



SARAH ELLIS BATES
writer, designer, educator

Key to Savannah's Pick-5 Local Favorites

From time to time, we like to give our readers a sampling of our absolute favorite things to do, see, eat, drink and more here in Savannah. Because we have such a wide variety of things to do and share in Savannah, we like to give you our current pick-5. No order, no ranking, just five great places or things to do that Savannahians simply can't live without.

Forsyth Park Farmer's Market: Fresh, local produce every Saturday from 9 am–1 pm. It's seasonal, it's fresh, it's locally grown. Eat healthy, enjoy the beautiful Forsyth Park scenery and stop by Sentient Bean and Brighter Day before you head home. Local tip: The Farmer's Market is held on the south end of the park near the tennis courts.

Mrs. Wilkes: Everyone says it's a tourist destination, but if you live in Savannah, you have to do Mrs. Wilkes at least once...then learn the best times to avoid winding lines and go back regularly. Well worth the wait, Mrs. Wilkes serves up a heaping of home cooked deliciousness every weekday from 11 am–2 pm.

Vinnie Van GoGos: More affectionately titled Vinnie's, there's nothing better than a hot slice of pizza from Vinnie's. \$2.50 for a plain slice, \$.50/\$.75 for extra toppings and \$3 for a beer leaves you full and with a check that isn't outrageous. Local tip: Vinnie's is cash only, so be sure to stop by the City Market ATM before you go.

Tybee North Beach & Lighthouse: You get to the pier and pavilion. It's beautiful...and crowded! If you're looking for a little less "tourist" and a little more relaxation, head down to the north beach. You might even see a classic summer wedding on the beach!

Lulu's Chocolate Bar: This chocolate-indulgence-filled dessert bar is the perfect place if you want delicious martinis PLUS a smoke free atmosphere. There's always good food, drinks and music, and Lulu's is a great place to catch local entertainment, from open mics and musicians to fundraising events. Lulu's is the perfect place to get a solid drink and still be able to carry a conversation without yelling. Laid back, quiet, and fun.

heybates@gmail.com

912.224.5319

[linkedin.com/in/heybates](https://www.linkedin.com/in/heybates)

heybates.com



SARAH ELLIS BATES
writer, designer, educator

Key to Savannah's Pick-5 Haunted Hot Spots

The Kehoe House: There are several spooky specters in the beautiful Kehoe House, built by iron foundry owner William Kehoe in 1892. Whether guests experience the ghostly laughter of the twins that haunt the halls or the friendly female ghost on the second floor, they are likely to remember the Kehoe House for its ghosts as well as its beauty. Fun fact: the molding on the exterior of the inn may look like wood, but it's all cast iron. Convenient in a town that has burned three times in its historic history.

17hundred90: The ghost of Anna haunts this famous inn. There are several versions of this spectral tale; Anna has been recounted as everything from a young woman in love with a sailor to a mail order bride from Ireland. Despite varied beginnings, the tales many versions tend to end the same way—Anna's life was cut short when she fell, jumped (or in one version, was pushed) from one of the inn's upper bedrooms. There's a waiting list to stay in Anna's room. People come from near and far to chance a visit from this famous Savannah spirit, so be sure to book well in advance.

The Marshall House: More ghost children can be heard in downtown Savannah, just ask employees at The Marshall House. Guests have claimed to hear children running in the halls of the hotel when no children are listed as guests. Guests have reported many other strange activities, from faucets turning on by themselves to waking to the feeling of their wrist being held as if someone was talking their pulse. This doesn't seem so strange when you discover that The Marshall House has been used as a hospital several times in its history. This knowledge also makes one grisly discovery a little less of a mystery: workers found the bones of Civil War amputees during a renovation! The Marshall House features a special Haunted Hotel Package for the visitor seeking a paranormal thrill.

Moon River Brewing Company: Formerly the City Hotel (built in 1821), Moon River Brewing Company is home to a fair number of ghostly residents. Whether it's the shadow of Toby slipping through the billiard room or the ghost of the lady in white up on the third floor, the paranormal sightings never cease. Want to know more about Moon River's ghosts? Stop in for one of Moon River's famous beers and ask the staff about their encounters with the paranormal. You can also catch Moon River Brewing Company featured on SyFy's Ghost Hunters and The Travel Channel's Ghost Adventures. Don't forget to try the liquid spirits while you're there!

The Pirate's House: Savannah is home to many famous spirits, but a famous pirate is said to reside in The Pirate's House. Robert Louis Stevenson's Treasure Island mentions Savannah as the final resting place of the famous Captain Flint, but many say that it is the Pirate's House where Captain Flint actually died. To this day, visitors and employees alike claim to hear Captain Flint calling for more rum. Fun Fact: The Pirate's House is also home to the oldest building in Georgia!

heybates@gmail.com

912.224.5319

[linkedin.com/in/heybates](https://www.linkedin.com/in/heybates)

heybates.com



SARAH ELLIS BATES
writer, designer, educator

Enjoy Each Day to the Fullest in Savannah

My brother surprised me by visiting this weekend and I was lucky enough to get to spend all day on Monday just with him. We started off our day by heading down to [Sentient Bean](#) on Park St. just off of [Forsyth Park](#). We had coffee and scones and sat outside enjoying the friendly vibe that always seems to flow off Forsyth Park. Next, we ventured into the park to sit beside the new [Forsyth Fort fountain and bandshell](#). My brother asked me for a coin just at the same time I was reaching into my pocket for the change from breakfast and we both made wishes for the new year.

