

2018

# GEORGIA TOURISM DIRECTORY OF SERVICES



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## **GEORGIA TOURISM DIVISION**

The Georgia Department of Economic Development's (GDEC) Tourism division, through programs including Business Development, Product Development, 12 Visitor Information Centers, nine Regional Tourism Project Managers, and national and international representatives, markets the state as a preferred leisure travel destination, assists Georgia's tourism partners statewide, and fosters tourism product development.

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## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ACCOUNTS

The Business Development team promotes Georgia's tourism product to group tour and travel operators and travel journalists domestically and internationally. They develop and maintain relationships with these entities in order to expand awareness of Georgia's destinations and travel products.

Because the international visitor generally spends more money and travels for a longer period of time during a single vacation, this market is very attractive. The international sales director works with several representatives in existing and emerging markets to bring travel writers and tour operators to Georgia. By experiencing the great travel opportunities available, our efforts to increase visitation from those countries has seen positive effects. Attendance at a variety of international trade and travel shows allows our staff to showcase Georgia as a vacation destination for international travelers. The domestic sales efforts focus on developing the state of Georgia as a primary destination and stopover destination for the motorcoach market. The sales team attends trade shows that provide one-on-one selling opportunities, responds to direct requests, provides follow up resources and planning information such as suggested itineraries and brochures, and works with communities to maximize their tourism sales efforts.

### RESOURCES

- Domestic Tradeshow Leads – [MarketGeorgia.org](http://MarketGeorgia.org)
- International Business Development Reports and Presentations – [MarketGeorgia.org](http://MarketGeorgia.org)
- Business Development Co-op Calendar – [MarketGeorgia.org](http://MarketGeorgia.org)

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## MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Georgia Department of Economic Development's Marketing and Communications division supports and develops strategies for the entire agency. The marketing team works closely with the Tourism division on advertising, marketing and public relations campaigns; the Georgia Tourism Co-op Program; the Georgia Tourism Foundation; ExploreGeorgia.org, MarketGeorgia.org and PictureGeorgia.org; promotional projects; e-newsletters; and collateral materials. The primary goal is to increase visitation to and within the state of Georgia.

The communications team works to enhance the image of Georgia as a preferred travel destination. They work closely with print, digital and broadcast media to generate media interest locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. The team is responsible for all communications-related functions that include working with travel and industry media and professionals, drafting talking points and speeches for leadership, pitching media, distributing press releases, managing ExploreGeorgia.org content, managing the ExploreGeorgia.org Media Room, managing content on social media channels, managing content for e-newsletters, hosting media FAM tours, and providing resources in all areas of communications to communities across the state.

### RESOURCES

#### PRINT

##### Tourism Industry

- [Roam: The Official Georgia Group Tour Planner – ExploreGeorgia.org/Roam](https://www.exploregeorgia.org/roam)  
Roam provides group tour operators with themed itineraries for groups throughout the state.
- [Georgia Sports Planner – ExploreGeorgia.org/Groups](https://www.exploregeorgia.org/groups)  
The sports planner provides sporting event organizers with details of facilities around the state.

##### Consumer

- [Georgia Travel Guide – ExploreGeorgia.org/Brochures](https://www.exploregeorgia.org/brochures)  
The Georgia Travel Guide is the state's primary print resource for consumers, with inspirational content and attraction listings.
- [Georgia Eats: The Official State Culinary Guide – ExploreGeorgia.org/GeorgiaEats](https://www.exploregeorgia.org/georgiaeats)  
The culinary guide provides consumers an insight into the state's varied culinary scene.

