

TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALLGAME

Looking for an affordable summertime outing for your Georgia family?
A minor league baseball game is a home run choice.

Played at a real ballpark, complete with pro baseball players, ballpark food and ample family-friendly entertainment options, a minor league game rivals the same excitement of an Atlanta Braves game — minus the expense and hassles.

MINOR BENEFITS

There's plenty to love about minor league game experiences, starting with budget-friendly ticket prices. Many have special promotions that provide free admissions for kids.

Every seat is a good one at minor league ballparks, too. You can sit close enough to hear the pop of the catcher's mitt.

Minor league baseball games are designed with families in mind. Theme nights like the Stripers' Christmas in July and the Clingstones' dog-friendly Wet Nose Wednesdays are fan favorites. Giveaways — think hats, shirts, bobblehead figures and more — are regular features.

Those who stick around for the final out on Fridays can enjoy a fireworks show at all Georgia minor league ballparks. On designated dates, every team invites kids to come onto the field for a post-game run around the bases, too.

Ready to score some baseball fun? Every team's website includes a calendar detailing upcoming promotions. Tickets can be purchased online, too.



Georgia is a hotbed of baseball game fun for fans of all ages. Read the Walton Wise blog for links to promotions and other affordable game options near you.



ATLANTA BRAVES' MINOR LEAGUE TEAMS

The Braves have three Minor League Baseball affiliate teams in Georgia.

At Coolray Field outside of Lawrenceville, the **Gwinnett Stripers** (Triple-A) showcase future stars on their way to "the show."

New this season, the **Columbus Clingstones** (Double-A) meet foes like the **Montgomery Biscuits** and **Rocket City Trash Pandas** at Synovus Park in downtown Columbus. Mascot Julius the penguin and the **Rome Emperors** (High-A) rule at AdventHealth Stadium in Rome. The **Augusta GreenJackets**, the Braves' A affiliate, host home games just over the state line in North Augusta, S.C., at SRP Park.

Sweet Spot

July is peak season for
Georgia-grown watermelons

No summertime barbecue or picnic is complete without a delicious, crisp watermelon. Picking up a fresh-from-the-field melon is a cinch here in Georgia.

With some 40,000 acres in production, watermelon is the state's number one produce crop, reports the Georgia Department of Agriculture. The growing season peaks this month, so you'll find plenty of watermelons available at roadside stands, farmers' markets and grocery stores.

The Georgia Watermelon Association offers these pointers for choosing the sweetest, tastiest melon:

LOOK: The watermelon should be evenly shaped with no cuts or bruises. Its skin should be dull and dark, not shiny. A brown, dried stem indicates the watermelon was picked ripe.

LIFT: A watermelon that feels heavy for its size is likely to be juicy and sweet.

TURN: A yellow or creamy field spot (the area where it rested on the ground) is a good sign of ripeness and sweetness. Look for webbing, a network of thin lines or veins, especially around the field spot. Larger webbing indicates a more sweet and well-pollinated watermelon.

LISTEN: Give it the thump test. Gently tap the melon's underbelly. A ripe watermelon will sound hollow and deep.

Show your support for local farmers by ensuring you select a locally grown watermelon. Many Georgia-grown melons bear a special label that confirms their origin.



Try a recipe
from the
Georgia
Watermelon
Association

Cool tips to save on energy this summer

Summer heat in Georgia can drive up your energy use, but a few small changes can help keep costs down. Try these easy ways to stay cool and save:

- 1 SEAL AIR LEAKS**
Check around windows, doors and vents for drafts. Sealing gaps with caulk or weatherstripping helps keep cool air in and hot air out, reducing energy waste and keeping your home more comfortable.
- 2 COOK SMARTER**
Avoid using your oven on hot days – it heats up your home and makes your AC work harder. Try grilling outside or preparing no-cook meals to keep things cool indoors.
- 3 KEEP THE SUN OUT**
Close blinds or curtains during peak sunlight hours to block out heat and reduce strain on your air conditioner. Blackout curtains work especially well for rooms with direct sun exposure.



Small changes
like these can
lead to real
savings over time. At Walton Gas,
we're here to help you make the
most of your energy all summer.

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Monroe
842 US Hwy. 78 NW

Snellville
3645 Lenora Church Rd.

Watkinsville
2061-D Hog Mountain Rd.

Jim Bottone
Senior VP, Walton Energy
& External Affairs

Ashlie Franklin
Commercial Accounts
afranklin@waltongas.com

Sara Beddington
Marketing Specialist

Call Atlanta Gas Light
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emergencies anytime.

Inside Metro Atlanta
770-907-4231

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