

DIVERSION

For Physicians at Leisure

INSIDER'S GUIDE

Atlanta

Five Great New Restaurants

- 1. Mitra** Occupying a retrofitted bungalow, Mitra has an upstairs room and deck that are large and lively; the downstairs space is quiet and snug. With dishes like smoked salmon balsas and orange and Morita chile braised pulled pig, the menu is an assertive but accessible take on Latin American cuisine. Midtown. 404/875-5515.
- 2. Rathbun's** In a cool modernist space carved out of an old factory building—with a year-round, protected patio—there's New American cooking with an earthy inflection; check out the sea scallop Benedict on country ham grits. Inman Park. 404/524-8280.
- 3. Table 1280 Restaurant and Tapas Lounge** This shimmering jewel box, part of Renzo Piano's redo of the High Museum of Art, opens onto an urbane terrace. Come for tapas and New American offerings like hot smoked salmon with heirloom tomatoes and garlic foam. Midtown. 404/897-1280.
- 4. Restaurant Eugene** A haven of civility, comfort and calm, this rising star offers diners luxurious contemporary southern cooking along the lines of pan-roasted North Georgia trout with blue crab gratin and braised Swiss chard. Have cinnamon-dusted donut buttons for dessert. Buckhead. 404/355-0321.
- 5. Eclipse di Sol** The chef at this bustling, casual neighborhood bistro has an inventive touch that results in seasonal dishes like cucumber and yogurt soup and crab cakes with orange and fennel. The people-watching from the covered streetside terrace is tops. Poncey-Highland. 404/724-0711.

Four Places to Walk, Run, Skate, Pedal or Relax

- 1. Piedmont Park** The city's best-loved and most-used outdoor space is looking splendid these days, following a decade-long (and ongoing) renovation by an ambitious public-private conservancy, which is now planning to increase the park's size by more than 40%. The highest point in the park—with the most stunning views—is occupied by the Atlanta Botanical Garden, itself always a delightful place to stroll.
- 2. Oakland Cemetery** Nearly everyone who died in Atlanta in the late 19th century is buried under the magnolias and oaks at this classical funerary park in the shadow of downtown. Guided tours concentrate on Oakland's 156 years of history, art and architecture.
- 3. Freedom Park** A linear greenway pointing east from downtown, this area was originally cleared to become a highway, but a grassroots movement nixed that plan. Now the park is a much-used amenity for the increasingly vibrant neighborhoods it passes through.
- 4. Arabia Mountain** This vast, low granite outcrop 30 minutes from town is an eerily beautiful terrain that's easy to walk, thanks to good trails. The rock surface is mottled with lichens and dotted with pools that support delicate miniature ecosystems.

Three Tips for Getting Around Town

- 1. Very little of Atlanta has a regular street grid** or even the slightest logic to its layout. If you don't know the city, you'll find that having a rental car may be more frustrating than convenient.

2. Use MARTA, the mass transit system, to get to and from the airport. Trains whiz right from the terminal building to downtown, Midtown and Buckhead in 20 to 30 minutes for just \$1.75.

3. It's very hard to find taxis on the street. Look for cabs near hotels, or phone for one.