

In the Neighborhood

# GREENVILLE

*South Carolina's West End*

Fall 2018 — TheBeanMagazine.com

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photography courtesy **VisitGreenvilleSC**

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## **This historic district in upstate South Carolina has a contemporary vibe, but it still boasts plenty of Southern charm.**

At one time, the city of Greenville, S.C., likely wasn't on many people's travel lists, but all that's changed in the past decade. Now the city of 65,000, nestled at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains, can't stop making it onto lists. In 2018 alone, it's been recognized as one of the best places to live by U.S. News & World Report and one of the best cities in America by National Geographic Travel. Travel & Leisure recently included Greenville in its list of the "50 Best Places to Travel in 2018."

With this kind of publicity, there's clearly no shortage of things to do, taste and see throughout Greenville, but you certainly don't want to miss the West End Historic District, which has rightfully earned itself a reputation as the arts and entertainment center of the city.

However, the West End wasn't always the draw it is today. At the turn of the century, it was a thriving commercial district, but it soon began to decline, and by the 1980s the area was viewed as outdated and rundown. Then the City of Greenville developed an innovative plan to restore a group of buildings near the Reedy River, which included preserving the buildings' arched doorways, large windows and original floors. In 1995, the 44,000-square-foot mixed-use facility known as West End Market opened, and today it's home to restaurants, shops, art

galleries and small businesses.

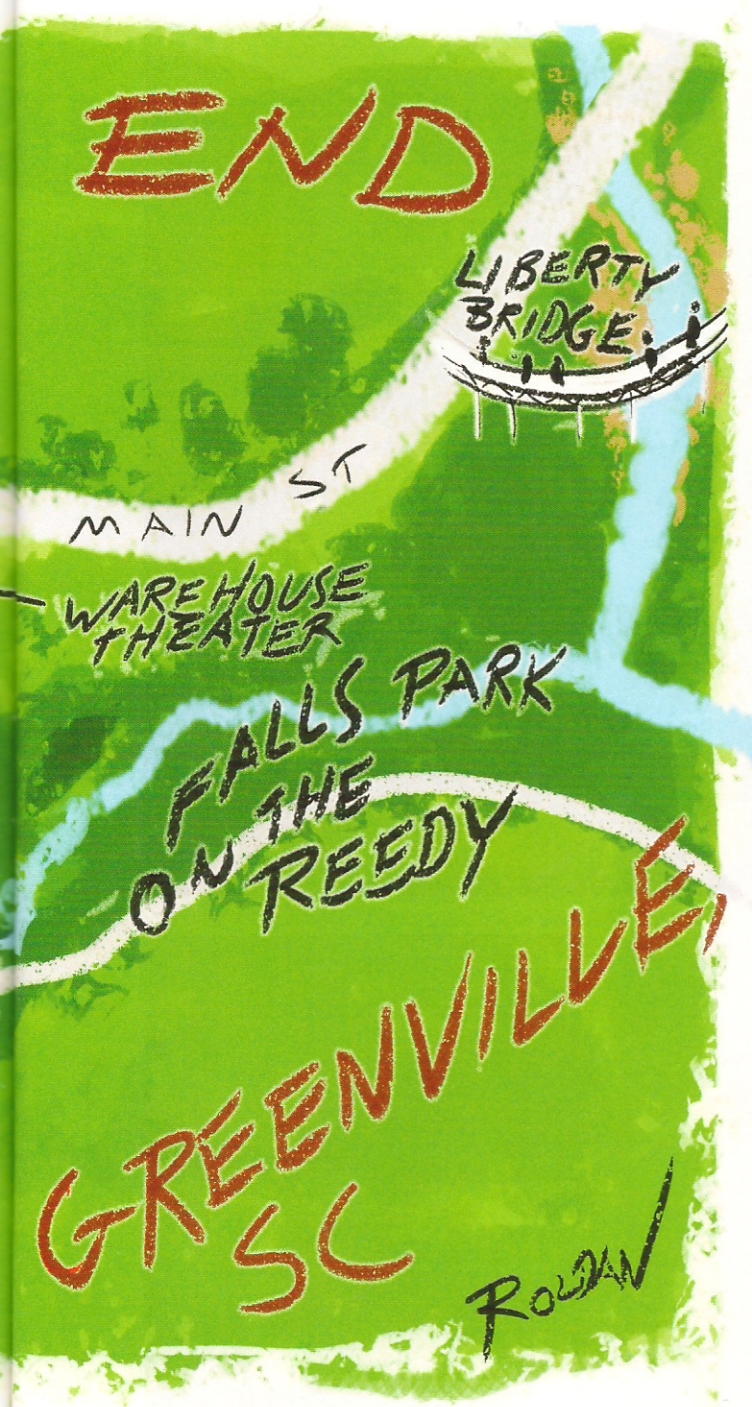
Greenville's West End continued to skillfully merge the old with the new in 2004 with the completion of Falls Park on the Reedy — a breathtaking oasis in the center of the city with beautifully landscaped waterfalls and gardens — and the construction of the Liberty Bridge, a 345-foot pedestrian suspension bridge supported by a single cable that's the only one of its kind in the nation. Throughout the park you'll find sculptures and other works of art featured as part of the city's Arts in Public Places initiative. Keep an eye out for one of the most notable pieces located right behind West End Market: Rose Crystal Tower, which was created by world-renowned glass artist Dale Chihuly.