We walked down Bull St. and I pointed out [Poetter Hall](#), the Savannah College of Art & Design's first building, and [St. John's Church](#) and [Madison Square](#), where Robert Redford's film [The Conspirator](#) had spent some time filming. We toured [Colonial Park Cemetery](#) and I explained to my brother how Savannah officials, wanting to save Savannah from destruction, surrendered the Hostess City to Sherman before he could burn it. I told him that, in comparison to some cities, Savannah got off light. One of the worst things the Union soldiers did during their occupation of Savannah was jokingly change the dates on some of the headstones in Colonial Park Cemetery. We walked towards the river and I pointed out the [Owens-Thomas House](#) on the corner of [Oglethorpe Square](#), a famously haunted National Historic Landmark in Savannah, now owned by the [Telfair Museum](#).

On Broughton Street we bought our mother a "Savannah Garden" scented candle at [Nourish](#) before heading over to [Gallery Espresso](#) on the corner of Bull St. and Perry St. for lunch and iced tea. We sat in the warm afternoon sun and watched the trolley tours moseying around [Chippewa Square](#), pointing out the once temporary home of "The Bench" from Forrest Gump (now housed in the Savannah Visitors Center,) the statue of James Oglethorpe, and the [Six Pence Pub](#) where they filmed a scene from "There's Something to Talk About" with Julie Roberts and Dennis Quaid.

After lunch, we walked back over to Abercorn St. and Liberty St. to tour the [Cathedral of St. John the Baptist](#). We enjoyed the architecture and gorgeous stained-glass windows, all brightly illuminated by the afternoon sun. We finished the day off around three, walking back home through Forsyth Park and spending the rest of the afternoon on my porch, reading and talking and just enjoying the fresh Savannah air.

We spent about four hours walking over four miles, just enjoying, taking in and being. We didn't worry about money or deadlines or jobs. We didn't fret about this or that or when or how; we just enjoyed. No matter what you do in Savannah, it will get inside you and beg you to just spend the afternoon with a cool drink in the warm sunshine that filters in through the Spanish moss—even in January. I hope you can find similar enjoyment on the next day spend in the Hostess City of the South. Yesterday was one of the best days I've had in Savannah in ages.

 heybates@gmail.com

 912.224.5319

 [linkedin.com/in/heybates](https://www.linkedin.com/in/heybates)

heybates.com



SARAH ELLIS BATES
writer, designer, educator

Selecting the Perfect Reception Venue

Selecting a venue for your wedding is possibly one of the hardest choices in wedding planning. With the help of the American Legion Post 135, Key to Savannah has come up with some tips to ensure you make an informed decision when it comes to choosing your reception venue. There are tons of questions to ask when you are choosing a location. Let's go over some of the most important things to consider when making your final decision.

1. **The W Questions.** You learned them in elementary school. Who? What? When? Where? Who have you invited? Are there many particularly young or elderly guests? Are you planning an indoor or outdoor wedding? Can Aunt Agnes handle long hours in an outdoor location during a hot Savannah summer? What are your plans for rain?
2. **Travel.** Are your guests coming from Brunswick or Chicago? How will they be traveling? Where will they be staying? Is your potential venue easily accessible from their hotel? Is there parking available?
3. **Use your Eyes.** Make a list of potential venues and schedule a time to visit each. Will your guests be packed together? Is there room to dance? Can you imagine this venue decorated and filled with the smiling faces of your friends and family?
4. **Get the Details!** Ask specific questions of the venue. Is there a closing time? How much does it cost to rent the venue? Can the location handle a DJ or a band? Is there a designated smoking area? Are there restrooms and what are they like?

The American Legion Post 135 ballroom is an ideal local venue for wedding receptions. Located at 1108 Bull Street, it is a block from Forsyth Park. It's close to many local churches and hotels – the Mansion on Forsyth is just a hop, skip and a jump away and St. Paul's Greek Orthodox Church, Bull Street Baptist Church and St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church are all within two and a half blocks.

The American Legion Post 135 ballroom can accommodate 299 guests and can provide table and chairs for up to 200. There is an onsite bar that serves wine, beer and special requests, and can accommodate your guests with up to three bartenders. The ballroom is available for rental from 7 am to midnight and there is a balcony designated for smoking.

The American Legion Post 135 ballroom will be the location for Key to Savannah's "Before They Tie The Knot," a networking event for wedding professionals in the Savannah area. For more information on the ballroom, visit: <http://www.alpost135.com/ballroom.htm>. For more information on "Before they Tie The Knot", visit our event calendar: [Before They Tie The Knot](#).

 heybates@gmail.com

 912.224.5319

 [linkedin.com/in/heybates](https://www.linkedin.com/in/heybates)

heybates.com



SARAH ELLIS BATES
writer, designer, educator

Other Samples from KeytoSavannah.com

- [Black Heritage Festival & Behind the Veil](#)
- [Hilton Head for a Couple](#)
- [St. Simon's Island with Kids](#)
- [St. Simon's Island - A Little Romance](#)
- [Statesboro - Just the Two of You](#)
- [Hilton Head - Family Fun](#)
- [Savannah - Family Friendly](#)
- [Buy Local, Savannah](#)

 heybates@gmail.com

 912.224.5319

 [linkedin.com/in/heybates](https://www.linkedin.com/in/heybates)

heybates.com