



How to Tour Atlanta Like a Local

By Rue of Rue La La Day Tours and Excursions



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INTRODUCTION

Meet Your Guide — Your Girl Rue

Hey there, traveler! I'm Rue — but around here, folks know me as Your Girl Rue. I'm the founder of Rue La La Day Tours and Excursions, a lifelong explorer of all things ATL, and your personal guide to seeing this city the way it should be experienced: with soul, insight, and style.

I created this guide because I've walked these streets, tasted the flavors, met the makers, and listened to the stories that make Atlanta unlike any other place in the world.

Whether you're visiting for the first time or looking to rediscover your city with fresh eyes, I've curated this e-book with you in mind.

From street art to street food, deep history to hidden gems, I'm here to help you see Atlanta not just as a tourist, but as someone who belongs. Welcome to the city. Now let's explore it—the Rue way.

— Your Girl Rue ♥

Founder, Storyteller & Tour Curator
Rue La La Day Tours and Excursions



Welcome to Atlanta

Atlanta is more than just a city — it's a story, a vibe, and a rich tapestry of culture, history, and soul.

This guide is your key to exploring the city like an insider.

From the rhythmic heartbeat of Sweet Auburn to the ever-evolving energy of West Midtown, Atlanta moves with purpose and pride. It's the birthplace of legends, the backdrop for movements, and a creative haven where food, art, music, and entrepreneurship collide. Here, the past is powerful, the present is vibrant, and the future is being shaped in real time — by people just like you.

Whether you're here for a quick visit or ready to deepen your connection with the city, this guide was made with care to give you access to the real Atlanta — the neighborhoods locals love, the flavors that tell a story, and the places that don't show up on basic tourist lists.

This is your invitation to explore with intention, feel the pulse of the city, and experience Atlanta the Rue La La way — thoughtful, immersive, and unforgettable.

Let's get started.



Where Locals Go

Skip the tourist checklist. Here's where the city really shines.

Atlanta has its fair share of iconic attractions—but if you want the true flavor of the city, you've got to go where the locals go. This section shows you how to swap the expected for the exceptional, trading mainstream stops for meaningful, culture-rich experiences that show you the soul of the city.

✗ Instead of The Varsity Try: Sweet Auburn Curb Market

Historic, flavorful, and buzzing with energy, Sweet Auburn Curb Market is where locals go for everything from oxtail plates to handmade chocolates. Nestled in the Sweet Auburn neighborhood—a hub of Black entrepreneurship and civil rights history—the market has been a community staple since 1924. It's a one-stop shop for authentic eats, small business vendors, and old-school Atlanta stories.

✗ Instead of World of Coca-Cola Try: The APEX Museum

If you want to leave Atlanta enlightened, the APEX Museum is where you start. Located on Auburn Avenue, this museum showcases the often-overlooked contributions of African Americans from Atlanta and around the world. It's more than history—it's perspective. Expect moving exhibits, untold stories, and a deep dive into a heritage that helped shape the city and the nation.

✗ Instead of Just the Ponce City Market Rooftop Explore: The BeltLine Eastside Trail

Sure, Ponce City Market is pretty—but the BeltLine Eastside Trail offers a deeper experience. Walk or bike this trail to see an ever-changing gallery of street art, discover pop-up performances, mural-covered underpasses, and hidden shops and cafés. It's a creative corridor that lets you experience Atlanta's artistry and architecture at your own pace.

✗ Instead of a Generic Breakfast Spot Visit: My Coffee Shop in East Atlanta

Unpretentious and full of personality, My Coffee Shop is a neighborhood gem where you'll feel like family the moment you walk in. From soulful Southern breakfast staples to rich coffee blends, this East Atlanta favorite is the kind of place where regulars greet the staff by name—and new guests are warmly welcomed. It's a true comfort stop for slow mornings and real conversation.

Atlanta's History Gems

Where the past speaks, and legacy lives on.

