



PO Box 1177
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www.VisitAikenSC.com

Visit *Aiken* Magazine

Volume 1 | Issue 2

Antiquing
Aiken

What's
On The
Menu

Aiken's
Arboretum
Trail



Published by the City of Aiken Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism

Aiken Is... A Perfect Match!

Adult Senior Tournament of the Year: Adult 18 & Over Championship Tournament in Aiken

In 2013 the City of Aiken hosted the Adult 18 and Over Championship Tournament with great success.

The tournament had 64 courts available to host the 111-team tournament and nearly 1,200 players. Because of the partnership with the United States Tennis Association – South Carolina this was another great opportunity to showcase Aiken.

THANK YOU USTA SOUTH CAROLINA FOR ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TO SHOWCASE TENNIS IN AIKEN, SOUTH CAROLINA!

Join us at The Weeks Tennis Center
1700 Whiskey Road, Aiken – (803) 642-7739

COURT HOURS

Monday – Thursday: 8 a.m. – 9 p.m.; Friday – Saturday: 8 a.m. – 8 p.m., Sunday: 8 a.m. – 8 p.m.
Reservations can be made by calling (803) 642-7739

TENNIS CENTER HOURS

Monday – Thursday: 9 a.m. – Noon and 3:30 p.m. – 9 p.m.,
Friday – Saturday 8 a.m. – Noon and 3:30 p.m. – 8 p.m., Sunday: 1 p.m. – 8 p.m.



Roll Up for a Tour of Aiken

Discovering Aiken is much easier than one might expect! Simply climb aboard our Saturday morning historic tour, hold on tight and experience our virtual time machine. Tour guides for the City of Aiken offer you a two hour

exploration of Aiken’s rich history aboard our trolley (weather permitting). Tours are hosted each Saturday from 10 a.m. – noon and depart from the City of Aiken Visitors Center and Train Museum (406 Park

Avenue). Participants are encouraged to book their seats well in advance as tickets sell out quickly. For more information or to purchase your \$15 ticket, please call (803) 293-7846.

Did you know that Aiken’s history can be traced back to a love story?
Join our tour and find out more!



The Aiken Historic Tour takes you by many Winter Colony homes to include Banksia (The Aiken County Historical Museum).

Antiques in the Heart of Aiken



By: Jean Schwalbert

Antique enthusiasts: mark your calendars for Antiques in the Heart of Aiken Show and Sale at the Aiken Center for the Arts in downtown Aiken, January 30 through February 2, 2014!

Celebrating its 15th year, this highly popular event successfully combines a taste of Southern hospitality and antiques from around the globe. With the help of many dedicated volunteers, twenty-two of the finest antique dealers in the Southeast transform Aiken Center for the Arts in a hall of fascinating treasures. Exhibitors from South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Texas and Florida gather to showcase estate jewelry, antique silver, furniture, rugs, porcelains, linens, rare maps and prints, sporting art, lighting and more. American, English,

French and Italian furniture and decorative accessories from the primitive and mid-century modern are at your fingertips in one convenient location. One ticket allows you to enjoy the antique show and sale for all three days.

The lecture series on Friday and Saturday mornings at 9 a.m. is a well-attended part of the show, as experts speak on a variety of topics ranging from the ceremony of tea and the care of antique linens to the restoration of old homes and the history of military. Hand engraving of gold and silver from a master engraver, as well as experts in the field of silver and art restoration will be available to answer questions.

The Sweetheart Café has become a legendary part of Antiques in the Heart of Aiken. Aiken's finest cooks prepare their highly sought

after recipes: homemade sandwiches, salads, soups and desserts, all served with a smile by delightful community volunteers. The café is open for lunch and afternoon treats.

If you want to be the first to interact with the dealers and view and purchase antiques, buy your tickets early and join the Preview Party, a cocktail party featuring scrumptious hors d'oeuvres and desserts and live entertainment. This evening always proves to be an informative and festive event.

Antiques in the Heart of Aiken Show and Sale is Aiken at its best! The local community and visitors gather for an exciting weekend in which the finest vendors, gourmet cooks and supportive patrons come together for a celebration of beauty in the midst of winter!

