

TRIP IDEAS

This Small South Carolina City May Be the State's Best-kept Secret — With Excellent Restaurants, Bars, and Shops

Greenville, South Carolina, is chock-full of eclectic shopping, drinking, and dining.

By [Lauren Dana Ellman](#) | Published on July 11, 2022



PHOTO: KRUCK20/GETTY IMAGES

The small but vibrant city of Greenville, [South Carolina](#), is about 1.5 hours from [Asheville](#), 2.5 hours from [Atlanta](#), and 3.5 hours from [Charleston](#) — yet it stands on its own against these larger locales. In recent years, Greenville has become popular for its walkable downtown (complete with a waterfall in the middle), in addition to plentiful shopping, drinking, and dining opportunities. Still, it feels like one of the South's best-kept secrets.

Read on for some of the best things to see, do, eat, and explore in Greenville, where Southern hospitality reigns supreme.

Where to Stay in Greenville



PHOTO: COURTESY OF WESTIN POINSETT

The Westin Poinsett is located in the heart of downtown Greenville, just steps away from the city's best shopping and dining offerings. The landmark property, housed in a 12-story Beaux Arts building dating back to 1925, offers upscale accommodations and a warm, welcoming staff.

Grand Bohemian Lodge, which is set to open in the coming months following three years of construction, is another excellent option. This 187-room property has a prime location overlooking the iconic Reedy River Falls and Liberty Bridge, and its specially curated art collection is just an added bonus.

Where to Eat and Drink in Greenville

Breakfast and Lunch

Sully's Steamers: This local, family-owned chain is best known for their steamed (not toasted) bagel sandwiches. You can't go wrong with the breakfast bagel (bacon, egg, and American cheese).

Gather Greenville: This trendy, ultra-colorful outdoor food court is built (almost) entirely out of shipping containers. Options abound, from lobster rolls at The Lob Father, made-to-order chicken sandwiches at HenDough, acai bowls at Cocobowlz, and frozen drink flights at Juice Box Wine Bar.

Biscuit Head: About a mile south of downtown Greenville lies Biscuit Head, famous for its flaky biscuits. Pair yours with one of the house-made hot sauces or flavored jams, or top it with an egg, bacon, and a fried green tomato.



PHOTO: TIM ROBINSON

Southern Pressed Juicery: Here, you'll find fresh, cold-pressed juices and smoothies, as well as a wide selection of superfood lattes (think: matcha, turmeric, cacao) and fruit-filled energy bowls.

Papi's Tacos: Located right along the riverfront, this neighborhood haunt offers tacos, tortas, margaritas, and more. Don't miss the house-made salsas and horchata, either.

Coffee, Sweets, and Snacks

Methodical Coffee: This local coffee chain serves hot and cold caffeinated drinks, plus a selection of sweets like lemon poppy bundt cakes, chocolate chip shortbread cookies, and mini strawberry pies.

Coffee Underground: Located along the corner of Coffee and Main Streets, down a flight of stairs, Coffee Underground is famous for its coffee concoctions and homemade desserts. (The homemade cinnamon rolls and frozen coffee frappes are a must.)

Poppington's Gourmet Popcorn: Poppington's tasty and creative popcorn flavors – cotton candy, dill pickle, and marshmallow, to name a few – attract travelers and locals alike.

Creme Shack: This refreshing rolled ice cream shop on Main Street offers a slew of sweet concoctions (Rocky Road, Funky Monkey, and Blackberry Cheesecake, among others), each piled high with toppings.

Le Petit Croissant: Calling all sweet tooths: This cozy cafe boasts a mouthwatering selection of cakes, caramels, eclairs, and more.

Dinner

Jianna: This second-floor Italian eatery is known for its house-made pastas and freshly shucked oysters. Try to snag a seat on the patio, which offers views of Falls Park.

Urban Wren: Visitors here can expect innovative plates that resemble edible works of art (the chorizo-lobster corn dogs and tuna poke are personal favorites), plus a wide selection of wines and craft cocktails.

The Lazy Goat: This riverside restaurant serves Mediterranean-inspired cuisine with a twist (think: pita-crusting catfish, caprese salad with black-eyed peas, and much more).

