



One of the 'coolest towns in America' is just four hours away

BY TARYN SCHER



TOP Falls Park featuring The Liberty Bridge  
BOTTOM Aerial View over Falls Park on the Reedy

Certainly you've head the buzz in recent years about Greenville — a short four-hour drive from Hilton Head Island. Travel + Leisure called it a "Top Place to Travel in 2018" and Men's Journal listed it among its "Top 18 Coolest Towns in America."

March is the perfect time to hit the road and see what all the hype is about.

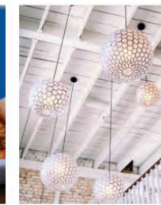
Nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, **Greenville** offers visitors a unique blend of traditional Southern charm and contemporary cool you won't find in many other places. Its award-winning, walkable downtown is

packed tight with cultural and culinary distractions. Its tree-lined Main Street buzzes with people, locally owned boutiques and more than 100 restaurants. Art is alive through theater, street musicians, galleries and public displays of art scattered all over town.

It is also home to a ridiculously picturesque 32-acre park situated in the heart of downtown, complete with a 40-foot waterfall and a one-of-a-kind floating pedestrian bridge. Bike or hike in the nearby mountains or through one of three state parks.



The Anchorage



The Community Tap



### The Food

Greenville's been touted as one of the most underrated food cities in the U.S. for a few years now and it's thanks to the mainstays like **Bacon Brothers Public House**, **Soby's New South Cuisine**, **Stella's Southern Bistro**, **Rick Erwin's West End Grill**, **Grill Marks** and **The Trappe Door**. Last year, **The Anchorage** earned Greenville's first ever James Beard Nomination for Best New Restaurant. More than two dozen new chef-driven spots will open in 2019, including Gather GVL, a food hall made of shipping containers featuring 13 unique concepts.

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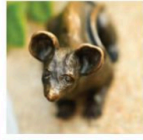
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## local destinations



### The Arts & Culture

There are butterflies on the top of light posts, in parking garages and on the side of buildings; there are mice (bronze ones) all over Main Street, that lead you through a self-guided tour of the city; there are humorous thoughts embedded into the sidewalk that make pedestrians literally laugh out loud. Everywhere you look, art abounds in Greenville. **The Greenville County Museum of Art** showcases some of the world's top art collections; galleries feature regular open studio events. More than six theatres, a local symphony, two ballet troupes and 70+ works of public art will tantalize your senses. Plan your visit during the First Friday of the month to experience First Fridays at the **Greenville Center for Creative Arts**.

### The Outdoors

Whether you're a novice hiker or a professional cyclist, Greenville's got the trail for you. Just seven miles from downtown, **Paris Mountain State Park** has nine trails to choose from while **Ceasars Head State Park** offers 75 mile views across North & South Carolina. **Jones Gap** insider spot **Rainbow Falls & Pretty Place** offer two of the most Instagram-worthy sites you'll see and are totally worth the hike. Cyclers of all skill levels will love the 22-plus mile **GHS Swamp Rabbit Trail** – accessible from downtown Greenville and full of treasures along the way to Travelers Rest, including the **Swamp Rabbit Café and Grocery** and a scenic tour of **Furman University**.

### The Events

Greenville has more than 200 event days a year — meaning there's almost always something going on from **Moonlight Movies in the Park**, the **Main Street Fridays** concert series, and the **Thursday Downtown Alive** concert series. Chances are you can always find something going on, whether it's skating outdoors during **Ice on Main** in the winter, **Shakespeare in the Park** in the spring, or the **Saturday Farmer's Market** in summer.

A number of annual signature events make for the perfect weekend getaway from **Artisphere** in May – showcasing more than 250 visual & performance artists to Fall for Greenville in October – giving festival goers the chance to sample bites from 50 local restaurants on Main Street.

You can also ride up and down Main Street on the free trolley and hop off at the **West End Field** to take in a Greenville Drive baseball game – the class A affiliate of the Boston Red Sox.



## Suggestions from a Local...

Physical therapist **Ashley Goodridge** grew up on Hilton Head Island and now lives with her husband, **Derek**, in G-Vegas. They both love the area and exploring what it has to offer. Here are a few hot spots Ashley suggests.

### WHAT TO DO

**THE BMW DRIVING SCHOOL** My husband raves about it. He says it is a blast.

**BIKING ALONG SWAMP RABBIT TRAIL UP TO TR** (Travelers Rest), which has great restaurants like Tandem (a creperie and coffee house) and a local brewery (Swamp Rabbit Brewery).

**VISIT DOWNTOWN GREENVILLE AND EXPLORE THAT AREA** There are several super cute boutiques and awesome restaurants. In summer, the farmers market takes up the street and it is amazing. Also, the festivals we have like Artisphere or Fall for Greenville are so much fun!

### WHERE TO EAT

**KITCHEN SYNC** The food is all local and fresh and the Bahn Mi salad and Gnu'di in Sunday sauce are out of this world! Plus the s'more cake. Yum. I absolutely love this place.

**BACON BROS PUBLIC HOUSE** This is a place my husband loves. They pride themselves on being fresh farmed and they cure their own meats.

**THE BRICK STREET CAFÉ** This place is awesome! It's funky and the food is delicious. They are best known for their sweet potato cake. Their slices are huge and delicious.

### WHERE TO STAY

The new **EMBASSY SUITES DOWNTOWN** A fun local restaurant Up On The Roof is at the top and overlooks the city.


**THE ALOFT** in the heart of downtown Greenville. Fun bar area with good food and drinks. It's near Mast General, an awesome outdoor store with a huge home and candy section. This place is a gem.

**THE WESTIN Poinsett** is another nice hotel with a bar, plus it's across from an amazing restaurant Soby's and near The Peace Center.




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