

HIDDEN GEMS

For Atlanta's intrepid diners, there's more to finding hidden gems than veering off the beaten path, though that certainly adds to the intrigue. The challenge is in uncovering food treasures. That's the real trick.

Whenever there is a discussion of hidden restaurant gems in Atlanta, a predictable list of names comes up—places that may be beloved but aren't so secret anymore. And while we appreciate being reminded of those heartwarming spots, we also want to seek out lesser-known destinations, from obscure restaurants and takeout shacks to underground bars, food trucks, and gas station finds.

We spent several weeks following up on tips, racking up the mileage, and putting on a few pounds to get a refreshed mix of hidden gems. The list doesn't include all the hidden gems out there, of course, but it's a good sampling of metro Atlanta's offerings. Restaurants are grouped loosely by geography—don't come at us, mapmakers. We hope to continue sharing more hidden gems on the regular.

Oh, and one thing we learned along the way: If your favorite hidden gems are iconic but aging, don't wait too long to visit. While they are priceless, they aren't around forever.

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Photography by GROWL BROS.

CHEF-OWNER
RANDY ADLER
HELMs THE
KITCHEN AND
HOMEY VIBES AT
BABS MIDTOWN.





► Laseter's Tavern

Vinings
© [@laseterstavernatvinings](https://www.instagram.com/laseterstavernatvinings)

Set between Truist Park and the Chattahoochee River is Laseter's Tavern, considered the "Cheers of Vinings" for more than 35 years. Come to watch a game—this is West Virginia University and Steelers country—or play on your own. Pool, the arcade game Golden Tee, and trivia are all on offer at the strip mall spot. Sip a pint of Georgia craft beer beneath the caricatures of the tavern's regulars above the oblong bar. The food, including the Boar's Head Reuben and homestyle fried chicken, can restore those pregaming for a Braves game or crawling in after shooting the hooch, which this author has, admittedly, done several times.

—Caroline Eubanks

► Naga Bistro

Chamblee
© [@nagabistro.atl](https://www.instagram.com/nagabistro.atl)

Earlier this fall, Naga Bistro transformed a former Thai restaurant on a quiet side street in Chamblee into a destination-worthy spot. Owner Thip Athakhhanh, who also owns Snackboxe Bistro in Duluth, broadens her Laotian repertoire here with dishes from Thailand and Cambodia. Standouts span the Southeast Asian region, from seashell-shaped curry puffs filled with an earthy, savory vegetable mixture to prahok ktis, a minced pork dip made with fermented fish sauce that showcases Cambodia's signature smoky-salty flavor profile. Fans of Snackboxe will recognize favorites: khao piek sen, a brothy chicken soup with chewy tapioca noodles, and laap, a lime-bright mix of protein, rice powder, chiles, and herbs. —Lia Picard

► Daily Chew

Morningside
© [@dailychewatl](https://www.instagram.com/dailychewatl)

Tucked into a sleepy neighborhood (dare we call it west Morningside?) behind busy Cheshire Bridge Road, Daily Chew is no secret for its many devotees. Still, it feels magical to stumble upon this lovingly crafted cafe-meets-restaurant, the brainchild of Julia Kesler Ierman, who also runs a robust catering business out of the same kitchen. The bright, vegetable-centric menu reflects Ierman's Jewish and South African roots. You'll find homey classics such as latkes, zhushed up with labneh and pickled onions, as well as clever reinventions, such as the schnitzel pita, made with juicy lion's mane mushrooms instead of meat and perfectly spiced with harissa. An outstanding "chew crew" of servers and baristas, plus a sunny, welcoming interior, make Daily Chew a delight every visit. —RG

► Cupanion's Kitchen + Coffee

Sandy Springs
© [@cupanionscafe](https://www.instagram.com/cupanionscafe)

Come for the coffee, stay for the sweet potato biscuits. If you're not clued in on the treasure that is Cupanion's, you may miss it, as the restaurant is nestled in the middle of a busy Roswell Road shopping center. This small space is rarely open for business without a line out the door, and (don't fact-check us on this) 95 percent of the orders include a sweet potato biscuit. These Southern delicacies are served warm with sides of honey butter and jelly. Order in the form of a fried chicken biscuit or a la carte. Don't forget a seasonally flavored latte with your order; they're brewed with house-made syrups. —Skye Estroff

LASETER'S TAVERN



➡ Krave Korean Grill

West Buckhead
© [@kraveatl](#)

Blink-and-you-miss-it Krave Korean Grill anchors a modest strip mall on Collier Road. Since 2022, it has quietly been churning out approachable quick-service Korean food, including homemade banchan such as kimchi pickles and sauteed green beans. Everything, including fruit- and vegetable-forward marinades, seasoning blends, and dipping sauces, is made in-house daily in the clean, no-frills space. Go for the steak bulgogi platter, which comes with 12 ounces of sliced, marinated rib eye, and level up your meal with a side of addictive fries and a house-made shrub-style soda. Proprietor Noah Kim learned his flavors from the best: He was the last apprentice of the former owner of Michelin-recommended Stone Bowl House, "Grandma" Young Hui Han, before she retired.

—Lauren Finney Harden

➡ Bold Monk Brewing

West Midtown
© [@boldmonkbrewing](#)

Surrounded by a half-dozen other breweries, Belgian-inspired Bold Monk Brewing sets itself apart with its chic interiors and a cathedral-esque barrel ceiling, as well as a coffee shop, a bookstore, and a lounge, where you could easily spend the day in a worn leather chair. The menu is a mix of American standards and traditional Belgian dishes like the classic French dip, and mussels with frites, cooked in white wine or house-made lager. Speaking of beer, don't miss the Bitter Sermon, a pale ale nod to the monks who created many of the beers we now love. And although Bold Monk is a brewery, you can also get wine and cocktails.

—CE

➡ Delilah's Everyday Soul

Upper Westside
© [@delilahseverydaysoul](#)

Classic soul food plates and new takes on chicken sandwiches are a delicious draw, but it's the hospitality that makes the original Atlanta outpost our pick. Tucked inside the food hall at The Works, you'll find the charming, silver-haired Gwen Buchanan (aka "Miss G"), a sometimes cashier who is kin to the founder, Delilah Winder. Miss G's son is married to Winder's daughter (the couple are the owners). Chef Delilah, who operated a food stand at the Reading Terminal Market in Philadelphia, became famous when Oprah proclaimed her mac and cheese the best she'd ever had. The seven-cheese wonder remains. If you stay to eat at the counter, you may see Delilah herself. Now in her 70s and living in Atlanta, close to her grandkids, she'll occasionally drop by to make sure the strawberry lemonade is properly iced, then linger to share kitchen tales with guests. —VF

➡ Bone Garden Cantina

West Midtown
© [@bonegardenatl](#)

Every day is the day of the dead at Bone Garden Cantina in West Midtown. As the name suggests, the theme is embraced to the max; you'll notice dancing skeletons on the walls and colorful skulls overlooking tables. The restaurant offers Mexican fare with an extensive menu of tacos, burritos, fajitas, tamales, esquites (street corn salad), and more. To try something new, get the Red Goat Soup, a chile-based soup with goat, onion, and cilantro. The drinks are the star of the show, including a strong, not-too-sweet house margarita, with other tart additions like pomegranate and tamarind available. Take in the lively decor inside, or sit on the patio lined with papel picado banners. —XS

KRAVE KOREAN GRILL