Atlanta's rich Black history isn't just preserved—it's alive in its streets, sanctuaries, and stories. While many visitors know of the big names and landmarks, locals know that some of the most powerful moments happen in places that aren't always on the standard tour route. These hidden gems offer a deeper connection to the people, power, and perseverance that have shaped Atlanta's soul.

The Madame Museum

Tucked in the heart of Sweet Auburn, this one-of-a-kind museum celebrates the untold stories of Black women entrepreneurs, beauty pioneers, and cultural icons. The Madame Museum is a vibrant tribute to legacy, leadership, and self-made success. It's a space that empowers, educates, and inspires—especially for those who know that beauty, business, and boldness go hand in hand.

The APEX Museum

As the oldest Black history museum in Atlanta, APEX (African American Panoramic Experience) tells the story of African Americans from their own point of view. The exhibits are immersive and sometimes challenging, offering raw truths and powerful insights. From the Middle Passage to modern movements, this museum takes you far beyond textbooks and into the heartbeat of real Black experience.

The Herndon Home

Built by Alonzo F. Herndon—formerly enslaved, later Atlanta's first Black millionaire—this mansion is a testament to Black excellence, entrepreneurship, and family legacy. A self-made success story housed within marble floors and hand-carved woodwork, the Herndon Home is as elegant as it is empowering. Tours offer a window into a life of dignity, strategy, and vision that redefined what was possible for generations to come.

These historic spaces are more than attractions—they're anchors. Each one tells a different part of Atlanta's truth, and together they offer a fuller, more authentic view of the city's legacy of resilience, resistance, and brilliance.



**WHERE THE
PAST SPEAKS
& LEGACY
LIVES ON.**



Atlanta's Food & Entertainment Gems

Eat & Sip Like a Local

Atlanta's food scene is a flavorful fusion of tradition, innovation, and heart—and locals know exactly where to go when they want something real. For a casual bite that feels like home, **Just Loaf'N** serves up New Orleans-style po'boys and daiquiris in East Atlanta Village with a Nawlins' twist and plenty of soul. If you're in the mood for a quiet morning or mid-day pick-me-up, **Little Tart Bakeshop** in Grant Park is a favorite for its flakey pastries, artful tarts, and locally roasted coffee—all served in a light-filled, welcoming space.

When it's time for something elevated but still comforting, **Twisted Soul Cookhouse & Pours** delivers with inventive takes on Southern classics—from catfish and grits to collard green ramen. If you're craving something fresh and fast that doesn't skimp on flavor, **SpringGreens** in East Lake offers a bold, healthy, and Halal menu good for the soul and your body. The food is comforting and just right after a long day. Try the lemon pepper wings and the turkey meatloaf. Tucked in the heart of Cabbagetown, **Agave** is a local favorite for Southwestern cuisine, craft margaritas, and a rustic-chic vibe that makes every night feel like a special occasion. The flavors are bold, the energy is warm, and the tequila selection is unmatched.

Whether you're grabbing a bite between stops or planning a foodie-focused itinerary, these local gems serve more than food—they offer a taste of Atlanta's culture, creativity, and community.

Events Locals Love

Atlanta is a city that knows how to move, groove, and celebrate its creative spirit—and locals always know where the rhythm is. On any given Tuesday, you'll find the crowd two-stepping and line dancing with joy and soul at our **LINE UP!** sessions, where the music is Southern, the vibes are high, and the community is unmatched.

For lovers of live music, **TEN ATL Bar & Lounge** in East Atlanta Village offers the best jazz, soul, and R&B sets in the city, served with premium spirits, signature cocktails, hookah and an intimate lounge feel.

Art lovers will find inspiration in every corner of the city—from the rotating exhibitions at **ZuCot Gallery** to thought-provoking showcases at **The Narrative**, **Black Art in America**, and the quietly brilliant **Nina Baldwin Gallery**, all of which spotlight the depth and power of Black artistry, and when you're ready to venture outside the city limits, **The Saturday Set**—our curated series of day trips and excursions—is your invitation to discover new towns, hidden gems, and unforgettable away.



WWAAD?

What Would An ATLien Do?

