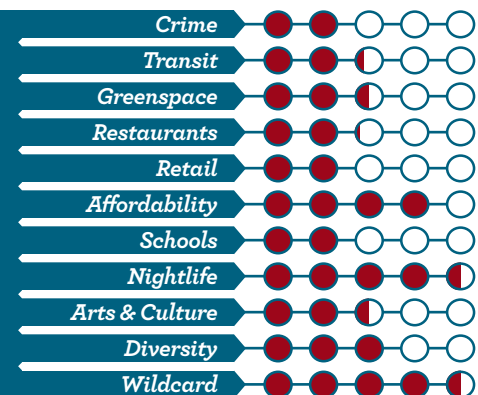


READERS PICK: BEST NEIGHBORHOOD OVERALL, AFFORDABILITY AND NIGHT LIFE

RANKED  
No. 9

# EAST ATLANTA

Location » Intown/East, south of I-20, just inside Atlanta's eastern border



## UPSIDES

**More indie rock** than you can shake a PBR trucker cap at.

**Karaoke nights at Mary's** — "Maryoke" to regulars — is simply *fab*-ulous!

**The annual East Atlanta Strut** is a loveable freak show.

**Oh, and two words: Holy Taco.**

## DOWNSIDES

**More hipsters** than you can shake a PBR trucker cap at.

**Crime can be an issue;** make use of the buddy system when stumbling home.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **106.06**

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **22.83**

Property crimes per 1,000 residents: **83.23**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

**\$121,250**

From mid-century ranches to quaint bungalows to Victorian fixer-uppers, East Atlanta has a variety of housing styles.

**Average rental: \$800**

### EDUCATION

**AB C D F**

Next year, Maynard Holbrook Jackson High School — formerly Southside — will launch fine arts, IT and AP engineering programs.

## HIDDEN GEM

When folks think of East Atlanta, they think of bands and booze. But what about Brownwood Park? The 12-acre greenspace is home to a rec center, tennis courts, playground, pavilion, community garden, walking trail and grassy knolls for lounging. 602 Brownwood Ave. [www.eaca.net](http://www.eaca.net).



**East Atlanta is near the epicenter** of the city's trend-setting counterculture. The 'hood boasts a diverse mix of dingy bars, a decent smattering of affordable shops and restaurants and the city's highest concentration of hipsters. The music scene attracts an impressive roster of visiting bands.

## WILD CARD

Nine points for the 'hood's absurdly named concentration of drunk-people food: Happy Donuts, Buffalo China, Burger Win, and Supreme Fish Delight.

### EATS

#### Holy Taco

Chef Robert Phalen has taken a tired idea — taco-centric Tex-Mex — and turned it on its head. The tacos are good, but the outrageous fusions he creates, borrowing from Spain, Europe, Mexico and beyond, yields some of the most creative and exciting food in town. 1314 Glenwood Ave. 404-230-6177. [www.holy-taco.com](http://www.holy-taco.com).

#### Urban Cannibals Bodega and Bites

A rotating menu of sandwiches, soups, salads and takeout dinners from popular local chef Calavino Donati. Local, farm-fresh groceries, too. 477 Flat Shoals Ave. 404-230-9865.

**"The neighborhood is full of charming, diverse people. You can always find a friendly face and a good time. And you don't have to pay for parking."**

— JENNIFER BOXLEY, PHOTOGRAPHER

### SHOPPING Traders

Quality furniture and housewares — with prices a notch below the norm. 485-B Flat Shoals Ave. 404-522-3006. [www.tradersatlanta.com](http://www.tradersatlanta.com).

#### Park Pet Supply

Premium pet foods, toys and accessories — even homeopathic meds. 479-A Flat Shoals Ave. 404-588-0140. [www.parkpetsupply.com](http://www.parkpetsupply.com).

#### Bound to Be Read Books

Quality used and new books, and the obligatory bookstore cat. 481-B Flat Shoals Ave. 404-522-0877. [www.boundtobereadbooks.com](http://www.boundtobereadbooks.com).

### NIGHTLIFE

#### The Earl

The longest-standing bar, restaurant and music venue in the 'hood with a menu a notch above pub grub and a calendar that's booked with local and nationally touring indie acts. 488 Flat Shoals Ave. 404-522-3950. [www.badearl.com](http://www.badearl.com).

#### 529

Cramped and smoky jewel of the local underground music scene, and a good place to see and be seen chillin' on the patio. 529 Flat Shoals Ave. 404-228-6769. [www.529atl.com](http://www.529atl.com).

#### Graveyard Tavern

Roomy venue is home to gothic décor and a tattooed clientele that loves dancing to Lady Gaga and the Smiths. 1245 Glenwood Ave. 404-622-8686. [www.graveyardtavern.com](http://www.graveyardtavern.com).

#### Mary's

If you're here and you're queer, and you're looking for the best damn karaoke in town, you've come to the right place. 1287 Glenwood Ave. 404-624-4411. [www.marysatlanta.com](http://www.marysatlanta.com).

### CULTURE

#### East Atlanta Beer Festival

Popular festival featuring more than 150 craft beers and benefitting local organizations. May 21. Brownwood Park, Glenwood and Brownwood avenues. [www.eabfonline.com](http://www.eabfonline.com).

#### East Atlanta Farmers Market

Scrappy local market that's low on the yuppie factor. May-November: Thursdays, 4-8 p.m. 1231 Glenwood Ave. [www.farmeav.com](http://www.farmeav.com).

#### East Atlanta Strut

A community-organized one-day festival featuring music, art, a 5K and wacky must-see parade to raise money for neighborhood charities and organizations. East Atlanta Village, Glenwood Avenue and Flat Shoals Road. [www.eastatlantastrut.com](http://www.eastatlantastrut.com).



# DECATUR

RANKED  
No. 1

Location » Intown/East: Just outside central Atlanta's eastern border

## UPSIDES

**A small-town-yet-progressive vibe;** great schools; a strong LGBT community; and beer. Soooooo much beer, from Twain's house brews to the Brick Store's Belgian beer smorgasbord.

**And despite having poor highway access,** Decatur has a centrally located MARTA station to whisk commuters to jobs downtown.

## DOWNSIDES

**High liberal yuppie quotient.** (If that's a plus for you, refile under upsides.)

**Swarms of beer lovers** on weekends can mean long waits at tiny pubs.

## CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **38.89**

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **3.75**

Property crimes per 1,000 residents: **35.14**

## MEDIAN HOME PRICE

# \$308,000

Real estate values have held remarkably steady, thanks to strong schools, a low crime rate and a walkable downtown.

Decatur also has added hundreds of apartments and condos in just the past few years.

**Average rental is \$800.**

## EDUCATION

# ABCD F

Decatur's top-rated school system helps make the city a destination for parents.

## GREENSPACE

Glenlake Park, the largest in Decatur's park is closest to downtown and boasts a pool. 1211 Church St., Decatur. [www.visitdecaturgeorgia.com](http://www.visitdecaturgeorgia.com).

## HIDDEN GEM

The 54-acre Decatur Cemetery a few blocks off the square is the oldest known publicly owned burial ground in metro Atlanta. 299 Bell St., Decatur. 404-378-4411. [www.decaturga.com](http://www.decaturga.com).



JOEY DAVIS

**With its historic square, cozy restaurants, quaint shops and vibrant nightlife** (bars here stay open an hour later than in Atlanta!), Decatur evokes Rockwellian sensibilities with a modern twist.

## WILD CARD

Five points for being a bookish pocket of small-town blissopia.

## EATS

### Leon's Full Service

Leon's is perhaps the personification of dear ol' Decatur: clean, vintage, delicious and possessing a serious appreciation for booze. 131 E. Ponce de Leon Ave., Decatur. 404-687-0500. [www.leonsfullservice.com](http://www.leonsfullservice.com).

### Cakes and Ale

Simple Southern fine dining at its best. Look for a move to new digs (on Decatur Square). 254 W. Ponce de Leon Ave., Decatur. 404-377-7994. [www.cakesandalerestaurant.com](http://www.cakesandalerestaurant.com).

### Farm Burger

Farm fresh and organic, you can easily create a \$15 burger (mmmm \$3 bone marrow). 410B W. Ponce de Leon Ave., Decatur. 404-378-5077. [www.farmburger.net](http://www.farmburger.net).

**"It's a small town that wants to make a difference, and it's full of honest heart and soul. It's the place other cities want to be when they make peace with their inner child."**

— **CARL BLACK**, DECATUR RESIDENT/  
CHEERLEADER, SOCIAL MEDIA MONSTER

## NIGHTLIFE

### Brick Store Pub

The gastro pub that started it all around these parts, with gourmet bar food and beers from around the world. 125 E. Court Square, Decatur. 404-687-0990. [www.brickstorepub.com](http://www.brickstorepub.com).

