

Atlanta



For young professionals, Atlanta is a great city with a lot to offer. The city's economy has grown tremendously in the last decade. Serving as the headquarters for CNN and several Fortune 500 companies, including Coke, Delta, and UPS, the city boasts many job opportunities and has attracted a large population of recent college graduates. In late 2007, Forbes ranked Atlanta the number 3 city for young professionals out of 40 major cities. CNN has also recently named Atlanta's downtown the very first "Zero Waste Zone". From the bars in Buckhead and clubs in Midtown to the frequent sporting events and numerous outdoor activities plus some southern charm, Atlanta has something for everyone.

HOT SPOTS IN ATLANTA

Buckhead• Featured in Tom Wolfe's *A Man in Full* and often called the "Beverly Hills of the South," this strip of bars, restaurants, and beautiful homes north of the city is Atlanta's most famous neighborhood. The area has entertainment for everyone, including all night bars with country music that resemble the Corner. It is also the home of Lenox and Phipps Plaza Malls, two of the nicest and most famous malls in the South.

Mid-Town• In between downtown and Buckhead, Mid-Town has the feel of a miniature New York City, and it most resembles true city life in the Atlanta area. The area is filled with museums, clubs, restaurants, and boutique shops. Its most popular attractions include the High Museum of Art, which has recently expanded and developed an exclusive art loan relationship with the Louvre in France, and the Fox Theatre, a famous landmark and nationally acclaimed theater.

Virginia Highlands• On the corner of Highland and Virginia Roads, this historic neighborhood just outside of the city is well-known for its restaurants and bars. Home to Piedmont Park where people like to run, picnic, and play with their dogs, it hosts running events like the Peachtree Roadrace on the 4th of July, the largest 10K in the world with 100,000 participants. It's also home to a small art district. U.Va. grads often hang out in the Highlands, as it tends to remind them of a larger Corner.

Centennial Park• In the center of downtown, this park served as the focal point of the 1996 Summer Olympics. There are many events in the park throughout the year, including an outdoor ice rink in the winter and free concerts and sporting activities in the summer.

Georgia Aquarium• Recently opened in the fall of 2005, Atlanta is home to the world's largest aquarium and features more animals than any other aquarium, in more than 8 million gallons of water! In addition to an excellent display of fish, the aquarium has a great restaurant and hosts many Atlanta events.

Stone Mountain• Just a short ride from the city, Stone Mountain is one of Georgia's largest tourist attractions. The attraction shows visitors life in the 1800s in the South. It's famous for its nightly laser shows that attract a large crowd in the summers. It's a great retreat from city-life into rural America.

The Silver Comet Trail• A well-known trail that allows you to bike, run, walk, or skate 39 miles from Smyrna, Ga., to Rockmart, Ga.

RENTING

General Overall, Atlanta has many options for those looking to rent an apartment. The recent construction of new apartment complexes has created a supply that exceeds current demand. As a result, there are usually no Realtor's fees or deposits. In addition, most renters can negotiate 1-3 months of free rent. Post Apartments owns many of the apartments in Atlanta, and the company's website is an easy place to start (postproperties.com). Many Realtor companies will help you find an apartment for free. When you sign a lease, they are compensated by the apartment complex, with no charge to you. A lot of recent graduates choose to rent in smaller neighborhoods with distinct character, such as Virginia Highlands, Inman Park, or Peachtree Hills.

Renter's Insurance Renter's insurance usually runs between \$100-\$150 a year to insure your apartment and belongings for a year. Numerous insurance agencies offer rental insurance around Atlanta.

Advice Be sure to talk to current tenants to see how helpful/reasonable the landlord is. If they seem unsatisfied, you may want to look elsewhere. Find out if there is a property manager or if the landlord addresses problems. If the landlord manages the property, find out how willing he/she has been to fix problems in the past. Finally, ask whether there will be any major construction projects or improvements to the property going on while you live there. There is nothing worse than arguing with your landlord, so make sure you have a good feeling about him/her.