#### DIGITAL

##### Tourism Industry

- [MarketGeorgia.org: The Tourism Industry Portal](https://www.marketgeorgia.org)  
Market Georgia houses news, resources and co-op programs to assist tourism partners around the state.
- [PeachByte e-Newsletter – MarketGeorgia.org](https://www.marketgeorgia.org/peachbyte)  
PeachByte is a monthly e-newsletter for the tourism industry, with tips and announcements.
- [ExploreGeorgia.org Partner Admin and Support – Partner.ExploreGeorgia.org](https://www.exploregeorgia.org/partner-admin)  
Partner Admin is a resource for tourism partners to manage free listings on ExploreGeorgia.org.
- [ExploreGeorgia.org Media Room](https://www.exploregeorgia.org/media-room)  
The media room provides writers access to story ideas, resources and press releases from the state's tourism

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- [Social Media Best Practices – MarketGeorgia.org](#)  
Georgia Tourism provides recommendations on marketing through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and YouTube.
  - [Explore Georgia Content Calendar – MarketGeorgia.org](#)  
Each year, the Georgia Tourism Communications team produces an editorial calendar for the website, e-newsletters and social media.
  - [Explore Georgia Partners Facebook Group](#)  
This Facebook group provides tourism industry members the opportunity to connect directly with Georgia Tourism staff and other industry members, source best practices and share industry news.
  - [Georgia RTA Leaders Facebook Group](#)  
This Facebook group provides members of the state’s nine travel regional associations the opportunity to share resources and best practices.
  - [Georgia On My Mind Brand Standards – MarketGeorgia.org](#)  
These standards explain how the Georgia On My Mind logo may be used in marketing materials.

### **Consumer**

- [ExploreGeorgia.org: Georgia’s Official Tourism Website](#)  
Explore Georgia is the state’s primary digital resource for consumers, with inspirational content and hotel, attraction, event and restaurant listings.
- [Bimonthly and Seasonal e-Newsletters – ExploreGeorgia.org](#)  
Georgia Tourism’s e-newsletters provide consumers with information on events, attractions, destinations, off-the-beaten path adventures, deals and places to stay.
- [Explore Georgia Blog – ExploreGeorgia.org/Blogs](#)  
The blog allows consumers to hear from locals and experts about events, food, culture, people, places, attractions, news, recipes, trip ideas and more.
- Social Media Platforms
  - [Facebook – @ExploreGeorgia](#)
  - [Instagram - @ExploreGeorgia](#)
  - [Pinterest – @ExploreGeorgia](#)
  - [YouTube - @ExploreGA](#)
  - [Twitter - @ExploreGeorgia](#)

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## PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

The Product Development team assists counties, cities and individual tourism partners in giving new life to existing resources and in fostering new tourism products within communities. Communities receive technical assistance and financial resources in hopes of creating new opportunities and markets for Georgia tourism products through strategic partnerships, packaging and marketing.

In October 2009, the team developed a new initiative to focus technical assistance in the form of a reconnaissance and strategy visit to any Georgia community interested in developing its tourism potential. The Tourism Product Development (TDP) Resource Team works to evaluate a community's past, present and potential for tourism growth and development in the future through innovative and unique local experiences. Selected communities host a team of experts in tourism and community development for an onsite, in-depth analysis of the community, resulting in a full report of recommendations for existing product enhancements and ideas for future product development. Resource Team members are selected based on each community's needs and come from a variety of state, federal, regional and local economic development agencies and non-profit organizations. During the Resource Team visit, the team members work with local leadership to assess the current and potential tourism portfolio relevant to any or all of the following areas of tourism:

- Agritourism
- Arts and Culture
- Attractions Development
- Downtown Redevelopment
- Festivals and Events
- Heritage/Historic Preservation
- Industrial Tours
- Lodging
- Nature-based Adventure
- Sport and Recreation

## RESOURCES

- Tourism Product Development Resource Team Program – [MarketGeorgia.org](http://MarketGeorgia.org)
- Tourism Product Development Resource Team Reports – [MarketGeorgia.org](http://MarketGeorgia.org)
- Tourism Product Development Grant Program – [MarketGeorgia.org](http://MarketGeorgia.org)
- List of Funding Sources – [MarketGeorgia.org](http://MarketGeorgia.org)
- Heritage Tourism Handbook – [MarketGeorgia.org](http://MarketGeorgia.org)