Camp: A contemporary American eatery that transforms locally sourced ingredients into delectable dishes like heirloom tomato terrine and swordfish schnitzel

Drinks



PHOTO: COURTESY OF AC HOTEL GREENVILLE

Southernside Brewing Co.: Located along Greenville's famed Prisma Health Swamp Rabbit Trail, this laid-back brewpub is known for its selection of local beers, refreshing cocktails, and Southern comfort food. Don't miss the fried pickles — paired with the brewery's brand-new, award-winning frozen tequila slushy.

Up on the Roof: This open-air rooftop bar atop the Embassy Suites hotel offers prime city views, a wide selection of cocktails (canned ones, too), and shared plates. And the warm, friendly staff makes the experience all the more worthwhile.

Juniper: Located on the top floor of the AC Hotel, this swanky rooftop gin bar features Instagram-worthy interiors decked out in beautiful flora and greenery. The drinks are just as photogenic as the decor (picture colorful, candy-coated rims and vibrant roses frozen in ice).

Hoppin': Patrons can choose from a selection of on-tap beers, ciders, meads, spiked seltzers, and wines at this buzzy bar. (Plus, you only pay for what you pour.)

What to Do in Greenville

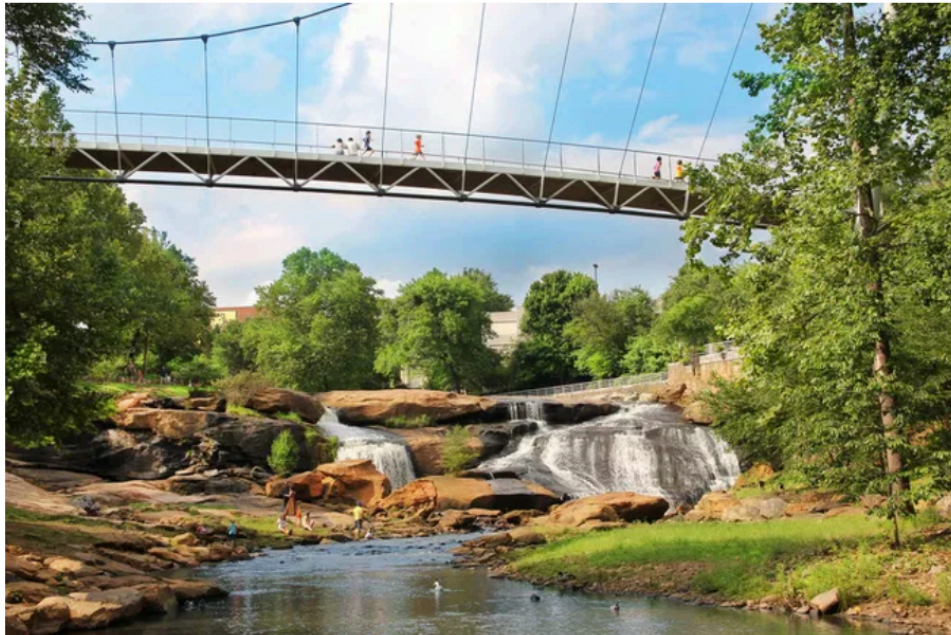


PHOTO: COURTESY OF VISIT GREENVILLE, SC

Take a candle-making class: Greenville Soy Candle Company sells hand-poured soy candles, as well as a selection of soaps, bath bombs, and lotions. The store also offers small group candle-making classes, where customers can mix and match different dyes to create their desired wax hue. Even better, the owner, Tina, is knowledgeable and passionate. Plus, guests can choose from 100-plus scent varieties.

Go shopping: Refresh your wardrobe at one of the eclectic boutiques like Dress Up, Monkee's, and Copper Penny, or shop for fun finds at Mast General Store, O.P Taylor's, and Vintage Now Modern.

Bike or stroll along the Prisma Health Swamp Rabbit Trail: This paved trail, which spans about 20 miles, is popular among bikers and outdoor enthusiasts. Along the way, you can stop at breweries, coffee shops, and parks.

Visit Falls Park on the Reedy: This 32-acre park is located in downtown Greenville, home to famous landmarks like the 345-foot Liberty Bridge and cascading Reedy River Falls.