### Eddie's Attic

A venue for singer/songwriters and the folkie set, with shows most nights. 515 N. McDonough St. 404-377-4976. [www.eddiesattic.com](http://www.eddiesattic.com).

### Thinking Man Tavern

An eclectic selection of books and the vibe of a living room. 537 W. Howard Ave., Decatur. 404-370-1717. [www.thinkingmantavern.com](http://www.thinkingmantavern.com).

## SHOPPING

### Your DeKalb Farmers Market

A 140,000-square-foot heaven on Earth for foodies, with an amazing variety of super-fresh produce, a fish counter bigger than your house, and a bakery and juice bar, all at ridiculously low prices. 3000 E. Ponce de Leon Ave., Decatur. 404-377-6400. [www.dekalbfarmersmarket.com](http://www.dekalbfarmersmarket.com).

### Kudzu Antique Market

Multiple dealers specializing in American and European furniture, with an affordable selection of vintage clothing, jewelry and books, too. 2928 E. Ponce de Leon Ave., Decatur. 404-373-6498. [www.kudzuantiques.com](http://www.kudzuantiques.com).

### Heliotrope

Gift store crammed with witty cards and hip housewares. 248 W. Ponce de Leon Ave., Decatur. 404-371-0100. [www.heliotropehome.com](http://www.heliotropehome.com).

### Decatur CD

New and used CDs, staffed by friendly clerks and offering the occasional live in-store performance. 356 W. Ponce de Leon Ave., Decatur. 404-371-9090. [www.decaturcd.com](http://www.decaturcd.com).

## CULTURE

### Dalton Gallery

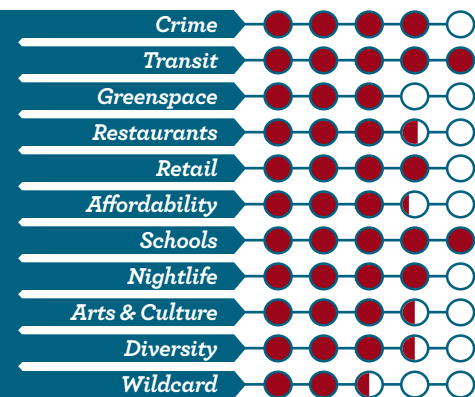
Agnes Scott College-affiliated gallery hosts an eclectic array of group shows from local and national artists. 141 E. College Ave., Decatur. 404-471-5361. [daltongallery.agnesscott.edu](http://daltongallery.agnesscott.edu).

### PushPush Theater

True to its name, this company specializes in pushing artistic limits in its anything-goes approach to stagecraft. 121 New St., Decatur. 404-377-6332. [www.pushpushtheater.com](http://www.pushpushtheater.com).

### Decatur Book Festival

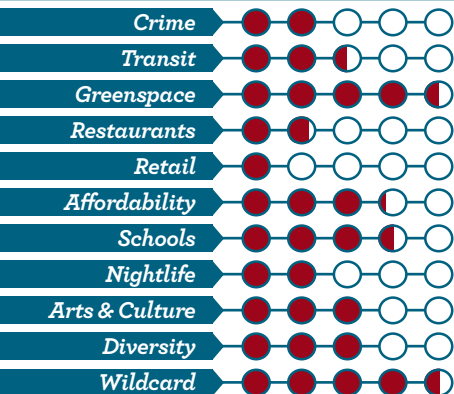
In five short years, the annual three-day DBF has grown to become the largest independent book festival in the country, featuring hundreds of authors and tens of thousands of visitors during Labor Day weekend. The marquee event has established Decatur as a literary hub. [www.decaturbokfestival.com](http://www.decaturbokfestival.com).





# GRANT PARK

Location » Intown/Central, just southeast of downtown



## UPSIDES

*Leafy, lovely and loaded with character.*

*Close to downtown and Turner Field,*  
convenient to the interstates.

*Good place for families with kids.*

## DOWNSIDES

*Good place for families with kids.* Seriously,  
have you ever seen so many strollers?

*Few retail/food amenities* in the  
neighborhood itself.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **109.56**

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **15.1**

Property crimes per 1,000 residents: **94.46**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

## \$260,000

With many homes a century old, the Grant Park historic district has strict rules for renovating.

*Average rental: \$800*

### EDUCATION

## A B C D F

The eponymous K-5 charter school is so competitive, some grades are filled by lottery.

### GREENSPACE

What other neighborhood offers a 132-acre greenspace — with a zoo — that's also home to a recently renovated and rarely crowded public pool?

## WILD CARD

Nine points for sheer livability and pretty flowers and stuff.



JOEY DAVIS

Grant Park claims a hearty slice of Atlanta history, including the city's oldest park and rows of handsome Craftsman-style and Victorian homes. The park itself holds the Atlanta Zoo and Cyclorama (a very big, very round Civil War painting), as well as a public pool and tons of lovely greenspace. Big with the aging hipster parent set, the neighborhood also has a great charter school and a friendly family vibe.

## HIDDEN GEM

Habitat for Humanity's ReStore sells cheap fixtures, used appliances and home improvement tools, with proceeds going to a good cause. 519 Memorial Drive. 404-223-5180. [www.atlantahabitat.org/restore.asp](http://www.atlantahabitat.org/restore.asp).

"There is a strong, yet laid-back aspect to the community. The park is a sublime getaway in the middle, or end, of a long day. And the Grant Park Farmers Market is coming soon."

— MARK LEIBERT,  
ARTIST AND ONLINE PRODUCER

### EATS

#### The Shed at Glenwood

Whether you're there for the now-legendary Wednesday slider night, the Sunday brunch, or just a great dinner, the Shed is a neighborhood restaurant worthy of destination status. 475 Bill Kennedy Way. 404-835-4363. [www.theshedatglenwood.com](http://www.theshedatglenwood.com).

#### Daddy D's

Funky run-down shack packed with diners diving into barbecue. 264 Memorial Drive. 404-222-0206. [www.daddydz.com](http://www.daddydz.com).

#### Ria's Bluebird Cafe

Wildly popular breakfast spot featuring creative dishes and traditional staples. 421 Memorial Drive. 404-521-3737. [www.riasbluebird.com](http://www.riasbluebird.com).

### SHOPPING

#### No Brakes

Hipsterish, fixed-gear shop offering custom bikes and repairs. 586 Woodward Ave. 404-589-9539. [www.shopnobrakesatl.vpweb.com](http://www.shopnobrakesatl.vpweb.com).

#### Garden\*Hood

Gorgeous selection of plants and garden stuff. 353 Boulevard. 404-880-9848. [www.gardenhoodatlanta.com](http://www.gardenhoodatlanta.com).

### CULTURE

#### Cyclorama

At 358 feet, the Cyclorama claims to be the largest oil painting in the world. 800 Cherokee Ave. 404-658-7625. [www.atlantacyclorama.org](http://www.atlantacyclorama.org).

#### Zoo Atlanta

The 40-acre zoo houses 200 species, including celeb pandas and twin gorillas. 800 Cherokee Ave. 404-624-9453. [www.zooatlanta.org](http://www.zooatlanta.org).

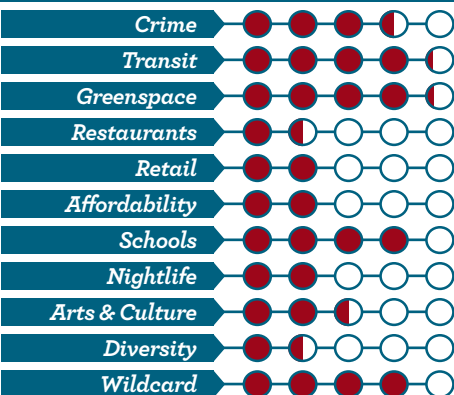
#### Grant Park Summer Shade Festival

Artist's market, wine and food booths, top-billed bands and family activities. Aug. 27-28. 840 Cherokee Ave. [www.gpconservancy.org](http://www.gpconservancy.org).

# CANDLER PARK

**RANKED**  
**No. 8**

Location » Intown/East, north of the MARTA tracks, just east of Little Five Points



## UPSIDES

From the *Kashi ashram* to the First Existentialist Congregation to the Hare Krishna temple, this is ground zero for alternative spirituality.

Good neighborhood schools.

## DOWNSIDES

House hunting and even renting has become way expensive.

The crowds waiting to get into Flying Biscuit Cafe could cause a traffic jam.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **63.49**

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **6.58**

Property crimes per 1,000 residents: **56.92**

### MEDIAN PRICE

**\$465,750**

The formerly hippie 'hood is so hot that prices have bounced back to near-bubble levels.