All proceeds from Antiques in the Heart of Aiken benefit the Aiken Center for the Arts, a non-profit organization providing art classes, gallery exhibits and presentations for all ages.

Aiken Center for the Arts

122 Laurens Street, SW, Aiken
(803) 641-9094
www.aikencenterforthearts.org



www.VisitAikenSC.com

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Cover photo (and many interior photos) by Larry Gleason.



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South Carolina
Just right.



Dear Aiken Friends,

Welcome to the City of Aiken! We believe you will find Aiken to be a beautiful and enjoyable South Carolina city. Whether you are visiting for business, recreation, or relaxation we are confident that you will soon discover why our community remains a great place to visit, play, and stay.

Aiken was incorporated in 1835. Today, as you explore our community, see if you can find landmarks left by our past visitors and

residents as continuing to work towards an even bigger future. Our equine enthusiasts and entrepreneurs, public parks, parkways, business leaders, and other special features contribute to our thriving local economy.

I encourage you to begin your Aiken expedition by first visiting our Aiken Visitors and Train Museum, located at 406 Park Avenue. Our experienced staff and team of dedicated volunteers are ready to assist you in discovering Aiken.

Enjoy your visit!

Richard L. Pearce
Aiken City Manager



Aiken's Guest Feature

Resources in Aiken County



Author Doc Lawrence takes a moment to get to know one of the horses of Aiken.

Each issue we will feature a story that was published about Aiken in an outside publication by a guest writer to our community. Doc Lawrence, now a friend of Aiken, has published multiple stories about Aiken following his visit last March. Featured below is an excerpt from one of our favorites!

Jazz, Southern Hospitality and Racing Horses

By: Doc Lawrence,
Gourmet Highway

AIKEN, South Carolina – Once the home of the Hope Diamond, this lovely city is known for thoroughbred horses and all sorts of stylish equestrian competition. Southern hospitality originated somewhere and after a few days in Aiken, there is a feeling

that perhaps this easy-going, elegant city, gave birth to gentle living and good manners.

In the late 19th century, Aiken gained fame as a wintering spot for wealthy people from the Northeast with names like Vanderbilt, Astor and Whitney. Their generosity exemplifies noblesse oblige and is evidenced today in thoroughbred horse breeding, training and racing, architecture, cultural heritage and environmental preservation.

Prancing racing horses (they have the right-of-way here) pass historic mansions with flower-filled gardens. Dominating downtown Aiken is The Willcox. Built in the late 19th century for Gilded Age dandies, the luxury hotel retains its splendor, all tempered with Southern

charm and modern amenities. Old wood, polished brass, bright crystal and original art mirror the elevated cuisine, fine wine and generously poured cocktails in the lobby bar. The large front porch offers the nap you have yet to enjoy. The Willcox has a wonderful history, attracting guests like Winston Churchill, Elizabeth Arden and Franklin Roosevelt. Local lore includes a story that the Prince of Wales was turned away during the Masters Tournament because no room was available.

Aiken's Rose Hill mansion occupies a city block. The architecture is high-fashion Shingle-style Dutch Colonial. A regional treasure, Rose Hill sits above the city and is listed on the National Register of Historic

Places.

Among the largest urban forests in the nation, Hitchcock Woods encompasses 2,100 acres of forestland resources. Full accessible and well maintained, this longleaf pine forest has retained its natural character and cultural heritage and is an essential part of the Aiken lifestyle. Equestrians and hikers join dog walkers and joggers along the 70 miles of sandy trails.

Dining showcases Aiken's diversity. The Red Pepper Café offers casual dining where the shrimp and grits are good interpretations of Low Country authenticity. Live music is regularly featured. Breakfast has to be special to earn raves. With a name inspired by the nearby dirt track where thoroughbred horses are exercised, The Track Kitchen is



creeks, sharp bends, or islands in the river to harvest wild ducks. The daily bag limit varies depending on the species of duck.

