



SOCCER CITY PROFILE

ATLANTA

When you hit the big city to watch Atlanta United, bring your passion, a lot of noise and your appetite. Because whether you go to the game or watch it from a variety of soccer-friendly hangouts, you'll want to show your own A-game.





There is no doubt that the city of Atlanta is one of the hottest cities for soccer in North America. Long ignored by the sport's movers and shakers — as is the rest of the southeast — Georgia's capital city now has one of the better expansion franchises of any sport in recent history and thousands of soccer fans from around the region planning to visit soon. If you're thinking about attending an Atlanta United FC (AUCF) game soon, coming into town for a youth tournament, or just want to hang with some people who love the game as much as you do, there are a myriad of places for soccer fans to hang out in Atlanta.

First of all, let's just forget about the place tourists are drawn to in town. At this point, who doesn't know about the Georgia Aquarium, CNN Center, or the World of Coca-Cola? Those places are fine and dandy, but what if you want to experience Atlanta surrounded by local soccer fans?

Take the advice of Spencer Barton, a founder of one of the official Atlanta United supporter groups, the Faction. One of the four officially recognized supporter groups of Atlanta's MLS franchise, the Faction's home base is Fado Irish Pub.

Fado Irish Pub has about a dozen locations around the country but has two spots in Atlanta — one in midtown, where the Faction congregate for AUCF away games, and one in Buckhead, the home

base of another group, Terminus Legion. Barton says Fado Irish Pub is the perfect spot for soccer fans. "I think it's just what they've been doing for a long time, offering a lot of games and matches you wouldn't normally see anywhere else," he says. Fado's website posts a schedule of games featured each week, specializing in soccer as well as the Gaelic sports traditional to Ireland. "They definitely tailor themselves to folks from Europe or fans of soccer or other sports like rugby, hurling, you name it. They do all kinds of different sports."

While you can find traditional Irish fare such as shepherd's pie, corned beef with potato dumplings, fish and chips, and pints of Guinness on the menu, the pub's kitchen offerings aren't constrained to the Emerald Isle. For instance, you can get a mighty fine Cuban sandwich or, for your meat-free cravings, a black-bean burger.

Another place Barton recommends is the Brewhouse Cafe located in Little Five Points. The pub's website features four links in the following order: Home, Menu, Soccer, Location. It's as simple a philosophy as you're likely to find. Serving up regular sports pub fare — burgers, wings, sandwiches, pizzas, etc. — the Brewhouse opens early on game days at kickoff of the first game and stays open until 2 a.m.

Of course, the jewel in the crown of Atlanta's soccer scene will be the new home of AUCF, Mercedes-Benz Stadium. Under construction

at the time of this writing, Mercedes-Benz Stadium is bound to be Mecca for the truly devoted soccer fan, even if the complex is also the home field of the NFL's Atlanta Falcons. The stadium will feature an amazing new retractable roof. However, you can't eat architecture. What many fans will be interested in is the array of food options at the new stadium. Mercedes-Benz stadium officials recently announced 13 local and regional restaurants and eateries as concession options when the stadium opens this summer. Among the food choices are the locally owned pizza establishment Antico, locally sourced burgers by Farm Burger, and hotdogs by legendary Atlanta standby The Varsity.

"It was important that our restaurant offerings not only reflect the world-class quality of Atlanta's culinary scene but also represent what our fans said they wanted," says Mike Gomes, senior vice president, fan experience at AMB Sports & Entertainment. "In addition to our great core food and beverage concepts, the variety of local partner options in the stadium will give guests the opportunity to sample the best of what Atlanta has to offer while maintaining our fan-first philosophy." 🍷

WHAT'S HOT IN ATLANTA



Need more suggestions or have a large group of soccer players heading into Atlanta for a tournament? Here are some additional places of interest, courtesy of the good folks at Yelp.

Elder Tree Public House

469 Flat Shoals Ave
Atlanta, GA 30316

4 Stars | 108 Reviews

Located in the East Atlanta Village neighborhood, Elder Tree Public House gets positive reviews from locals who like a place to hang out, watch soccer and enjoy a burger and a cold beer. The Pub's Facebook page describes Elder Tree as an Irish Pub with a Southern twist where "soccer is always on."

Antico Pizza

1099 Hemphill Ave NW
Atlanta, GA 30318

4 Stars | 2,381 Reviews

Not your basic pizza restaurant, Antico Pizza is located on the west side of Atlanta and is a great spot for a pie baked in the restaurant's wood-fired oven. A great place for a hungry soccer team in need of some carbo-loading in one of the coolest places in town. There's even a framed Maradona #10 jersey signed by the legend himself mounted on the wall.

Have a suggestion for a great place to hang out?

Let us know at loyd@upper90magazine.com

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TO REGISTER OR LEARN MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

UGASOCCERCAMP.COM

CAMP PHONE: 706-425-3139

LOCATION

UGA Soccer Complex

(Jack Turner Complex)
2330 South Milledge Ave
Athens, GA 30605

WHAT TO BRING TO CAMP

You need to bring an adequate amount of soccer clothes (shorts, shirts, socks, indoor & outdoor shoes, and shin guards) for the week. Also bring a soccer ball, alarm clock, towels, twin sheets (80x36), blanket, pillow, personal toiletries, sunscreen, and casual clothes. Laundry facilities are available but campers are responsible for providing their own laundry detergent.