Average rental: **\$800**

Finding an apartment here typically means renting a room in an older house.

### EDUCATION

**A B C D F**

Mary Lin Elementary is bounded on one side by a golf course and a bike trail on two others.

### GREENSPACE

Should you tire of the eponymous 55-acre greenspace — what with its playing fields, swimming pool and a city-owned nine-hole golf course — pedal yourself to Freedom Park via the adjacent PATH trail. [www.freedompark.org](http://www.freedompark.org).



JOEFF DAVIS

Named for Coca-Cola magnate Asa Candler, who donated the parkland to Atlanta in 1922, this neighborhood is centered around a 55-acre park and 9-hole golf course. Long a hippie enclave with its small strip of boutiques and casual eateries, Candler Park remains one of Atlanta's more laid-back and quirky neighborhoods.

## HIDDEN GEM

A holdover from the 'hood's hippie era, the Lake Claire Community Land Trust is an oasis of sustainable grooviness. For 25 years, the plot off Arizona Avenue has been home to trails, communal gardens, a menagerie of pet-able animals (including Big Lou the Emu) and the clothing-optional sweat lodge. [www.lcclt.org](http://www.lcclt.org).

## WILD CARD

With few knocks against it, save for scant retail or dining options, Candler Park rates a solid eight.

**"It's just a great little neighborhood that makes you forget you're in a big city."**

— NICK PARSONS, CO-OWNER OF DR. BOMBAY'S UNDERWATER TEA PARTY

### SHOPPING

#### Candler Market

As much a wine shop as a grocery, with a lunch counter in back. 1642 McLendon Ave. 404-373-9787. [www.candlerparkmarket.com](http://www.candlerparkmarket.com).

#### Full Moon Records

Used LPs, CDs and DVDs, as well as a popular \$1 section. 1653 McLendon Ave. 404-377-1919.

### EATS

#### Dr. Bombay's

A charming coffee shop with a Mad Hatter vibe, filled with knickknacks. 1645 McLendon Ave. 404-474-1402. [www.drbombays.com](http://www.drbombays.com).

#### The Mercantile

An extensive, gourmet deli. 1660 DeKalb Ave. 404-378-0096. [www.themercantileatl.com](http://www.themercantileatl.com).

#### Gato Bizco

This tiny outpost is the sort of place you imagine in a working-class neighborhood in Chicago. 660 McLendon Ave. 404-371-0889.

### CULTURE

#### MidSummer Music Festival

Annual live music and summer festival sponsored primarily by Red Stripe. June. [www.midsummermusicfestival.com](http://www.midsummermusicfestival.com).

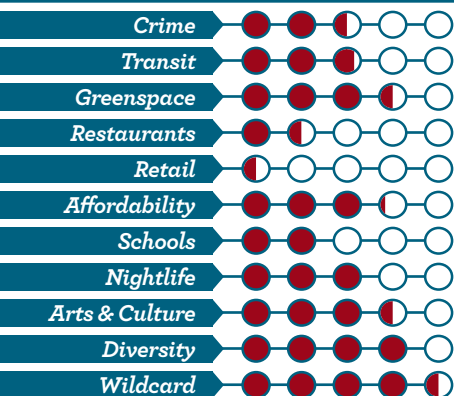
#### Candler Park Fall Fest

This laid-back autumnal celebration features food, music and a road race through the fallen leaves. Oct. 15-16. [www.candlerparkfallfest.org](http://www.candlerparkfallfest.org).



# CABBAGETOWN +REYNOLDSTOWN

Location » Intown/Southeast, in the core of the city, just east of downtown



## UPSIDES

**Because of its history** as a refuge for young, artsy types, Cabbagetown boasts strong support for nonprofits like WonderRoot, Trees Atlanta and the recently relocated Eyedrum.

**Rentals are pretty reasonable** for a neighborhood so close to the city center, too.

## DOWNSIDES

**Buying a home** here can be pricey, and crime can be dicey.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **92.53**

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **3.8**

Property crimes per 1,000 residents: **88.74**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

# \$168,400

Originally built for mill workers, Cabbagetown's older houses are cute but have few extras, while Reynoldstown is still a little dodgy in places.

**Average rental is \$800**

### EDUCATION

# ABCD F

Tech High charter school specializes in engineering, communications and IT classes.

### GREENSPACE

Cabbagetown Park sits smack-dab in the middle of the neighborhood and features a playground and, in keeping with the area's adorability factor, a tree swing. 701 Kirkwood Ave.



ALAN FRIEDMAN

Shabby-chic Cabbagetown underwent a slow transformation over the years, morphing from a downtrodden mill town brimming with dilapidated shanties to a lovingly restored artists' community — one that still retains its ramshackle charm. Neighboring Reynoldstown is right on the heels of Cabbagetown's restoration; young urbanites are setting up shop in R-town's bungalows and shotgun homes alongside old-timers who've been there for generations.

## WILD CARD

Nine points for being quirky, authentic, creative and distinct — and for the ever-evolving graffiti artist playground that is the Krog Street tunnel.

"Cabbagetown is unbeatable because of its **strong sense of neighborhood, fascinating history, unique architecture and great vibe.** It's an authentic, close-knit village."

— DAVE KNOX,  
CABBAGETOWN ARTIST/PHOTOGRAPHER

### EATS

#### Agave

The chili-laden but not overly spicy restaurant consistently turns out comforting, filling and satisfying Southwestern. 242 Boulevard. 404-588-0006. [www.agaverestaurant.com](http://www.agaverestaurant.com).

#### Carroll Street Cafe

This romantic winebar embodies Cabbagetown's eclectic sensibilities. 208 Carroll St. 404-577-2700. [www.apresdiem.com](http://www.apresdiem.com).

### SHOPPING

#### Memorial Tattoo

Revered Cabbagetown ink outpost. 190-A Carroll St. 404-681-9111. [www.memorialtattooatl.com](http://www.memorialtattooatl.com).

#### Wag-A-Lot

One of the best doggie day cares in town, and a wide selection of organic food and dog products. 840 Old Flat Shoals Road. 404-522-2230. [www.wagalot.com](http://www.wagalot.com).

### NIGHTLIFE

#### 97 Estoria

Favored watering hole for the American Apparel set to drink for cheap, eat decent bar food and soak up sun on the patio. 727 Wylie St. 404-522-0966. [www.97estoria.com](http://www.97estoria.com).

### CULTURE

#### Chomp & Stomp

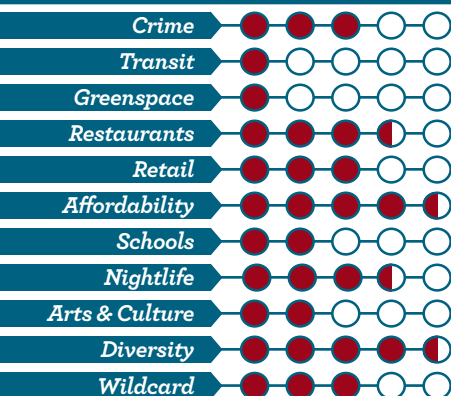
Five bucks gets you as much cook-off chilli as you can eat, plus an afternoon of priceless people-watching. Every in-the-know under-35-year-old within a 10-mile radius is here. [www.chompandstomp.com](http://www.chompandstomp.com).

#### WonderRoot

From classes and workshops to music, literary and visual arts events, this Reynoldstown art collective unites movers and shakers across Atlanta's various scenes. 982 Memorial Drive. 404-254-5955. [www.wonderroot.org](http://www.wonderroot.org).

# BUFORD HIGHWAY

Location » Northeast Atlanta/DeKalb County on either side of the Perimeter



## UPSIDES

**Food, glorious food.** You could eat each meal at a different Buford Highway restaurant without repeating for the rest of your life.

**Buford Highway's better known** for its density of apartments, but neighborhoods just off the highway offer cozy, affordable starter homes.

## DOWNSIDES

**It's a nice place to eat,** shop and sing karaoke, but once your stomach's full and your wallet's empty, you might rather live somewhere else.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **52.83**

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **9.34**

Property crimes per 1,000 residents: **43.49**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

**\$165,000**

With subdivisions of no-frills ranch homes, BuHi hasn't rebounded from the real-estate crash.

### Average rental: \$800

The six-lane state route is home to thousands of low-end to midrange apartments.

### EDUCATION

**ABCDF**

Low test scores likely attributed to a wealth of students for whom English is a second language.

### GREENSPACE

Doraville's Dresden Park offers 24 acres of fields and trails, while Flowers Park boasts a 25-meter swimming pool. [www.doravillega.us](http://www.doravillega.us).