Deer Hunting is the most popular form of hunting in South Carolina and Aiken County is no different. The Low country of South Carolina has the longest deer hunting rifle season in the entire

country starting August 15th and going through January 1st. The first 2 weeks of the season allows hunters the opportunity to harvest a buck that is still in velvet. This is one of only a few places in the entire country you can harvest a velvet buck. The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources has 4 different pieces of public

property for hunters to hunt by purchasing a special permit. These 4 properties total over 12,800 acres. Hunters readily take advantage of these public hunting areas and harvest many deer from them every year.

Aiken County outdoors is a great place for families to learn about the outdoors and managing the natural resources that

cover the county. With all of the outdoor options it is easy for people to find something enjoyable to do and many benefit from these opportunities each year!

Managing our Natural



By Stan Courtney

Hunting has a very rich heritage in the southeastern United States and South Carolina has some of the best hunting in the country. Over 125,000 hunters take to the woods and water every year to pursue wild game and help fill their freezers with meat for the rest

of the year. Aiken is the fifth largest county in South Carolina totaling 1080 square miles of land. A large portion of this land is rural which allows for great hunting opportunities. Some of the animals that are hunted in the fall in Aiken County are: deer, wild hogs, ducks, geese, doves, quail, squirrels, and rabbits.

Bird Hunters in Aiken County are very successful. Doves come into season in early September. Hunters usually hunt doves in large fields with groups of 10 people or more. The fields are planted in late spring with sunflowers, corn, or wheat. The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources has 48 public dove hunting

fields in South Carolina. One of these fields is in Aiken County. The daily bag limit for doves is 15 birds per hunter per day. Another bird that attracts hunters in Aiken County is ducks. Aiken County's western boarder follows the Savannah River which is home to thousands of wild ducks. Duck hunters on the Savannah River usually focus on small

by the nearby dirt track where thoroughbred horses are exercised, The Track Kitchen is a laid-back breakfast institution. Wife and husband team Carol and Pockets Cater have a loyal following ranging from billionaires and sheiks to struggling journalists who come here for a made to order genuine Southern breakfast. The bacon is baked, served with properly prepared grits, eggs and fluffy pancakes. Coffee is self-service with unlimited refills.

Downtown Aiken's Prime Steakhouse combines the menu of a big city restaurant with Southern culinary influence. There are three

constants here: fork-tender beef, an impressive wine list and trained servers who, as they say in New York, "get the job done." The bar serves only premium drinks, making my order of Jack Daniel's served neat quite easy.

La Dolce provides Aiken with a glimpse of Europe. A cozy tea room and very popular bakery, La Dolce offers a tutorial tea tasting conducted by the eloquent and effervescent Lady Kelly MacVean, a Certified Tea Master. Tea is part of the celebration of life and La Dolce adds the grandeur of the gourmet experience.

The Houndslake Guest



The Track Kitchen offers the perfect opportunity for a laid-back breakfast.

House is a comfortable 30-room inn with spectacular golf course views. Located in the heart of one of Aiken's finest country club communities, the food and drinks are wonderful, emblematic of Aiken's many quality choices.

The langiappe is special: good conversation with the engaging proprietor, Peggy Penland.

Tourism's trajectory is soaring in Aiken. Offer excellence and people will come. The truly lucky ones will stay.



Lady Kelly of La Dolce is an internationally certified Tea Master.

Aiken Arboretum Trail



By: Bob McCartney, Woodlanders, Inc. and Harry Shealy

Earlier this year the City of Aiken opened its newest addition to Aiken's Citywide Arboretum...the Aiken Arboretum Trail. The "trailhead" begins just left of the Aiken County Public Library where you will find a brochure to guide your adventure. The trail runs east on Colleton Avenue from Chesterfield Street to Charleston Street and back, a distance of about two miles of flat terrain. There are just over one hundred different kinds of trees along the trail. An example of each is labeled with common name, scientific name and a tree number. With the opening of the new trail, a mobile cellular tour was

launched. Visitors can enter the program phone number (803) 295-5008 and enter the tree number to hear a short narrative for each tree. For anyone eager to increase their knowledge of trees, this trail is a must!

