Savannah's Secrets

Source: Savannah Visitor Service and Savannah Morning News



- The Pirate House, a famous Savannah restaurant, actually was a tavern frequented by pirates who sailed the Carribean in 1794, Events at the Pirates House were the inspiration for Robert Lewis Stevenson's novel, *Treasure Island.*
- *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil,* the John Berendt novel about secrets, socialites, and murder, spent more than five years on the New York Times bestseller list, holding the record for the longest running bestseller in history.
- In 2002, the American Institute of Parapsychology named Savannah Americas Most Haunted City. Based on Savannah's history of fires, plagues, wars, and voodoo, they determined Savannah as the perfect place for supernatural activity.
- While admiring Savannah's splendid architecture, you might notice a recurring color painted on the door frames, porches, and window sills of many Savannah homes. This blue-green color or "Haint Blue" not only is aesthetically pleasing, but has a purpose -- to ward off evil spirits. "Haint Blue" paint was first used by African Slaves to secure entry points into their houses from spirits. According to the Geechee/Gullah culture of the Low Country, the blue-green color of "Haint Blue" represents water which, it is believed, spirits cannot pass over. Five months after General Oglethorpe and the original settlers landed in Savannah, 42 Jewish refugees from Spain arrived in July 1733. This was the largest immigration of Jews at one time to the New World during the Colonial Period.
- Florence Martus, born August 7, 1868, is a Savannahian whose understanding and application of the words "Southern Hospitality" brought her fame as the Waving Girl. Martus lived with her brother, lighthouse keeper George Martus, between 1887 and 1931 near the entrance of the Savannah harbor. During this time, she would wave a welcome to each incoming ship and wave a goodbye to every outgoing vessel. During her years at the lighthouse, she greeted more than 50,000 vessels. A memorial to her legacy is located on Savannah's Historic River Street. This is the first memorial to a Georgia woman in any city park.
- Tomochichi, Chief of the Yamacraw Indians, was rumored to stand over seven feet tall, have only one good eye, and wear a cape of bear skin. Tomochichi is buried in Wright Square; a large boulder marks his resting place.
- While the Spanish Moss that hangs from Savannah's majestic oaks is a true reminder that you are in the romantic deep South, it does not make a great souvenir. Often undetectable by the naked eye, a small biting bug called a chigger makes Spanish Moss its home. During the early days of the Colony, residents often stuffed and bounded their mattresses with the soft and bountiful Spanish Moss, only to wake up irritated and itchy after the tiny bugs invaded their slumber. As a result, a common phrase emerged in Savannah -- "Goodnight neighbor, sleep tight, and don't let the bed bugs bite."
- Besides English, the other languages spoken in the early days of the colony were Indian languages, Spanish, Portuguese, Yiddish, French, Gaelic, and German.
- Savannah over the years has become the fictional home of some of the silverscreen's most memorable movies, including *Forrest Gump, Roots, Gator, Glory, Something to Talk About, Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil, Forces of Nature, The General's Daughter, and the Robert Redford golf epic, Legend of Bagger Vance.* Hollywood loves Savannah because our beautiful Historic District and Low County landscape make an instant movie set.
- In a study published by the Savannah Historic Foundation, one of the most admired preservation groups in the country, more than 40 percent of 2,500 building inventoried in Savannah had architectural or historical significance.
- While wandering around Savannah, if you happen to take a stroll down St. Julian Street, you will notice you are walking on oyster shells. You have discovered Tabby, a type of cement on plaster used for mortar, walls and walkways. Because limestone was not available along the coast, the colonists burned oyster shells and mixed the ash with sand and water to make cement.
- The first movie shown at the Lucas Theatre when it is opened in 1921 was *Camille*, starring silent film actor Rudolph Valentino.
- When the Colony of Georgia was founded in 1733, Catholics, lawyers, and hard liquor were banned. Considering that Savannah now is home to the largest celebration in the South honoring St. Patrick (an Irish Catholic Saint) and is famous for the "To-Go Cup" (thanks to the city's liberal view on cocktails to-go), Savannah has dropped the bans created long ago.
- Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. was founded in Savannah in 1912 by a Savannah woman named Juliette Gordon Low. Her childhood now serves as the Girl Scouts' National Headquarters.

Average Monthly Temperatures

(in degrees Farenheit)

Month	Average Low	High	Precipitation
January	39°	60°	3.43 inches
February	42°	64°	2.4 inches
March	49°	71°	3.56 inches
April	55°	78°	2.93 inches
May	63°	85°	3.19 inches
June	70°	89°	5.52 inches
July	73°	92°	5.65 inches
August	72°	90°	5.86 inches
September	68°	85°	4.7 inches
October	58°	78°	3.22 inches
November	48°	70°	2.26 inches
December	41°	62	2.63 inches

Climate: Savannah enjoys a subtropical climate that makes outdoor activities possible yearround. The summers are hot and the winters are mild. On average, Savannah experiences four weeks where temperatures can approach freezing, and two months where temperatures often are in the 90s.