

Southeast Getaway Travel Newsletter

Southeastern Conference Football Destinations

September, 2005

In this issue

[Gainesville, FL Home of the Florida Gators](#)

[Athens, GA Home of the Georgia Bulldogs](#)

[Columbia, SC Home of the SC Gamecocks](#)

[Alabama Home of the Auburn Tigers and Crimson Tide](#)

[SEC Football Shopping Page](#)

[Travel Help](#)

Dear Harry,

It is that greatly anticipated time of the year welcomed by not just the south but a great deal of the country. College Football season! The southeast welcomes SEC football with a passion and loyalty that is incredible to witness. Car Flags, shirts, hats, etc. can be seen all over the south.

Another way this grand sport is welcomed to the south is the beginning of tailgating season, another team sport ranking highly among all game spectators, body paint or not. Some games are preceded by DAYS of this culinary spectacle considered a sport of its own. Some of these rivalries go back generations.

If not for the football, fantastic food or fun the beauty of the southeast in the fall offers everyone the perfect vacation or escape destination.

Gainesville, FL Home of the Florida Gators



When the southeast talks about its "Gators" they aren't referring to dangerous animals. They are bragging or bashing those Florida Gators from the "Swamp" at the University of Florida. The Gators loyal fans span back generations and so does its rivalries. Beginning the season with Wyoming on Sept 3 and building up to the big games with Georgia, Vanderbilt and SC in Oct-Nov the excitement is electric.

When the Gators and GA Bulldogs meet it will be in Jacksonville, FL due to mutual agreement to play on neutral ground. The preceding days of tailgating and cocktail parties rival the competition of the football teams. The specialty of the house for this event is Gator Bites!! Oh yeah, they eat their young and boast about it. This is a game not to be missed.

In Gainesville, as well as the surrounding areas, visitors can explore the beautiful rivers & lakes, cool natural springs and unspoiled wilderness parks of an exquisite sub-tropical region. Easy US Interstate-75 access allows exploration of many of the nearby natural attractions from cycling, canoeing, hiking, camping, bird-watching and fishing to tubing down the famous Suwannee River.

Due to its location in sunny central Florida, any time of year is fine for a visit to Gainesville. It is a busy time of year when the University of Florida is in full session (and anytime the Florida Gators are playing a home football game). Whatever the season or whatever the reason for visiting, this true Florida City has something for everyone.

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• Athens, GA Home of the Georgia Bulldogs

Athens, the home of the University of Georgia Bulldogs is a small town famous for its SEC football team. Ranked second in the SEC East in 2004 with an overall 9-2 record this team begins its 2005 season with Boise St in Sept and faces South Carolina next. Probably the best known mascot in the country is UGA the white English Bulldog. The pride and veracity of this team definitely matches that of this fine mascot. When these Bulldog fans tailgate its BBQ all the way! Just one more rivalry in these southeastern states.



Just below the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains this University Town offers visitors a unique blend of Southern heritage and contemporary entertainment. A wide range of award-winning restaurants offer distinctive dining. Take time to stroll through the restored downtown or take a drive through historic districts, featuring Antebellum, Victorian, and other period homes. View the state's Official Art Collection, a traveling art exhibition, or one of the many local galleries. Treat yourself to a Broadway production without metropolitan hassles, and experience the bustling nightlife of Athens world-renowned music scene.

New in Downtown Athens is a quaint boutique inn and spa offering an escape to repose, rejuvenate and reward yourself. After the game or exploring the city the [Foundry Park Inn & Spa](#) will pamper you from the moment you enter the retreat. Just a short drive from Atlanta, this historic 3.8 acre site all within a village, park-like setting offers the ultimate evening dining experience with your choice to stroll to the historic Hoyt House Restaurant or be entertained with live music in the Athens Steam Company Pub.

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• Columbia, SC Home of the SC Gamecocks

This year the University of South Carolina Gamecocks are encouraged by their new head coach, Steve Spurrier who is returning to his roots in college football. The Gamecocks had an overall 6-5 standing in the SEC East in 2005 and start their season facing the Central Florida Knights on Sept 1.



The state of South Carolina divides in November when the USC Gamecocks play their rival the Clemson Tigers at home in Williams-Brice Stadium. This is BIG and the Gamecock fans know a thing or two about tailgating in style. A row of privately owned train cabooses fitted in South Carolina's proud team style provides the southern touch to tailgating prowess. Don't let the southern charm fool you, these are the fighting Gamecocks and they are out to win and win big.

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• Alabama Home of the Auburn Tigers and Crimson Tide



Let's not leave out the strong SEC West division with Auburn as the top finisher in 2004 with a 13-0 overall record. The Auburn Tigers play in Jordan-Hare Stadium to over 87,000 fans. They ended the season with a win over Virginia Tech in the Nokia Sugar Bowl. The Auburn Tigers

coached by Tommy Tuberville open Sept 3 with Georgia Tech. Some of the tailgating foods include fried turkey and shrimp or crawfish boils. You will also find strong BBQ competition in Alabama. Oh, you can never leave out the great side dishes of cornbread, mac and cheese and great southern potato salad.

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The state of Alabama also boasts its second SEC West team the Crimson Tide. This team from Tuscaloosa ended the 2004 season with a loss to Minnesota in the Music City Bowl and a 6-6 overall record. Bryant-Denny Stadium holds over 83,000 fans and the Crimson Tide proudly plays for coach



Mike Shula. They begin their season on Sept 3 playing the Middle Tennessee St. Blue Raiders. And we all know how this Alabama season ends--with the two state rivals duking it out at Auburn in November.

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- [Alabama](#)
- [Auburn](#)
- [Carolina](#)
- [Florida](#)
- [Georgia](#)
- [All SEC Teams](#)

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- [Airline Tickets](#)
- [City Guides](#)
- [Cruises](#)
- [Car Rentals](#)
- [Golf Guides](#)
- [Hotels Around the World](#)
- [Last Minute Deals](#)
- [Southeast Getaway Home Page](#)