JOEFF DAVIS

In 1974, the **Atlanta Rhythm Section** sang the virtues of Doraville with the line "Touch of country in the city." Today, you might wonder "Which country?" as you drive along Buford Highway on either side of the Doraville line. The multi-ethnic, seven-mile stretch inside and outside the I-285 perimeter is a mecca for exotic and cheap food and adventurous shopping. Looking for meat-shaped tofu? Cowboy boots or ball gowns for preschoolers? Buford Highway awaits.

## WILD CARD

We adore the 'hood as one of our most valuable cultural treasures, but it's a little ... highway-like, which earns it six points.

"We see all types of people — blue collar, white collar, people from all over the world. This is a place to gather and run into your neighbors and family."

— **HIEU PHAM**, ATLANTA-BORN VIETNAMESE/CHINESE/CAMBODIAN MANAGER OF CRAWFISH SHACK SEAFOOD

### EATS

#### So Kong Dong

Red-hot tofu soup, cold noodles, small fried fish, kimchee galore. Hangover cure of the gods. 5280 Buford Highway, Suite C. 678-205-0555.

#### Pho Dai Loi

Some of the best in pho Atlanta, perfect spring rolls and killer Vietnamese coffees. 4186 Buford Highway, Suite G. 404-633-2111.

#### Sushi House Hayakawa

Hayakawa is obsessed with freshness, purity and skill, and it shows. 5979 Buford Highway. 770-986-0010. [www.atlantasushibar.com](http://www.atlantasushibar.com).

#### El Rey del Taco

Combine homemade tortillas and authentic meats with fresh masa and behold: El Rey del Taco! 5288 Buford Highway. 770-986-0032.

### SHOPPING

#### Buford Highway Farmers Market

Huge space with hard-to-find Asian and Latino wares and uncommon meats. 5600 Buford Highway. 770-455-0770. [www.aofwc.com](http://www.aofwc.com).

#### Plaza Fiesta

Over 200 shops selling frilly dresses, cowboy hats and chili-flavored lollipops. 4166 Buford Highway. 404-982-9138. [www.plazafiesta.net](http://www.plazafiesta.net).

### NIGHTLIFE

#### El Chaparral

A mostly Hispanic crowd that flocks to both hip-hop and LGBT nights. 2715 Buford Highway. 678-568-9657. [www.chaparralatlanta.com](http://www.chaparralatlanta.com).

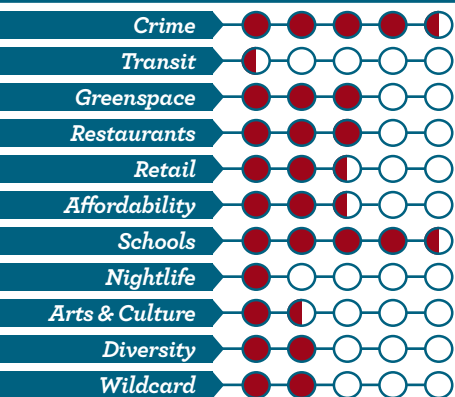
#### Mansion Elan

Hip-hop meets architectural artifice. Think gothic columns, Roman statues and crystal chandeliers. 3595 Clairmont Road. 404-997-6900. [www.themansionelan.com](http://www.themansionelan.com).



# VININGS + SMYRNA

Location » Vinings: Intown/Northwest. Smyrna: Suburbs/Northwest



**Situated on a ridge** high above the Chattahoochee, Vinings' rep as an upscale shopping and dining destination remains untarnished. And Smyrna is growing into its own notable destination, thanks in part to the Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre.

## UPSIDES

*The area is home* to several good restaurants, as well as boutiques and antique shops.

*The 'hood boasts a low crime rate.*

## DOWNSIDES

*The area isn't very walkable* or transit-friendly.

*Nightlife seekers will be* left wanting.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **28.46**

Total violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **2.72**

Total property crimes per 1,000 residents: **25.75**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

# \$165,136

Add another 100 Gs or so to upgrade from "Smyrnings" to Vinings proper.

**Average rental: \$750**

### EDUCATION

# A B C D F

Campbell High School's most famous graduate: Julia Roberts.

### GREENSPACE

The Chattahoochee River National Rec Area is nearby. Or hop on the Silver Comet Trail and pedal to Alabama. [www.silvercometga.com](http://www.silvercometga.com).

### DIVERSITY

Vinings is a predominantly white, while Smyrna has black, Hispanic and Asian populations.

## HIDDEN GEM

The Vinings Butcher and Deli is a one-stop shop for cut-to-order meats, deli items and sandwiches. 2810 Paces Ferry Road. 770-805-4011. [www.viningsbutcheranddeli.com](http://www.viningsbutcheranddeli.com).

## WILD CARD

Four points, due to word aversion to the area's nickname, "Smyrnings."

### EATS

#### Muss and Turner's

Equal parts upscale deli and neighborhood bistro. 1675 Cumberland Parkway, Suite 309. 770-434-1114. [www.mussandturners.com](http://www.mussandturners.com).

#### Canoe

Classic food, situated along a stunning stretch of the Chattahoochee. 4199 Paces Ferry Road. 770-432-2663. [www.canoeatl.com](http://www.canoeatl.com).

### SHOPPING

#### Emly Benham

A local favorite for its top-tier shoes and bags. 4300 Paces Ferry Road, Suite 228. 678-213-2595. [www.emlybenham.wordpress.com](http://www.emlybenham.wordpress.com).

### NIGHTLIFE

#### Vinings Inn

Quaint, historic inn with Southern charm, an antique vibe and live music. 3011 Paces Mill Road. 770-438-2282. [www.viningsinn.com](http://www.viningsinn.com).

### CULTURE

#### Jonquil Festival

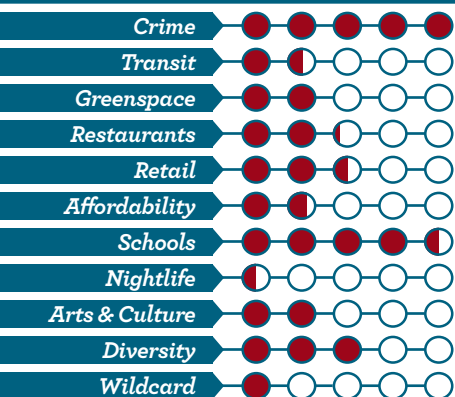
Semi-annual arts fest and street party in downtown Smyrna is popular with locals. April 30-May 1 and Oct. 22-23. [www.smyrnacity.com](http://www.smyrnacity.com).

#### Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre

Premier venue for Broadway shows, concerts and opera. 2800 Cobb Galleria Parkway. 770-916-2800. [www.cobbenergycentre.com](http://www.cobbenergycentre.com).

# SANDY SPRINGS

Location » Suburbs/North: Straddling I-285 at the very top of the Perimeter



Despite its OTP location and big-box retail strips, Sandy Springs has an urban feel, from the busy lunchtime rush to the crushing traffic. But its active network of community organizations, boutiques and local restaurants help give the area its soul.

## UPSIDES

*Great for families*, thanks to its low crime rate, top-notch schools and great public library.

*Eclectic, high-end antique shops*.

## DOWNSIDES

*Some of the worst traffic* in metro Atlanta, a dearth of nightlife and high home prices.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **14.87**

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **1.01**

Property crimes per 1,000 residents: **13.86**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

# \$330,600

Home prices took a tumble in 2008, but remain some of the highest in metro Atlanta.

*Average rental is \$800*

### EDUCATION

# ABCD F

Schools are among the most diverse in metro Atlanta. Riverwood High School boasts a special international studies magnet program.

### GREENSPACE

Newly opened 159-acre Morgan Falls Park overlooks Bull Sluice Lake. 450 Morgan Falls Road. 404-730-6200. [www.sandyspringsga.org](http://www.sandyspringsga.org).

### DIVERSITY

Mostly white, with notable slices of black and Hispanic populations.

## HIDDEN GEM

Heritage Sandy Springs' community gardens play host to free concerts, festivals and weddings. 6110 Blue Stone Road. 404-851-9111. [www.heritagesandysprings.org](http://www.heritagesandysprings.org).

## WILD CARD

Two points — the pros don't stack up against the horrific traffic and high home prices.

### EATS

## 5 Seasons

Excellent house-brewed beer, lobster cakes, pommes frites and grilled pizzas. 5600 Roswell Road. 404-255-5911. [www.5seasonsbrewing.com](http://www.5seasonsbrewing.com).

## Rumi's Kitchen

Upscale Persian food in a breezy, modern setting. 6152 Roswell Road. 404-477-2100. [www.rumiskitchen.com](http://www.rumiskitchen.com).