AREAS IN AND AROUND ATLANTA

Buckhead

Who lives there: Young professionals, wealthy families, executives and politicians (Governor's Mansion)

Distance to downtown: 15-minute drive

Means of transportation: MARTA to downtown, drive, or taxis

Average price of two-bedroom apt: \$600-700 per person per month

Pros: Close to city, can take MARTA from most places, young crowd, plenty of restaurants, bars, and shopping

Cons: Expensive, lack of free parking, tons of traffic

Virginia Highlands

Who lives there: Young professionals, wealthy families

Distance to downtown: 5-minute drive

Means of transportation: Drive or taxis; walk to most restaurants and bars

Average price of two-bedroom apt: \$600 per person per month

Pros: Close to the city, lots of restaurants/shopping nearby, historic neighborhood

Cons: Expensive, lack of parking

Mid-Town

Who lives there: Young professionals, artists, large gay community

Distance to downtown: 5-minute drive or MARTA ride; short walk to some parts

Means of transportation: MARTA, drive, or taxis

Average price of two-bedroom apt: \$650 per person per month

Pros: Close to city, walking distance to most clubs, restaurants, shops, and many offices

Cons: Expensive, lack of free parking, tons of traffic

Decatur (Emory is located here)

Who lives there: Families, students

Distance to downtown: 20-minute drive

Means of transportation: MARTA, drive, or taxis

Average price of two-bedroom apt: \$500 per person per month

Pros: Nice area, close to Emory, less congested traffic

Cons: Lots of students, farther from Buckhead and downtown

North of the Perimeter (Refers to area north of I-285)

Who lives there: Families, young professionals

Distance to downtown: 30-minute drive; up to 1.5 hours in rush-hour traffic

Means of transportation: Drive

Average price of two-bedroom apt: \$400-500 per person

Pros: Suburban area away from city-life, quiet areas with more families, great place to live if you work in the area

Cons: Very intense traffic in and out of downtown during rush hour, main road to access downtown (400) is a toll road, fewer young people



TRANSPORTATION

Atlanta is an extremely accessible city. Two of the biggest roads in the South, 75 and 85, run through the center of the city. In addition, Atlanta hosts the world's busiest airport, with direct flights to almost any destination within the United States and many foreign destinations. Supported by the City, the airport is continually expanding and offers numerous cheap fares to major cities through airlines like Airtran and Delta. Within the city, Atlanta is a "car city" and often suffers from serious traffic congestion. The lack of public transportation makes it extremely difficult to live in Atlanta without a car. There are essentially two public transportation options: MARTA and taxis.

MARTA• The MARTA has two lines, one that runs north and south and another that runs east and west. With only two lines, the system provides limited options for commuting to many areas in Atlanta. However, if you live within driving distance of one of the stations, parking is free, and you can ride the train to most destinations in the city.

The MARTA is also a great way to get to large sporting events like Braves and Falcons games. The city has prioritized improving the MARTA system, and construction has begun to improve its usability. As public transit systems go, it's reasonably clean and safe. It costs \$1.75 each way regardless of when and where you get off.

Taxi• There are an abundance of taxis throughout the city.

Traffic• Atlanta has developed a reputation for its traffic issues. However, students considering moving to Atlanta should not let this dissuade them. Traffic is a problem for people who live outside of 285 and try to commute to downtown. As a young professional, there are numerous living options that can decrease your commute to minutes. In fact, if you live and work in mid-town (where many businesses are located), you might be able to walk to work.

USEFUL ATLANTA LINKS

- www.hoosatlanta.org – U.Va. Club of Atlanta
- www.atlanta.com - Comprehensive resource for the city
- www.lmtt.com - Atlanta's golf courses online. Great way to get last minute tee times
- www.postproperties.com - Largest apartment company in Atlanta

*City Sheets were created by members of the McIntire Young Alumni Council (MYAC). MYAC and the Alumni Association are working together to keep them updated with the most current information. The information on these sheets is based on online research, information from tourism offices and local newspapers, and, most significantly, from the authors' personal experiences. All costs, fares, and rental prices are approximate estimates for 2009.