Stroll — or pedal since the area is incredibly bike friendly — through the streets of West End, and you'll discover shops, galleries and boutiques offering one-of-a-kind items. Stop by Custard, which prides itself on dressing and accessorizing people of all shapes and sizes, to get your hands on unique styles and many items handmade by local artisans. There's plenty of bike racks outside, and you're welcome to bring your canine companion along to shop as well. You can also shop while giving back at the nearby West End Co-Op, a community-based rehab employment program that integrates people with brain









injuries back into the workforce. The nonprofit sells handcrafted jewelry, art and many other items, and all the proceeds are reinvested in the co-op.

If you've worked up an appetite, you certainly won't go hungry in Greenville. People Magazine recently named this radically reinvigorated Southern city one of the ten hottest foodie cities in America, and the West End is serving up culinary delights for every taste and budget. Grab lunch or dinner at Husk, whose award-winning chefs create dishes that "transcend the essence of Southern food." This hyper-regional restaurant has a menu that changes daily based on which local ingredients are in season. Don't miss the hot fried chicken seasoned with secret spices, and be sure to order the pimento cheese appetizer, which features the original strain of pimento peppers fresh from local Cedar Creek Mountain Farm.

Get a taste of cuisine from across the globe at Gather GVL, the city's first outdoor community food and beverage collective that's opening in late 2018. The 17,000-square-foot space features a large lawn area and plenty of seating, as well as a stage and rooftop venue, and you'll find a variety of delicious foods. From authentic Philly cheesesteak and German comfort food to plant-based bowls and flights of wine and beer, you'll find it all at Gather GVL. And if you're looking to grab something fast and healthy, you can't go wrong with family-owned Bex Cafe & Juice Bar, where everything on the menu is made fresh from locally sourced ingredients.

Need a pick-me-up after gorging yourself? Stop by the West End Coffee Shoppe, where you're sure to have one of the best cups of java you've ever tasted. West End Coffee has been keeping upstate South Carolina caffeinated





Top: Housed in a converted textile warehouse, The Warehouse Theater puts on at least six productions a year, as well as the Upstate Shakespeare Festival in Falls Park on the Reedy. Upcoming performances include "Christmas on the Rocks," an offbeat collection of twisted holiday tales, and "The Glass Menagerie."

Bottom: The five-room brick house where Major League Baseball player and Greenville native "Shoeless" Joe Jackson lived and died is now a museum containing many of his personal belongings and more than 2,000 books related to baseball.





since 1992, and its beans are always fresh and roasted within the week.

As you explore the West End, you won't be able to miss Fluor Field, which is home to the Greenville Drive, a Class A affiliate of the Boston Red Sox that's now sent more than a dozen players into the big leagues. The field is a mini replica of Fenway Park, complete with a Green Monster in left field. Nearby you'll find a museum dedicated to Major League Baseball player and Greenville native "Shoeless" Joe Jackson. The five-room brick house where Jackson lived and died contains many of his personal belongings and more than 2,000 books related to baseball.

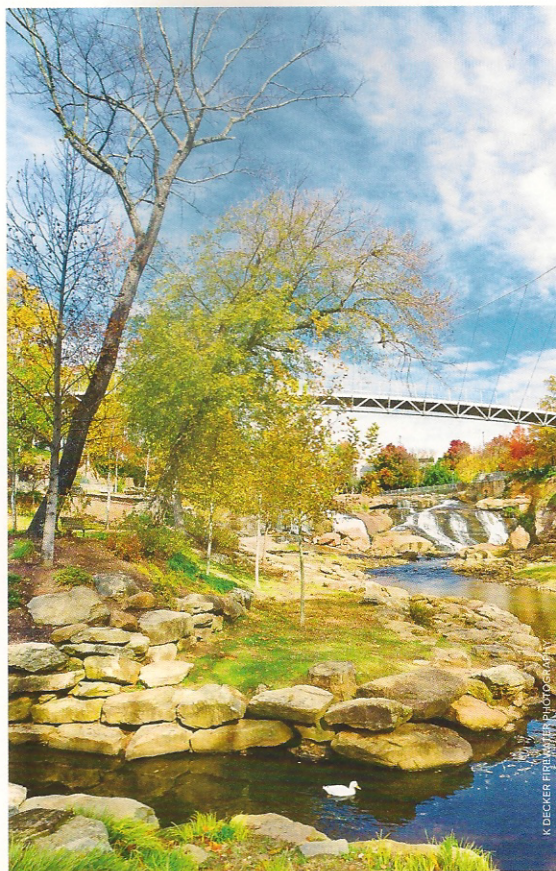
Wind down your day in the West End with a performance at The Warehouse Theater. Housed in a converted textile warehouse, the theater puts on at least six productions a year, as well as the Upstate Shakespeare Festival in Falls Park on the Reedy. Upcoming performances include "Christmas on the Rocks," an offbeat collection of twisted holiday tales, and "The Glass Menagerie."

While there are a variety of nightlife options in the West End, don't overlook one of the city's best kept secrets, Smiley's Acoustic Cafe. While many live music venues also identify as sports bars or dance clubs, Smiley's bills itself as "a pure music venue" that has live music Monday through Saturday. While Monday is always open-mic night, the rest of the week features an eclectic mix of performers — and musical genres — from across the globe.

No matter where you venture in Greenville's West End, you — or "y'all" as Southerners say — are guaranteed to have a wonderful time in this historic district that artfully melds the New South with the Old. 🍌

### Greenville Visitor Center

(864) 233-0461 / VisitGreenvilleSC.com



Top: Located in Falls Park on the Reedy, the Liberty Bridge, a 345-foot pedestrian suspension bridge supported by a single cable, is the only one of its kind in the nation. Bottom: Fluor Field, which is home to the Greenville Drive, a Class A affiliate of the Boston Red Sox, is a mini replica of Fenway Park, complete with a Green Monster in left field.