### SHOPPING

## Little European Bakery

Artisanal breads, cakes, cookies and European-style pastries. 334 Sandy Springs Circle. 404-255-8200. [www.littleeuropeanbakery.com](http://www.littleeuropeanbakery.com).

### NIGHTLIFE

## Punchline Comedy Club

Has played host to Eddie Murphy, Jerry Seinfeld and Dave Chappelle. 280 Hilderbrand Drive. 404-252-5233. [www.punchline.com](http://www.punchline.com).

### CULTURE

## Sandy Springs Festival

Popular fest with artists market, music and car show. Sept. 17-18. 6075 Sandy Springs Circle. 404-851-9111. [www.sandyspringsfestival.com](http://www.sandyspringsfestival.com).

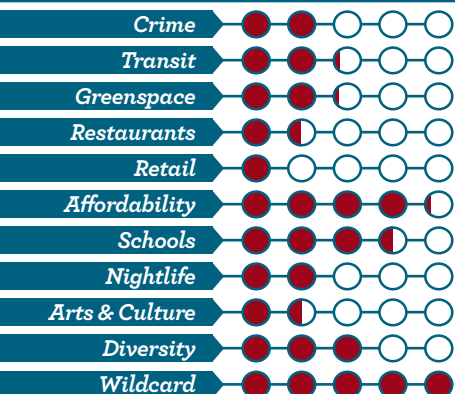
## Jewish Film Festival

Three-week event features dozens of films at LeFont theatre and other venues. Usually takes places in January or February. [www.ajff.org](http://www.ajff.org).



# ORMEWOOD PARK

Location » Intown, between East Atlanta and Grant Park, south of I-20



This verdant, diverse and quiet neighborhood has a storied history of being a good place to settle down and raise a family — while still being close to the East Atlanta haunts you enjoyed in your younger days.

## UPSIDES

Compared to other neighborhoods, it's relatively cheap to buy or rent.

Lots are huge and the housing styles run the gamut.

The schools are both diverse and good.

## DOWNSIDES

It's walkable, but unless you want to get ice cream, there's not much to walk to.

The gritty, beautiful Beltline segment nearby is still active railroad — and off-limits.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **105.28**

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **18.63**

Property crimes per 1,000 residents: **86.65**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

# \$168,500

If you can't find a suitable house on one of Ormeewood Park's tree-lined streets, you haven't looked hard enough.

Average rental: **\$1,000**

### DIVERSITY

Just more than 50 percent white, with a decent-sized black population as well.

### EDUCATION

# A B C D F

The Atlanta Charter Middle School, which sits in the heart of the community, recently merged with Grant Park's Neighborhood Charter School.

### GREENSPACE

Once a kudzu-covered lot, Jacqui Fuller Woodland Garden Park — the only city greenspace in Ormeewood Park — owes its present-day beauty to the careful tending and planning by its namesake, a neighborhood resident who died in 1995.

## HIDDEN GEM

On Gilbert Avenue, there's a house built out of one of the famed Ormeewood streetcars.

## WILD CARD

It's the last scrappy, truly affordable intown neighborhood that's livable, earning it 10 points.

### EATS

#### Spoon

What may appear as your run-of-the-mill noodle and rice place turns out to be some of the best Thai in town. 749 Moreland Ave. 404-624-4713. [www.spoonatlanta.com](http://www.spoonatlanta.com).

#### Morelli's Ice Cream

It's hard to go wrong with even the simplest flavors at this mom-and-pop stand. 749 Moreland Ave. 404-622-0210. [www.morellisicecream.com](http://www.morellisicecream.com).

### SHOPPING

#### Lucky Exchange

An off-the-beaten-track collection of near-pristine vintage threads. 749 Moreland Ave. 404-622-4848. [www.luckyexchange.com](http://www.luckyexchange.com).

### CULTURE

#### Hotoberfest

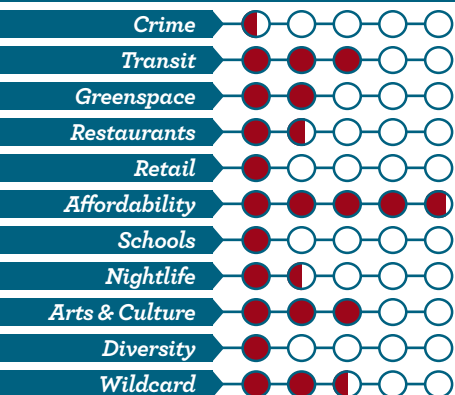
This neighborhood beer fest benefits Trees Atlanta and Legacy World Missions. Oct. 1. [www.hotoberfest.net](http://www.hotoberfest.net).

"I love our neighborhood's old big trees and gorgeous flowering trees (especially this time of year). I love that I'm minutes from downtown and at the same time have a forest in my backyard. And I love that I can walk to the best ice cream in Atlanta (Morelli's)!"

— JULIE FISHMAN,  
ORMEWOOD PARK RESIDENT SINCE 1997

# WEST END

Location » Intown/Southwest



Besides being home to the Atlanta University Center, the 'hood runneth over with the kind of cultural dichotomy — from Southern folkloric figure Uncle Remus to such Afrocentric institutions as the Shrine of the Black Madonna — that could only be nurtured in one of the city's oldest communities.

## UPSIDES

**Affordable, artist-friendly studios** and warehouse spaces.

**A nationally registered historic district** with Victorian homes and cobblestone streets.

## DOWNSIDES

**Let's just say the Mall West End** is not among the city's premier shopping destinations.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **172.87**

Total violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **25.25**

Total property crimes per 1,000 residents: **147.61**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

# \$84,500

This area has bank-owned bungalows going for \$12,000 on up to restored Victorian showplaces.

**Average rental is \$700.**

### DIVERSITY

The West End is an overwhelmingly African-American neighborhood.

### EDUCATION

# ABCD F

Brown Middle School students wear uniforms, but the schools lag in test scores and diversity.

### GREENSPACE

The Outdoor Activity Center and Cascade Springs Nature Preserve offer miles of hiking through largely untouched woods. [www.wawaonline.org](http://www.wawaonline.org).

## HIDDEN GEM

"Art of the Negro," a mural by Georgia artist Hale Woodruff, decorates the atrium of the Clark Atlanta University art galleries. 223 James P. Brawley Drive. 404-880-6102. [www.cau.edu](http://www.cau.edu).

## WILD CARD

Five points for having more finger-lickin' soul food joints than you can shake an oxtail at.

**"When you live in this neighborhood, you become more than just a person in a house. You become part of a community."**

— **NIA KNOWLES**, CHAIRWOMAN OF THE WEST END'S NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING UNIT

### EATS

## Busy Bee

This venerated soul-food joint serves up some of the city's best fried chicken at a price that's hard to beat. 810 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. 404-525-9212. [www.thebusybeecafe.com](http://www.thebusybeecafe.com).

## Beautiful Restaurant

No-nonsense cafeteria-style soul food till 11 p.m. seven nights a week! 2260 Cascade Road. 404-752-5931. [www.beautifulrestaurant-atlanta.com](http://www.beautifulrestaurant-atlanta.com).

### CULTURE

## Hammonds House Museum

Museum in a historic Queen Anne house sponsoring exhibitions and events celebrating the culture of the African Diaspora. 503 Peeples St. 404-612-0500. [www.hammondshouse.org](http://www.hammondshouse.org).

## Wren's Nest

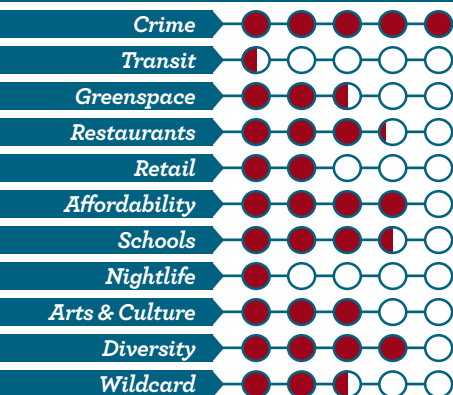
Victorian home of "Uncle Remus" author Joel Chandler Harris with performances by master storytellers. 1050 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd. 404-753-7735. [www.wrensnestonline.com](http://www.wrensnestonline.com).



# MARIETTA

RANKED  
No.10

Location » OTP/Northwest, just north of Smyrna



**Don't write off this one-time Civil War outpost.** Anchored by a charming town square and boasting more than its share of impressive old houses and historic sites, the city has managed to craft a reputation as a diamond in the roughs of suburbia.

## UPSIDES

*The schools are top-notch* and offer a variety of programs to challenge your kids.