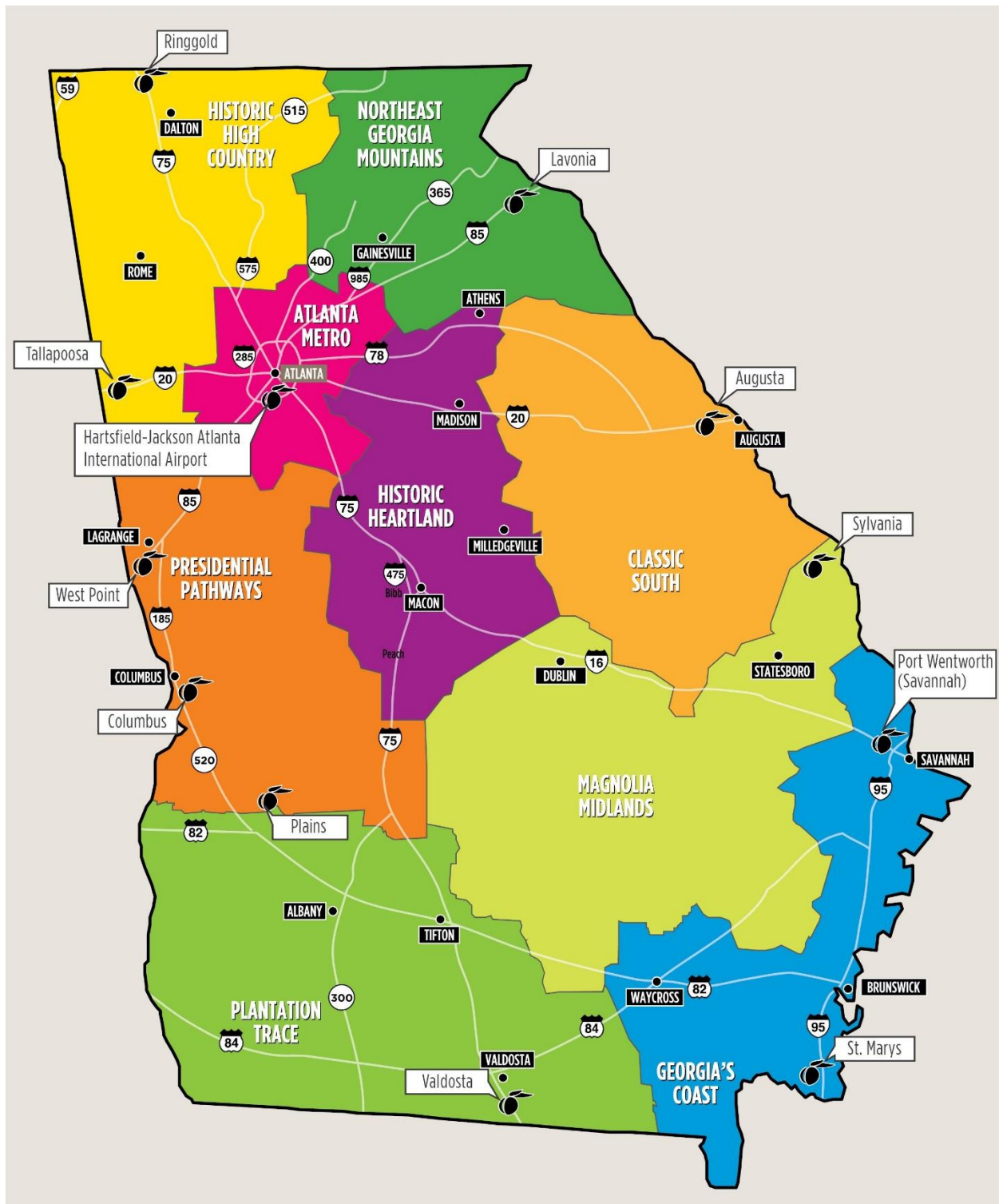
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# REGIONAL SERVICES

## TRAVEL REGIONS



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## TOURISM PROJECT MANAGERS

The Tourism Project Managers (TPMs) serve as the liaisons between partners around the state and the Tourism division's resources and opportunities. In addition, TPMs:

- Assist tourism product growth, asset-based development and sustainability;
- Provide expertise and resources in tourism marketing;
- Assist communities with tourism planning and development initiatives;
- Liaise with tourism businesses, destination marketing organizations, regional travel associations, regional commissions and any other entity as it relates to tourism development and marketing;
- Maintain awareness of tourism product to include attractions, lodging, recreational outfitters and events; and
- Assist with facilitating FAM tours, media requests and requests for information, resources and research data.

