

GEORGIA

Hi, I'm Sanford Owens and I'm here to talk about my home-state of Georgia. Known as the Empire State of the South and the Peach State, Georgia not only offers southern charm and 47 state parks, but is also home to the largest historic district in the United States and over 400 Civil War sites including Atlanta. I think my favorite is the Cyclorama which is in Grant Park, Atlanta which is an oval depiction of the Battle of Atlanta in the Civil War. But there's lots and lots of battle field sites. But don't miss all the extensive to learn about Georgia's historical significance as the last of the original Thirteen Colonies. And go back in time by visiting the numerous battlefields, mansions and museums.

For those who seek outdoor adventures, be sure to spend a few days hiking the Appalachian Trail which starts in the North Georgia Mountains or go kayaking on the longest whitewater river in the world, the Chattahoochee River. The North Georgia Mountains are great, I spent a lot of my summers up there because they're so cool and if you grew up in South Georgia the thing you have to know is that if you're in a cornfield and the summer is 95 degrees and the humidity is amazing. Georgia's Cumberland Island National Seashore offers another escape from the lively metropolitan capital of Atlanta, which has a population of about 500,000 people.

Founded in 1733 and named after King George II of Great Britain, Georgia is located in the southeast of the United States. As one of the Thirteen Colonies to revolt against the British during the American Revolution, Georgia signed the Declaration of Independence. Georgia ratified the current Constitution in 1788 and was the fourth colony to do so.

The Georgia Gold Rush, which began in 1829 in the North Georgia Mountains, drew a large number of settlers. This led to the signing of the Indian Removal Act and eventually to the forced removal of over 4,000 Cherokees in an event known as the Trail of Tears.

Georgia joined the Confederacy in 1861 and was the site of several battlefields at Kennesaw Mountain, Chickamauga and in Atlanta. In 1864, a large area of land was destroyed and Atlanta was burned when Union General William Tecumseh Sherman led the March to the Sea, an event which took the lives of over 18,000 Georgian soldiers. Georgia was the last state to join the Union after reconstruction began.

Today, Georgia is a thriving agricultural and economic center. The agricultural products are probably corn, soybeans, cotton, and tobacco and peaches. But Jimmy Carter is of course famous for his peanuts. He is known as the peanut farmer, so every time I would drive through to my college I would go through plains and there was all these vast peanut-fields forever and ever. Atlanta, being the largest city in Georgia, plays a key role in the transportation of goods. The picturesque oak trees, charming city squares and the famous fried green tomatoes surely make for a unique and memorable time in Georgia.

Atlanta is one of six U.S. cities to host an Olympics, which was held in 1996. Today, Olympic Park near the CNN Center is a lasting tribute to Atlanta's Olympic Games.

One highlight that Georgia offers is the moviemaking fame and movie tours. Over 700 feature films have been shot in Georgia. Explore the *Gone with the Wind* Trail from Jonesboro to Marietta and see if you can recognize landscapes from the movie! Watch *Deliverance* starring Burt Reynolds, a film which was shot along the Chattooga River.

You wouldn't believe how many famous Georgians there are. The 39th president of the United States Jimmy Carter is from Plains, Georgia and still resides there. Everyone is invited to attend his Sunday school classes at the Maranatha Baptist Church. James Brown, Julia Roberts, Jackie Robinson, Clarence Thomas, Joann Woodward, Little Richard, Ty Cobb, and Trisha Yearwood so quite a few.

And there's also Civil Rights leader and Nobel Peace Prize winner Martin Luther King, Jr. was born in Atlanta in 1929. As an activist and pastor, King believed in using nonviolence to end racial inequality. Be sure to visit The Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site in Atlanta and Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church where the famous orator once preached.

Well I grew up in South Georgia which is a lot different from North Georgia but it was great. So you had a choice of sports, because everyone plays sports in Georgia, and you can either play football or you could play golf. And you know very small southern town, everyone knew everyone, a very relaxed, very comforting, very personable and very friendly and hospitable. Just like you would expect.

For devoted golf fans, the Masters Golf tournament held in Augusta, every spring, usually the first weekend of April and a lot of people come from all over the world now to attend, is sure to be the golf highlight of the year. Masters tickets are the "United States' hardest to get sporting ticket". I've had the pleasure of attending, I don't know, 10 masters and that's, if you ask me: "What I could do in all the world?" it would be go to the Masters.

You should come and visit Georgia, not only for the beautiful cities like Savannah, Georgia. But for the 500 golf-courses and for the beautiful mountains and lakes in North Georgia and for the beautiful scenery all over the state.