*The square's a public treasure*, and the city doesn't hesitate to close down surrounding streets for concerts, festivals or fireworks.

## DOWNSIDES

*If you work intown*, be prepared to waste several hours a week on clogged interstates.

*The Big Chicken*, the campy, 60-foot-tall robotic clucker, has become an unofficial landmark — and most likely will never, ever die.

## MEDIAN HOME PRICE

# \$162,750

Homes run the gamut from antebellum-style mansions to small row houses.

**Average rental: \$700**

## EDUCATION

# ABCD F

Marietta boasts one of Georgia's first charter systems, which allow local school officials more flexibility in setting curriculum.

## GREENSPACE

The site of one of the Civil War's most brutal battles, the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park is now a recreational wonderland with unmatched views of the Atlanta skyline and Stone Mountain. [www.nps.gov/kemo](http://www.nps.gov/kemo).

## DIVERSITY

Very diverse mix of white, black and Latino.

## HIDDEN GEM

On Friday nights during Marietta High School's football season, virtually every man, woman and teen in the city packs Northcutt Stadium, the seriously no-frills, '40s-era stadium. 121 Winn St.

## WILD CARD

Five points for being a livable suburb. But still, it's a suburb.

"I love Marietta because of the small-town feel with big-city benefits.

**Everything we need is within 15 minutes:** mall, grocery stores, shops, hundreds of restaurants."

— MISSY HUNTER, HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER

## EATS

### Falafel Cafe

Ironically weak falafel, but the stews and the dips are some of the best home-style Persian in town. 950 Cobb Parkway. 770-429-8999.

### Tasty China

With Peter Chang again at the helm, this is the spiciest, most alluring Szechuan in the region. 585 Franklin Road. 770-419-9849.

## SHOPPING

### Eddie's Trick Shop

Before you run off to join the circus, visit Eddie's for magic tricks, makeup and juggling supplies. 70 S. Park Square. 770-428-4314. [www.eddiestrickshop.com](http://www.eddiestrickshop.com).

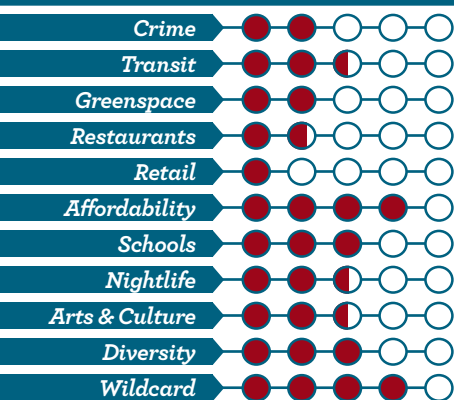
## CULTURE

### Strand Theatre

The 1935 art deco movie house stood vacant for years on Marietta's historic square. The restored venue proves cozier than the Fox Theatre with less grindhouse funk than the Plaza. 117 N. Park Square. 770-293-0080. [www.earlsmithstrand.org](http://www.earlsmithstrand.org).

# KIRKWOOD

Location » Intown/East of Moreland Avenue, south of DeKalb Avenue



**Still not entirely gentrified,** Kirkwood is a hodgepodge of restored homes and quaint bungalows. The small retail district has yet to crest, but most amenities are only a short drive away, and the neighborhood has parks and bike trails aplenty.

## UPSIDES

**Proximity to MARTA,** Decatur and I-20.

**An ideal intown bedroom community** with a small-town feel.

## DOWNSIDES

**High crime** and few restaurant and retail options.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **108.06**

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **27.01**

Property crimes per 1,000 residents: **81.05**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

# \$195,696

With lovely Craftsman bungalows and room for new construction, Kirkwood has been a gentrifier's playground for the past decade.

**Average rental: \$800**

### EDUCATION

# AB C D F

Coan Middle School is home to the only Confucius Institute in the Southeast.

## HIDDEN GEM

Off of a quiet residential street, Morris Restaurant & Lounge is an old-school dive with a working-class black clientele who comes to dance. 2254 Oakview Road. 404-378-9262.

"Kirkwood is definitely a neighborhood; everyone gets to know their neighbors, and **they love getting to know and supporting their local business owners.**"

— ALANA KELLY, OWNER, GITCHE YAH YAH

### EATS

## Le Petit Marché

Fresh-baked cookies, scrumptious sandwiches and fancy sundries. 1963 Hosea L. Williams Drive. 404-371-9888. [www.thelittlemarket.net](http://www.thelittlemarket.net).

## Sun in My Belly

Impressive brunch menu until 4 p.m. at this hardware-store-turned-restaurant. Challah french toast with ricotta, anyone? 1345 Piedmont Road. 404-532-7375. [www.suninmybelly.com](http://www.suninmybelly.com).

### SHOPPING

## Kirkwood Feed and Seed

Premium pet supplies, dog washing and pro dog photos. 1998 Hosea L. Williams Drive. 404-378-2829. [www.kirkwoodfeedandseed.com](http://www.kirkwoodfeedandseed.com).

### NIGHTLIFE

## Aces

Neighborhood hangout that's good for a quiet drink or two. 1992 Hosea L. Williams Drive. 404-377-9577. [www.kirkwoodaces.com](http://www.kirkwoodaces.com).

## Picaflor Studio

Yoga studio by day, cutting-edge art gallery and indie music spot by night. 195 Arizona Ave. 404-247-6432. [www.picaflorstudio.com](http://www.picaflorstudio.com).

## Arizona Pub

A bustling spot with a nightclub vibe. The sofas upstairs are a good place to catch up with friends. 130 Arizona Ave. 404-370-0550.

### CULTURE

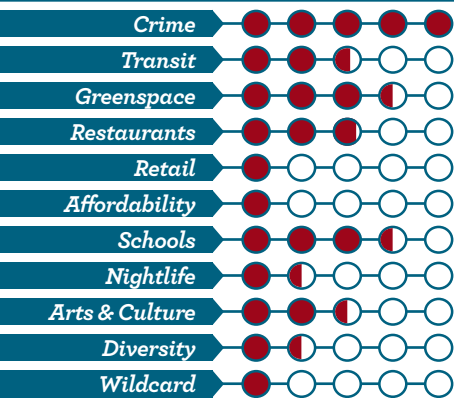
## Kirkwood Spring Fling and Tour of Homes

Kirkwood has as much architectural charm as it does community spirit, which is to say a lot. The Fling features a tour of homes, 5K, music and more. May 14-15. Bessie Benham Park, 2051 Delano Drive. [www.kirkwoodfling.com](http://www.kirkwoodfling.com).



# EMORY +DRUID HILLS

Location » Intown/Northeast



**Civic-minded families coexist** with coeds in Emory and neighboring Druid Hills, home to resplendent homes, a bustling retail strip undergoing a major overhaul, and, on its southern edge, a celebrated linear greenspace designed by Frederick Law Olmsted.

## UPSIDES

**Good schools**, safe streets and plenty of green-space make this a haven for families.

## DOWNSIDES

**Constant presence of college students** serves as a nagging reminder that you're getting old.

**Morning and afternoon traffic** around Emory University and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention can be a nightmare.

## MEDIAN HOME PRICE

# \$350,000

Streets lined with old-school mansions make Druid Hills a home-tour organizer's wet dream.

**Average rental is \$1,000**; plenty of the larger homes rent rooms for students.

## GREENSPACE

Emory's 185-acre Lullwater Park has a gorgeous lake, trails, and an awesome suspension bridge spanning the South Fork of Peachtree Creek.

## EDUCATION

# A B C D F

Fernbank Elementary sits across the street from its namesake science center, making field trips easy, while Paideia is *the* private school for crunchy, creative, intown liberals.

## EATS

### Mezza Lebanese Bistro

A family restaurant serving delicious Lebanese food to a thankful clientele. 2751 Lavista Road. 404-633-8833. [www.mezzabistro.com](http://www.mezzabistro.com).

### Bagel Palace

With 18 varieties of bagels and an extensive menu including blintzes, knishes and challah bread. 2869 N. Druid Hills Road. 404-315-9016.

### Floataway Café

The less decadent younger sibling of Bacchanalia, Floataway is the essence of decadent chill. 1123 Zonolite Road. 404-892-1414. [www.starprovisions.com](http://www.starprovisions.com).

## SHOPPING

### Finders Keepers Boutique

Women's consignment store with hip brands. 2130 N. Decatur Road. 404-634-6995. [www.finderskeepersconsignment.biz](http://www.finderskeepersconsignment.biz).

### Wuxtry

Long-running record and CD shop with solid selection of indie, folk and early country. 2096 N. Decatur Road. 404-329-0020. [www.wuxtryrecords.com](http://www.wuxtryrecords.com).