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Counties represented: Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Harris, Heard, Henry, Meriwether, Pike, Spalding, Talbot, Taylor, Troup, Upson

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Counties represented: Brantley, Bryan, Camden, Charlton, Chatham, Effingham, Glynn, Liberty, McIntosh, Pierce, Ware

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## TOURISM PROJECT MANAGERS (CONTINUED)

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Decatur, Dooly, Dougherty, Early, Echols, Grady, Lanier,  
Lee, Lowndes, Macon, Marion, Miller, Mitchell,  
Muscogee, Quitman, Randolph, Schley, Seminole,  
Stewart, Sumter, Terrell, Thomas, Tift, Turner, Webster,  
Worth

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## VISITOR INFORMATION CENTERS

Georgia operates 12 Visitor Information Centers (VICs), which act as a contact point for travelers entering Georgia and distribute information on the state's tourism attractions, accommodations, natural resources, history and other visitor sites. Hours of operation vary, but generally the VICs are staffed from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., with restroom facilities open longer. Tourism partners can leverage their limited marketing budget by participating in a variety of services offered through the VICs.

### SERVICES

- Brochure Display Areas
- Georgia On My Mind Days
- Room Reservation Service
- Advertising Opportunities
- Tourism Partner Outreach
- Maps and Directional Information
- Displays, Signage and Event Banners
- Professional Development Workshops
- Courtyard, Picnic and Sitting Areas
- Public Restroom Facilities
- Vending Machines
- ATMs
- Georgia Lottery Tickets

### RESOURCES

- VIC Fact Sheet – MarketGeorgia.org
- Georgia On My Mind Days – MarketGeorgia.org
- VIC Partner Opportunities and Services – MarketGeorgia.org

### CONTACTS

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Lake Park, GA 31636  
valdosta@georgia.org | 229.559.5828

- **Cathy Sassnett**, TMP, Manager: csassnett@georgia.org
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### West Point (I-85 N)

Georgia Visitor Information Center  
I-85 N, GA/AL Line  
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## REGIONAL VISITOR INFORMATION CENTERS

The Regional Visitor Information Center (RVIC) program is an extension of the Georgia VIC program. The RVICs are found in communities across the state and managed by tourism professionals who are passionate about their communities and share their expertise and knowledge with visitors. Each year the RVIC Conference highlights a different community, recognizes newly certified RVICs, and awards RVICs and travel counselors for their dedication to promoting tourism. Each RVIC is assigned to its local of the state VICs, and participates in regular programming with its “sister center.”

### RESOURCES

- List of RVICs – [MarketGeorgia.org](http://MarketGeorgia.org)
- Criteria for Becoming an RVIC – [MarketGeorgia.org](http://MarketGeorgia.org)

### CONTACTS

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## RESEARCH

Georgia Tourism tracks the economic impact of tourism, hotel performance, and domestic and international visitation to the state. Research efforts assist the Tourism division in the development of its marketing efforts and in defining the scope of work for the division. Research provides vital demographic information on Georgia’s visitors, monitors the strength of the tourism industry, and is beneficial in understanding current and emerging markets for the state and its travel regions.

Primary travel and tourism research is conducted by contracted research vendors, and published on MarketGeorgia.org throughout the year.

## RESOURCES

- State Economic Impact Reports – MarketGeorgia.org
- County Economic Impact Reports – MarketGeorgia.org
- Visitor Demographics Reports – MarketGeorgia.org
- State Tourism Satellite Reports – MarketGeorgia.org
- Event Economic Impact Calculator – MarketGeorgia.org
- Smith Travel Research – distributed by Tourism Project Managers

## CONTACTS

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## ADDITIONAL DEPARTMENT AND TOURISM RESOURCES

### GEORGIA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS

Artists and arts organizations play an important role in our state in driving tourism and local economic growth. The creative industries in Georgia represent a combined \$37 billion in revenue, including 200,000 employed with \$12.1 billion in earnings, and \$62.5 billion in total economic impact.