Aiken's Citywide Arboretum was formally established in 1995 but remains a work in progress. This Arboretum along with the newly launched trail was made possible through the wonderful heritage of the City's 176 parkways. The unique parkways of Aiken offer the open space needed for a diverse collection of trees. These parkways and properties in Aiken have a diversity of trees and shrubs unequaled in municipal landscapes.

The mild climate of

Aiken combined with adequate rainfall, a variety of soil types and habitats ranging from wetlands to desert-like sand hills support a rich and diverse native flora. These conditions are likewise favorable to a wide variety of trees and other plants.

Local arboretum enthusiasts encourage

visitors to explore Aiken's Citywide Arboretum, appreciate Aiken's diversity of trees and enjoy the serene beauty of the city's legacy of open spaces. The Aiken Arboretum Trail along Colleton Avenue is an excellent introduction and provides a small sample of this Aiken treasure.



Photo by Larry Gleason

Aiken's Thoroughbred Tradition

If you couldn't guess it from the horse crossing signs and the painted statues around town, Aiken is proud of its horses. Thirty-nine champions have trained at the famed Aiken Training Track, and the Thoroughbred Racing Hall and Museum of Fame stands testament to the history and honor of their

essential role in Aiken's culture.

Located appropriately in a 1900s carriage house in Hopelands Gardens, the Hall of Fame and Museum displays a collection of over a century's worth of photographs, exhibits, racing silks, trophies and other memorabilia of the thoroughbred racing

industry.

Induction ceremonies are held each March after the Aiken Trials, one of the biggest local equestrian events of the year since 1942!

Admission to the Aiken Thoroughbred Racing Hall of Fame and Museum is free. Hours of Operation are September-May (Tuesday-Friday & Sunday

2-5, Saturday 10-5), June-August (Saturday 10-5, Sunday 2-5) and June-August (Saturday 10-5, Sunday 2-5). www.AikenRacingHallofFame.com, 135 Dupree Place (Inside Hopelands Garden), Aiken (803) 642-7650.

Located throughout Aiken, visitors will discover eleven painted horses that were part of a fundraising campaign for the Aiken Center for the Arts many years back. Today, the eleven remaining in public locations can be admired and photographed. This horse, Stonerside, is one of three displayed in Hopelands Gardens. You will find Magnolia Mare and Have Sum Fun also in the gardens. The other horses are located at the following locations:

Green Boundary Club - History Maker
Aiken Center for the Arts - Splendor in Glass
Aiken Community Playhouse - Dustin' Hoofman
Sotheby's at Laurens Street - His Spirit is the Wind in Aiken
USC-Aiken Etheredge Center - Down by the Water
City of Aiken Administration Building (Laurens Street)
- Palmetto/American Equine
Laurens Street at Park Ave (Morgan Circle) - The Patriot
Newberry Street Festival Site - Horse of a Different Color
Bank of America at Park Ave - Steed Freedom



Aiken...a Year Around Destination



Aiken’s annual calendar is filled with one of a kind events to attract locals and visitors to celebrate. From the racing of lobsters in the early summer to the racing of horses in the fall and spring, Aiken is known as a place with a lot to do! For a complete listing of events hosted in and around the City of Aiken, we encourage you to visit www.VisitAikenSC.com and to LIKE us on Facebook at Visit Aiken SC.



Just a sampling of holiday events in Aiken during the month of December:

Christmas Craft Show
December 6th – 7th
www.VisitAikenSC.com

A Holly Day
December 7th
www.downtownaiken.com

Night of 1000 Lights
December 12th
www.downtownaiken.com

Christmas in Hopelands
December 12th – 23rd and 26th
www.VisitAikenSC.com

Christmas at the Depot
December 21st
www.VisitAikenSC.com

Dear Santa
Aiken Community Playhouse
(multiple show dates)
www.aikencommunityplayhouse.us



Simply scan this QR code to explore www.VisitAikenSC.com.
Click on Calendar and find all of our upcoming events.