## CULTURE

### Fernbank Museum of Natural History

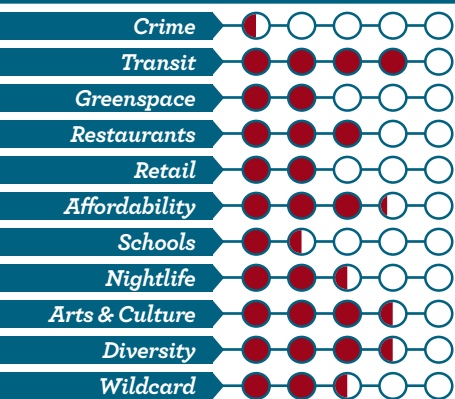
The spectacularly designed museum features an IMAX theater, traveling shows and interactive science exhibitions. 767 Clifton Road. 404-929-6300. [www.fernbankmuseum.org](http://www.fernbankmuseum.org).

### Michael C. Carlos Museum

The building, designed by post-modern architect Michael Graves, houses the Southeast's largest collection of ancient art from Egypt, Greece, Rome and Central America. 571 S. Kilgo Circle. 404-727-4282. [www.carlos.emory.edu](http://www.carlos.emory.edu).

# DOWNTOWN

Location » In the middle of it all



With Georgia State University's enrollment topping 30,000 and Centennial Olympic Park now a major family draw, downtown is not the ghost town it once was. The newish W and Twelve hotels have likewise helped bring nightlife to what had been a dead zone after dark.

## UPSIDES

In a sprawling metropolis like Atlanta, downtown is where you go to feel like you're in a big city.

The Georgia Aquarium provides a reliable attraction for visiting family members.

## DOWNSIDES

Panhandlers. Tourists. Conventioneers. A maze of one-way streets.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **178.01**

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **15.64**

Property crimes per 1,000 residents: **163.37**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

**\$94,200**

Downtown residential choices are limited to lofts, apartments or Centennial Place townhomes.

Average rental: **\$800**

## WILD CARD

Five points for being home to one of the few surviving Trader Vic's tiki bars in the U.S.

### EATS

#### Social Restaurant

Downtown's great hidden gem: Euro-centric, casual, affordable, welcoming. 12 W. Peachtree Place. 404-525-2246. [www.socialintown.com](http://www.socialintown.com).

#### Lunacy Black Market

This place is so good, so weird and so cheap it's hard to believe it's legal. 231 Mitchell St. 404-736-6164. [www.lunacyblackmarket.com](http://www.lunacyblackmarket.com).

#### BLT Steak

Some of the best (and priciest) steaks in town, served at the bottom of the Downtown W Hotel. 45 Ivan Allen Jr. Blvd. 404-577-7601. [www.bltsteak.com](http://www.bltsteak.com).

### SHOPPING

#### Sweet Auburn Curb Market

Stalls selling soul food, burgers and 10-pound bags of pig knuckles. 209 Edgewood Ave. 404-659-1665. [www.sweetaurncurbmarket.com](http://www.sweetaurncurbmarket.com).

### NIGHTLIFE

#### DrinkShop

Blue velvet, craft cocktails and a bar that glows. Inside the W. 45 Ivan Allen Jr. Blvd. 404-582-5789. [www.starwoodhotels.com/whotels](http://www.starwoodhotels.com/whotels).

#### Magic City

Donkey butts and dollar bills reign in this 25-year-old institution among strip joints. 241 Forsyth St. 404-584-5847. [www.magiccity.com](http://www.magiccity.com).

#### Pal's Lounge

As historic as its Auburn Avenue address, Pal's is funkier than Rick James' jheri curl and hosts the city's crunkest karaoke nights every Tuesday. 254 Auburn Ave. 404-524-4300.

### CULTURE

#### Dragon\*Con

Labor Day weekend fantasy convention hosts a parade of characters from movies and comics. Sept. 2-5. Hyatt Regency and other downtown hotels. [www.dragoncon.org](http://www.dragoncon.org).

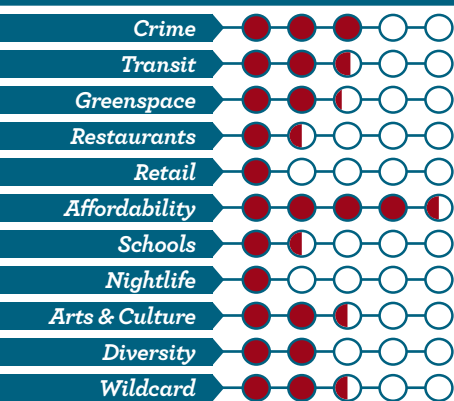
#### National Black Arts Festival

More than 1,000 artists dedicated to work from the Caribbean, Africa, Europe and the Americas are expected at this 10-day cultural festival. July. [www.nbaf.org](http://www.nbaf.org).



# COLLEGE PARK

Location » Suburbs/Intown: In the far southwestern corner of the Perimeter



## MEDIAN HOME PRICE

**\$74,000**

Houses in College Park and nearby East Point run the gamut from quaint and homey to cheap and trashy, sometimes in the same block.

**Average rental: \$650**

## EDUCATION

**A B C D F**

Tri-Cities High School boasts OutKast as well-known grads.

## GREENSPACE

While the city has plenty of parks offering ball fields and tennis courts, it's hard to beat Barrett Park, a well-designed, visible park where diverse groups of children gallivant on quality playgrounds as adults enjoy a walking loop.

## HIDDEN GEM

Not much to choose from, so let's go with Barbecue Kitchen, a dive-y meat 'n' three restaurant that serves barbecue, catfish and Southern veggies in a no-frills setting. 1437 Virginia Ave. 404-766-9906.

## WILD CARD

Five points for affordability and the potential of its nifty row of Main Street storefronts. The hip Hotel Indigo chain is planning to put its newest property near the College Park MARTA station.

## SHOPPING

### Poor Little Rich Girl

Vintage boutique with a hipster edge carrying affordable duds, jewelry, accessories and shoes for women and men. Also offers rental services. 3393 Main St. 404-423-9546. [www.poorlilrichgirls.blogspot.com](http://www.poorlilrichgirls.blogspot.com).

**Small College Park has several claims to local fame:** It's a three-minute MARTA ride from the airport; it's home to Woodward Academy, the largest private school in the continental U.S.; and it boasts one of Georgia's largest historic districts, with more than 700 homes on the National Register of Historic Places. But its picturesque Main Street has been hit hard by the economy, so for now, it's primarily an ITP bedroom community with a small-town feel.

## UPSIDES

**Apart from the pretty homes,** it's easy to get almost anywhere, with quick access to I-85, I-285 and Camp Creek Parkway. And did we mention you're one MARTA stop away from Delta check-in?

## DOWNSIDES

**Few restaurants, even fewer shops.** These days, College Park feels pretty dead.

## CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **26.69**

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **3.86**

Property crimes per 1,000 residents: **22.83**

## DIVERSITY

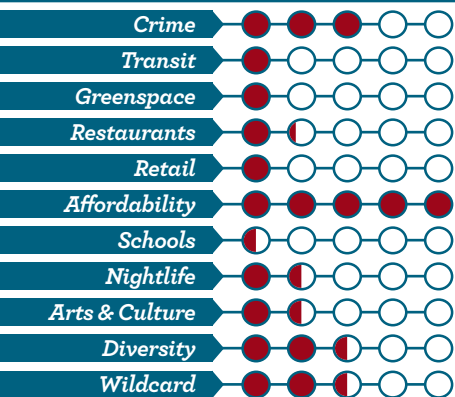
College Park is a predominantly African-American neighborhood with a sprinkling of white residents.

**"I love the architecture here and the cleanness of the city, which has great public services and low taxes. But mostly, I found a 1923 bungalow next to a wonderfully renovated city park."**

— **TOM FULKERSON**, REAL ESTATE AGENT

# CLARKSTON

Location » Suburbs/East: DeKalb County just outside I-285



## EDUCATION

### AB C D F

The schools aren't much, but your kid could be in a class with one of the Fugees soccer players.

## DIVERSITY

Mostly black, although Clarkston is home to residents from many countries, including Ethiopia and Nepal.

## HIDDEN GEM

Forty Oaks is a gorgeous nature preserve and dog park that sits right on Market Street, about two blocks off Ponce de Leon Avenue.

## WILD CARD

Five bonus points for Clarkston's multi-culti factor and its shabby-chic adorableness.

## SHOPPING

### Records Galore

An old-school record store that carries used country, rock and hip-hop vinyl. 4148 E. Ponce de Leon Ave. 404-294-5271.