#### With the support of the Georgia Council for the Arts (GCA), arts organizations and artists in Georgia:

- Drive tourism, create jobs and attract new businesses to the state;
- Revitalize communities;
- Engage citizens in programs and services that offer benefits ranging from improved physical and mental health and increased civic engagement to new skills development and better problem-solving;
- Play an essential role in education, cultivating the next generation of entrepreneurs, leaders, inventors and creative problem-solvers who will place Georgia as a leader in the global economy; and
- Build and invest in community connections creative a collective sense of place and identity.

#### GCA offers a variety of resources, which include:

- Grants for arts and arts education projects for non-profits, schools, local governments, colleges and libraries;
- General operating support grants for arts organizations;
- Rosters of Georgia artists available for performances, exhibits and demonstrations, as well as teaching artists who serve K-12 students;
- An Arts Economic Impact Calculator;
- Consultations with local governments or organizations on arts programming and ways to engage artists for community and economic development;
- Reviews of grant applications for arts projects to other funders such as the National Endowment for the Arts; and
- Research and data on the impact of the arts and arts education.

#### RESOURCES

- GaArts.org: The Official Georgia Council for the Arts Website
- Grant Funding – GaArts.org
- Georgia Artists Rosters – GaArts.org
- Arts and Economic Development Resources – GaArts.org

#### CONTACTS

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## GEORGIA FILM OFFICE

Formed in 1973 by then-Governor Jimmy Carter in response to the economic impact *Deliverance* had on North Georgia, the Georgia Film Office has over 40 years of experience promoting Georgia as a film location. From beaches to mountains to cities both large and small, the state has always offered a unique variety of looks, a skilled crew base and a network of industry suppliers. From *Smokey and the Bandit* to *Fried Green Tomatoes*, the state has maintained a consistent production slate. In 2008, however, Georgia passed a film tax incentive in response to competition from Canada and other US States, and as a result, Georgia is today one of the top three production centers in the country. In fiscal year 2017, the economic impact to the state was \$9.5 billion dollars from over 320 projects.

Today Georgia supports a vast network of stages, vendors, actors, casting agencies, post production facilities and more. As production work continues to migrate to the state, the number of skilled crew workers is increasing as well. With a relatively low cost of living, a warm climate and a host of amenities, the state has proven to be a place creative industries workers want to relocate to and stay. At one busy point on the production schedule recently, there were 42 productions (film and television) shooting simultaneously.

The Georgia Film Office can assist anyone looking to shoot in the state with a number of services, whether a large studio tentpole feature, a micro-budget short film, a television reality show, a catalog photo shoot or a commercial. The advantages of working with the Georgia Film Office include:

- Saving up to 30% with production tax incentives: 20% base amount with a 10% uplift available for embedding a Georgia promotional logo in credits;
- Thousands of locations made available through free scouting assistance;
- The Georgia-only Camera Ready™ program, a network of knowledgeable experts in each county across the state who assist productions with finding obscure locations, permitting, lodging and more;
- The Georgia Reel Crew Production Directory, a list of crews and vendors, detailing availability, credits and IMDB links; and
- The Georgia Film Academy.

Georgia is unwaveringly committed to supporting the film and television production industry. As a major generator of jobs and investment, the state's production community now includes nearly 2,800 industry businesses, provides over 92,000 jobs, and is responsible for \$4.6 billion in total wages. *Movie Maker* magazine recently named Atlanta the No. 1 large city for filmmakers to live and work, and Savannah the No. 2 small city.

