Historic Atlanta

Atlanta, Georgia is a vibrant city with a rich and colourful past.

Atlanta's history began in 1837 when the city was built as the final destination on the Western and Atlantic railroad line. The city was originally called Marthasville in honour of the Governor's daughter. Railroad connections earned the nickname "Terminus", and the city's name was eventually changed to Atlanta, the feminine form of Atlantic, another railroad reference.

Since its humble beginning, Atlanta has quickly grown. Even in today's expansive industrial and commercial world, Atlanta is known as one of the largest transportation hubs across the United States and worldwide. The Hartsfield Atlanta International Airport is one of the country's busiest in terms of daily passenger flights. With several direct flights to Europe, Asia and South America, metro Atlanta has become a more accessible home to over 1,000 international businesses. Because of these international flights, more than 50 countries now enjoy representation in Atlanta through trade offices, consulates and chambers of commerce. These developments helped Atlanta grow into an important banking center, and the city is known as the world headquarters of Fortune 500 companies.

For over forty years, historic Atlanta has been significantly associated to the civil rights movement. During the early days of the movement, civil rights leaders moved forward and acted as visionaries to develop the new south, an area that would become Atlanta, Georgia. These visionaries possessed a fierce belief in freedom, and made monumental sacrifices in the name of peace. Atlanta's rise was made possible because of these civil rights leaders. Through hard work and diligence, they helped Atlanta grow into the modern cosmopolitan center it is today.

Throughout the evolution of historic Atlanta, it is interesting to note that diehard Southerners still view the place as the heart of the Old Confederacy. It's this blend of old and new that makes Atlanta, Georgia a perfect example of the "New South": a fast-paced modern community that still stands proud of its heritage.

Over the past two decades, Atlanta has undergone unprecedented growth. In the 1980s, the official population of the city remained suspended at about 420,000. Since then however, the metro population has exploded in growth. The population of Atlanta is now nearly 40 percent greater, with 1.2 million more residents. The city uses new development as a measure of this growth. The ever-changing downtown skyline, plus the construction of new skyscrapers in the outside perimeter business districts of Midtown and Buckhead, is indicative of Atlanta's population boom.

Since the late 1970s, dozens of incredible new skyscrapers have reshaped the city's profile. Renowned architects like Marcel Breuer, I. M. Pel and Philip Johnson have applied their vision and formidable talents to create the new developments. Atlanta is deemed the "Capital City of the Southeast", a city of the future with strong ties to the past.

Despite the remarkable growth and undeniable cosmopolitan qualities of historic Atlanta, there is an undisputed element of "old" in this city of the "New South". During the turbulent 1960's, Atlanta was known as the "City Too Busy to Hate". Today, it's proud to be called the "City Not Too Busy to Care". The very soul of Atlanta is the heritage that enhances and improves the quality of life in an otherwise contemporary community.