## NIGHTLIFE

### Pho Truc

Steaming bowls of pho, cheap cold beer and free live music Thursday nights. 926 Montreal Road. 404-294-0404.

## CULTURE

### WRFG Peach Blossom Bluegrass Festival

Nonprofit community radio station WRFG (89.3-FM)'s annual benefit/festival hosts a great lineup of bluegrass performers. Sat., April 2, 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Clarkston Community Center, 3701 College Ave. 404-523-3471. [www.wrfg.org](http://www.wrfg.org).

On the surface, quaint and rural Clarkston feels more like Main Street USA than suburban Atlanta. But over the past few years, the east DeKalb enclave has become something of a post-hipster nesting place — or, as one resident described it, “a punk rock retirement village.”

## UPSIDES

**Clarkston's main draws** are its diversity and abundance of affordable vintage homes on sprawling lots. It's a mere 10-minute drive to downtown Decatur and a stone's throw from Your DeKalb Farmers Market. Plus, the PATH bike trail runs straight through town.

## DOWNSIDES

**Yeah, it's close to Decatur** — but other than that, Clarkston's kind of out there.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **63.73**

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **8.5**

Property crimes per 1,000 residents: **55.23**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

## \$53,000

Artists and designers have flocked to Clarkston for its low-priced houses.

**Average rental: \$600**

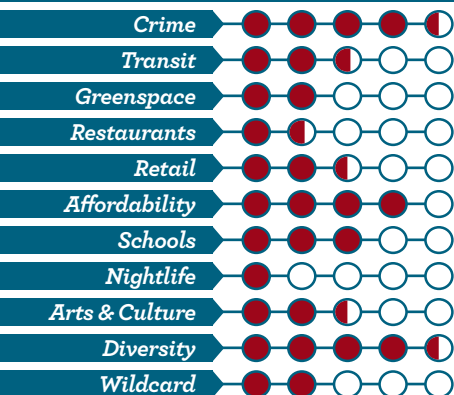
“I love my neighbors because they come in all types: **young couples with babies, older Asian ladies out walking every morning, people doing yard work.** We all know each other's faces and people wave.”

— **HEATHER GULDEN**, PET STORE OWNER WHO LIVES ON MARKET STREET



# CHAMBLEE

Location » Intown/Northeast: DeKalb County just inside the Perimeter



In his 1998 novel *A Man in Full*, Tom Wolfe titled one chapter “Chambodia” in r Chamblee’s immigrant population. In the ensuing decade, the neighborhood has begun to gentrify, attracting young professionals looking for affordable housing inside the Perimeter.

## UPSIDES

*It’s conveneint to Buford Highway’s* polyglot restaurants, Buckhead’s tony shops, Oglethorpe University’s cultural draws, and the MARTA line.

*Antiques addicts can spend hours* browsing its cluster of shops, which provide old-school props for Georgia’s booming film industry.

## DOWNSIDES

*There’s not a lot to do in Chamblee per se*, and between Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Buford Highway and the railroad tracks, the residential neighborhoods feel a bit squeezed.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **22.84**

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **2.7**

Property crimes per 1,000 residents: **20.14**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

# \$200,000

Chamblee is home to some of the area’s newest transit-oriented developments.

*Average rental: \$700*

## WILD CARD

Four points for the chance of finding an antique magic lamp to grant you three wishes. The odds are still low, but higher in Chamblee.

“I’ve been on this corner for 37 years, and it’s been like this since before I got here. **We have fun around here.** I hope they take me out feet first.”

— SHIRLEY MADDOX, FOR 37 YEARS THE PROPRIETOR OF RUST N’ DUST ANTIQUES

### EATS

#### Shoya

Stunningly authentic Japanese izakaya — the most fun you’ll have eating stuff you don’t recognize. 6035 Peachtree Road. 770-457-5555. [www.shoayatlanta.com](http://www.shoayatlanta.com).

### SHOPPING

#### Antique Factory

Art deco chrome, arts and crafts furniture. 5505 Peachtree Road. 770-455-7570. [www.antiquefactory.net](http://www.antiquefactory.net).

#### Broad Street Antiques

This 20,000-square-foot antique mall has ... just about everything. 3550 Broad St. 770-458-6316. [www.broadstreetantiquemall.com](http://www.broadstreetantiquemall.com).

### NIGHTLIFE

#### The Velvet Room

The long lines just to get in the door say it all: This is where the city’s black Hollywood set comes to ball. 3358 Chamblee Tucker Road. 404-874-4460. [www.velvetatl.com](http://www.velvetatl.com).

### CULTURE

#### Georgia Shakespeare

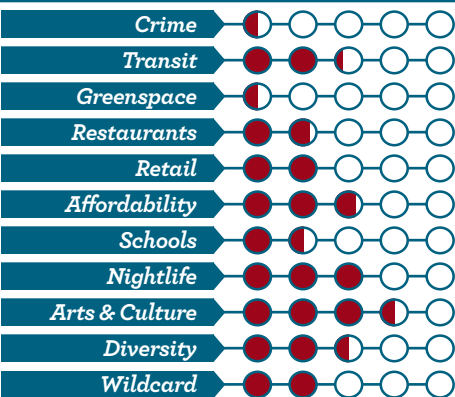
Slick, reliable and at times surprising productions of the Bard and other classics. Conant Performing Arts Center, Oglethorpe University, 4484 Peachtree Road. 404-264-0020. [www.gashakespeare.org](http://www.gashakespeare.org).

#### Oglethorpe University Museum of Art

Intimate space that exhibits everything from Tibetan art to Russian painting. 4484 Peachtree Road. 404-364-8555. [museum.oglethorpe.edu](http://museum.oglethorpe.edu).

# CASTLEBERRY HILL

Location » Intown/Southwest of downtown



Home to loft dwellers by day and a hip nightlife scene after hours, Castleberry Hill is ground zero for creatives on the come-up. And its mix of vintage storefronts, historic warehouses and a killer skyline makes it the preferred urban haunt for on-location music video, TV and film shoots.

## UPSIDES

The coolest cultural fusion occurs when patrons of the monthly Friday night ArtStroll and the late-night lounge crowd spill onto the sidewalks in a mishmash of metropolitan flavor.

## DOWNSIDES

Not to knock the hustle, but the parking pan-handlers that crawl out of the woodwork after dark can be a bit of a nuisance.

### CRIME

Average total crimes per 1,000 residents: **173.86**

Violent crimes per 1,000 residents: **29.75**

Property crimes per 1,000 residents: **147.11**

### MEDIAN HOME PRICE

# \$170,882

Although the typical loft unit lists for more than \$300,000, sales have been slow in Castleberry.

**Average rental: \$1,200**

### GREENSPACE

Castleberry lacks an actual city park, but residents have adopted an area between two loft buildings for movie nights and yard sales, and the new dog park is a regular gathering area.

## WILD CARD

Once the trendiest of intown neighborhoods, Castleberry's hip quotient already seems to be on the wane after a five-year run, earning it a meager four points.

"A lot of free-spirited people and entrepreneurs live in the neighborhood. It's an extension of downtown — kinda like the Meatpacking District in New York."

— NAPOLEON WILLIAMS, OWNER OF VITESSE EXCHANGE CLOTHING BOUTIQUE

### EATS

#### Slice

The pizza's cool, but the mix of creatives and hip-hop hopefuls give this location its vibe. 259 Peters St. 404-588-1820. [www.sliceatlanta.com](http://www.sliceatlanta.com).

### SHOPPING

#### Adrene Boutique

Chic boutique owned by celebrity stylist Adrene Ashford. 262 Peters St. 404-688-8876. [www.adreneboutique.com](http://www.adreneboutique.com).

#### City of Ink

Tattoo parlor doubling as an art gallery and hub for Atlanta's indie hip-hop scene. 323 Walker St. 404-525-4465. [www.thecityofink.com](http://www.thecityofink.com).

### NIGHTLIFE

#### Elliott Street Deli & Pub

The closest thing the 'hood has to a members-only pub; the regulars possess zero pretense, the sandwiches are surprisingly good and every Wednesday the music is live. 51 Elliott St. 404-523-2174. [www.elliottstreet.com](http://www.elliottstreet.com).

### CULTURE

#### ArtStroll

Open galleries create a street-art, block-party vibe the second Friday night of every month. [www.castleberryhill.org](http://www.castleberryhill.org).

#### Marcia Wood Gallery

A great selection of regional and national artists working in every medium and united by their provocative pieces. 263 Walker St. 404-827-0030. [www.marciawoodgallery.com](http://www.marciawoodgallery.com).

#### Flux

A one-night celebration of public art, with large and small-scale projections, dance, music and more. Sept. 30. [www.fluxprojects.org](http://www.fluxprojects.org).