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## GEORGIA FILM OFFICE

### RESOURCES

- Tax Incentive Information – [Georgia.org](http://Georgia.org)
- Location Image Library – [Georgia.org](http://Georgia.org)
- Camera Ready Program – [CameraReady.Georgia.org](http://CameraReady.Georgia.org)
- Georgia Reel Crew Production Directory
- Georgia Film Academy – [GeorgiaFilmAcademy.org](http://GeorgiaFilmAcademy.org)
- Georgia Filmography: Complete List of Georgia-Lenses Productions – [ExploreGeorgia.org/Filmography](http://ExploreGeorgia.org/Filmography)
- Now Filming in Georgia – [ExploreGeorgia.org](http://ExploreGeorgia.org)

### CONTACTS

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## TOURISM INDUSTRY RESOURCES

- [American Bus Association – Buses.org](http://Buses.org)  
National organization of motorcoach owners and operators
- [Appalachian Regional Commission – ARC.gov](http://ARC.gov)  
Regional economic development agency representing a partnership of federal, state and local government
- [Georgia Association of City and County Governments – ACCG.org](http://ACCG.org)  
Non-profit charged with providing Georgia's counties resources to develop leadership, services and program
- [Georgia Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus – GACVB.com](http://GACVB.com)  
Resource for destination marketing organizations in Georgia to maximize the economic impact of tourism via industry education, professional development and legislative awareness
- [Georgia Department of Community Affairs – DCA.Ga.gov](http://DCA.Ga.gov)  
State agency providing resources to build strong, vibrant communities and improve the lives of Georgia citizens
- [Georgia Department of National Resources – GaDNR.org](http://GaDNR.org)  
State agency overseeing state parks, historic sites, wildlife resources, historic preservation, environmental protection and coastal resources
- [Georgia Department of Revenue Alcohol Licenses & Permits – DOR.Georgia.gov](http://DOR.Georgia.gov)  
State agency overseeing regulation of breweries, wineries and distilleries
- [Georgia Department of Transportation – DOT.Ga.gov](http://DOT.Ga.gov)  
State agency overseeing road signage, including for attractions, lodging, restaurants and agritourism
- [Georgia Grown – GeorgiaGrown.com](http://GeorgiaGrown.com)  
The marketing and economic development program of the Georgia Department of Agriculture
- [Georgia Hotel & Lodging Association – GHLA.net](http://GHLA.net)  
Trade association representing Georgia's lodging industry, which provides resources and promotes the industry's economic impact
- [Georgia Humanities – GeorgiaHumanities.org](http://GeorgiaHumanities.org)  
Non-profit preserving and promoting the cultural stories and artifacts of the state through cultural and education programs and resources
- [Georgia Innkeepers Association – InnGeorgia.com](http://InnGeorgia.com)  
Association representing independent innkeepers, including bed & breakfasts and inns
- [Georgia Municipal Association – GMAnet.com](http://GMAnet.com)  
Association providing tools and services to assist municipal governments in becoming more innovative, effective and responsive
- [Georgia Office of Historic Preservation – GeorgiaSHPO.org](http://GeorgiaSHPO.org)  
Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources charged with protecting historic resources
- [Georgia Restaurant Association – GaRestaurants.org](http://GaRestaurants.org)  
Association serving as the voice of Georgia's restaurants in advocacy, education and awareness

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## TOURISM INDUSTRY RESOURCES (CONTINUED)

- [Georgia State Parks & Historic Sites – GaStateParks.org](http://GaStateParks.org)  
Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources charged with managing the state’s 63 state parks and historic sites
- [Regional Travel Associations – Georgia.org](http://Georgia.org)  
Volunteer organizations that represent the state’s nine travel regions
- [Southeast Tourism Society – SoutheastTourism.org](http://SoutheastTourism.org)  
Organization providing education, advocacy, recognition and networking for tourism professionals in the Southeast; hosts annual Marketing College where tourism professionals can earn a Travel Marketing Professional (TMP) certification
- [Travel South USA – Industry.TravelSouthUSA.com](http://Industry.TravelSouthUSA.com)  
Official regional destination marketing organization for the Southern United States, representing 12 states domestically and internationally
- [United States Travel Association – USTRavel.org](http://USTRavel.org)  
National non-profit organization representing all components of the travel industry
- [UGA Small Business Development Center – GeorgiaSBDC.org](http://GeorgiaSBDC.org)  
Extension of the University of Georgia dedicated to providing tools, training and resources to help small businesses grow and succeed