Photo Ops Without the Crowds

Looking for the perfect backdrop without the tourist rush? Atlanta is full of unexpected beauty.

Snap vivid street art at the **Krog Street Tunnel**, capture the city skyline from the iconic **Jackson Street Bridge**, explore colorful **Murals** rooted in history and culture all throughout the city (check out @OccasionalSuperstar), or wander the **Atlanta BeltLine Eastside Trail**, where ever-changing public art turns every stroll into a creative moment.

Want the VIP Experience?

Skip the crowds and elevate your adventure with **Rue La La Day Tours**.

Enjoy private guided tours luxury transportation, thoughtfully curated itineraries tailored to your interests, and exclusive access to Atlanta's cultural tastemakers, hidden gems, and unforgettable moments—crafted just for you.

Locals-Only Checklist

Want to blend in like a true ATLien?

Start by learning how to ride MARTA like a pro—it's fast, affordable, and gets you where you need to go.

Get familiar with Atlanta's distinct neighborhoods, each with its own personality and pace. Don't be shy—ask locals for their favorite hidden gems (they'll love to share!).

Dress smart with comfy shoes for all the walking and exploring you'll do. And whatever you do, don't leave Atlanta without trying lemon pepper wings—it's practically a rite of passage.



DIRECTORY

Business	Area	Social Media
Rue La La Day Tours and Excursions	Atlanta, metro	@ <u>ruelaladaytours</u>
Rue Clark	Atlanta, metro	@ <u>ruethatswho</u>
Sweet Auburn Curb Market	Atlanta, Auburn	@ <u>thecurbmarket</u>
The APEX Museum	Atlanta, Auburn	@ <u>theapexmuseum</u>
BeltLine Eastside Trail	Atlanta, NE	@ <u>atlantabeltline</u>
My Coffee Shop	Atlanta, East Lake	@ <u>mycoffeeshop</u>
The Madame Museum	Atlanta, Auburn	@ <u>madamecjwalkermuseum</u>
Herndon Home	Atlanta, West Side	@ <u>herndonhomemuseum</u>
Just Loaf'N	Atlanta, EAV	@ <u>justloafn</u>
Little Tart Bakeshop	Atlanta, Grant Park	@ <u>littletartbakeshop</u>

DIRECTORY

Business	Area	Social Media
Twisted Soul Cookhouse & Pours	Atlanta, metro	@ <u>twistedsoulscookhouse</u>
SPRINGGREENS	Atlanta, East Lake	@ <u>springgreens.atl</u>
Agave'	Atlanta, Cabbage Town	@ <u>agaverestaurant</u>
The LINE UP!	Atlanta, EAV	Rue La La Day Tours
Ten ATL	Atlanta, EAV	@ <u>tenatl</u>
ZuCot Gallery	Atlanta, Castleberry Hill	@ <u>zucotgallery</u>
The Narrative	Atlanta, Buckhead	@ <u>thenarrativeshowroom</u>
Black Art in America	Atlanta, West Side	@ <u>blackartinamerica</u>
Nina Baldwin Gallery	Atlanta, Castleberry Hill	@ <u>ninabaldwingallery</u>
The Saturday Set	Atlanta, metro	Rue La La Day Tours

CONCLUSION

Until Next Time...

I hope this guide has sparked your curiosity, deepened your appreciation, and opened the door to seeing Atlanta in a whole new light. Whether you're strolling the BeltLine, grabbing a bite at a local gem, or soaking in the stories of the city's powerful past, know that you're doing more than touring—you're connecting.

Atlanta is layered, vibrant, soulful, and ever-changing—and it deserves to be experienced with care, context, and a little bit of flair. I created Rue La La Day Tours & Excursions to give you just that: curated experiences that feel personal, purposeful, and unforgettable. If you loved this guide, imagine what we can do together in real time. I'd be honored to show you around. Private tours, day trips, creative events—we've got a seat just for you.

Until then, keep exploring boldly.

— Your Girl Rue ♥

Founder, Rue La La Day Tours and Excursions

www.ruelaladaytours.com

- RUE CLARK