Chef Randy Stamm, Owner of Prime Steakhouse, proudly showcases the very product that makes him one of a kind in Aiken.

What’s On The Aiken Menu

Even though the colder months are settling in, you don’t have to abandon the tastes of your favorite grilled entree....STEAK! Whether it’s grabbing a delicious steak dinner after the big game, a quiet dinner for two or celebrating a special occasion, let the steakhouses of Aiken prepare their satisfying “grilled just the way you like it” steak complete with all the savory sides the South can offer!

Aiken’s Steakhouses

Prime Steakhouse
316 Richland Ave West
(803) 642-4488

Longhorn Steakhouse
2480 Whiskey Road
(803) 648-5070

Outback Steakhouse
160 Aiken Mall Drive
(803) 644-4031

Up Your Alley Chophouse
222 The Alley
(803) 226-0386

For a full listing of restaurants in Aiken, please visit www.VisitAikenSC.com.



Showcasing Aiken's Locally Owned Businesses



Plum Pudding offers a variety of gourmet items perfect for every event.

Aiken has no shortage of locally owned and operated businesses! While visiting, be sure to set off on an adventure and explore these fantastic locations throughout Aiken. In each edition of this publication you will find a different locally owned business highlighted. A brief interview with the owner or manager of the

business will be featured. And, as you set out to find this business, we encourage you to let them know that you read about them in our magazine.

Plum Pudding Gourmet Kitchen Store

Plum Pudding, located in the heart of downtown Aiken, has become one of the "must shop" places



Store associate prepares for Cooking Class at Plum Pudding.

in the community. This gourmet kitchen store is filled with fabulous finds, unique dinnerware and a staff ready to assist you with great customer service. We recently sat down to interview Christian Carlisle, Plum Pudding's amazing Manager and Buyer.

Tell us about one product you sell that is unique?

We are continually striving to find great new, regional products! Visitors can send home a special piece from what they found in Aiken. From our custom local postcards of Aiken to regional gourmet and specialty products we like to feel like everything we sell is unique.

What is your most popular product?

Popularity of our products is constantly changing as trends change and as we bring new discoveries into the store. One of the most popular items currently and historically is the silicone lids by Charles Viancin. These silicone lids are capable of sealing any vessel with a smooth lip whether it is plastic, steel, glass, wood or really anything. What takes them to the next level is their versatility. These lids are microwave, fridge, freezer AND oven safe! They take the place of cellophane as well as aluminum foil...this fills a green niche while also solving that hard to find lid for the unusual sized



Manager and Buyer, Christian Carlisle, showcases one of the stores most popular products.

pot or bowl. They can even be used for wine glasses and coffee mugs to keep flies out or the heat in. Let's not forget that they can also be a drain stopper!

You walk in Plum Pudding and smell the incredible coffee you sell. What is your best-selling coffee?

Our best-selling coffee is the Sumatra Arabica American Roast. This mild, low acid coffee is samples every day and outsells all of our other coffees twelve to one. Stop by and try it!

What would you like visitors to Aiken to know about Plum Pudding? Why choose you to visit?

Plum Pudding has been a fixture in historic

downtown Aiken for more than 35 years. We have evolved over the years to where we are today. We currently offer cooking classes locally that sell out each time as well as the ability to ship orders home for those visitors that discover us during their travels. We make and ship custom gift baskets for both personal and corporate customers. Also, for those that can't stop by the corner of Richland and Laurens, our user friendly website is just a click away. It offers a full online gift registry. Having said all of this, one of the greatest things about Plum Pudding is what we are a part of! We are one business that is part of what has become a fantastic downtown.



This beautiful China, named Aiken, is a local and visitor favorite.

This downtown has become a destination for day visits and beyond! The downtown is truly one community's greatest asset and we are proud to be one of its representatives.

Now, you've read this and you're itching to get there, right?

Plum Pudding
101 Laurens Street,
Aiken
(on the corner of Laurens Street
and Richland Avenue)
(803) 644-4600
www.plumpuddingkitchen.com