

5

Where to Stay

The undisputed stars of Savannah lodging are the small inns in the Historic District, most in restored homes that have been renovated with modern conveniences while retaining their original charm.

A note on rates: Because many of Savannah's historic inns are in converted former residences, price ranges can vary greatly. Keep in mind that a very expensive hotel might also have some smaller, more moderately priced units. So it pays to ask. Advance reservations are necessary in most cases, since many of the best properties are small.

MAKING RESERVATIONS

You may make your reservations by telephone, mail, fax, and, in many cases, the Internet. If you're booking into a chain hotel, such as a Hilton, you can easily make your reservations by calling their toll-free phone numbers.

You can usually cancel a room reservation 1 week ahead of time and get a full refund. A few places will return your money up to 3 days before the reservation date; others won't return any of your deposit, even if you can cancel far in advance. It's best to clarify this issue when you make your reservation. If you are booking by mail, include a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your payment so that the hotel can easily send you a receipt and confirmation.

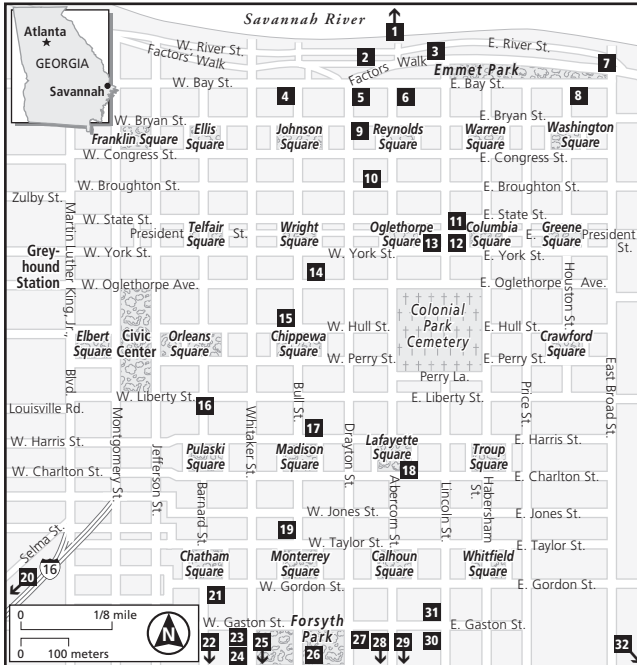
If you arrive without a reservation, begin your search for a room as early in the day as possible. If you arrive late at night and without a reservation, you may have to take what you can get, often in a price range much higher than you'd like to pay.

1 Along the Riverfront

EXPENSIVE

Hyatt Regency Savannah ★★ There was an outcry from Savannah's historic preservation movement when this place went up in 1981. Boxy and massively bulky, it stands in unpleasant contrast to the restored warehouses flanking it along the banks of the Savannah River. Today it is grudgingly accepted as the biggest and

Savannah Accommodations



- | | |
|--|--|
| Azalea Inn 29 | Hyatt Regency Savannah 4 |
| Ballstone Inn 14 | The Kehoe House 11 |
| Bed & Breakfast Inn 21 | Magnolia Place Inn 23 |
| Catherine Ward House Inn 22 | The Manor House 16 |
| Claudia's Manor 22 | Marshall House 10 |
| Courtyard by Marriott 28 | Master's Inn 32 |
| DeSoto Hilton 17 | The Mulberry-Holiday Inn 8 |
| East Bay Inn 6 | Olde Georgian Inn 22 |
| Eliza Thompson House 19 | Olde Harbour Inn 3 |
| Fairfield Inn by Marriott 28 | Park Avenue Manor 26 |
| Foley House Inn 15 | Planters Inn 9 |
| The Forsyth Park Inn 24 | The Presidents' Quarters 13 |
| Gaston Gallery Bed & Breakfast 30 | River Street Inn 2 |
| The Gastonian 31 | Savannah Marriott Riverfront 7 |
| Granite Steps Inn 27 | 17 Hundred 90 12 |
| The Hamilton Turner Inn 18 | Westin Savannah Harbor Resort 1 |
| Hampton Inn 5 | Whitaker Huntington Inn 25 |
| Homewood Suites by Hilton 28 | Wingate Inn 20 |

Tips Savannah's Fluctuating Room Rates

Savannah's hotel and B&B rates are like the weather—subject to change. Most establishments rate their room prices based on high and low seasons. **High season** is from April to October. In addition, the rates also may vary if you stay during the week-day or if you stay over a weekend. You will find that the cheapest rates will usually be on weekdays during **low season**, which is usually in January, February, and sometimes late August.

flashiest hotel in town. It has a soaring atrium as well as glass-sided elevators. The comfortable rooms are international and modern in their feel, all with good-size baths with shower-tub combinations and some with balconies overlooking the atrium. Room prices vary according to their views—units without a view are quite a bargain.

2 W. Bay St., Savannah, GA 31401. ☎ **800/228-1234** or 912/238-1234. Fax 912/944-3678. savannah.hyatt.com/property/index.jhtml. 347 units. \$175–\$240 double; \$300 suite. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Parking \$14. **Amenities:** Restaurant; bar; pool; fitness center; room service 6am–12am; laundry/dry cleaning. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer, safe.

Savannah Marriott Riverfront Hotel ✨ At least the massive modern bulk of this place is far enough from the 19th-century restored warehouses of River Street not to clash with them aesthetically. Towering eight stories, with an angular facade sheathed in orange and yellow brick, it doesn't quite succeed at being a top-rated luxury palace but does attract lots of corporate business and conventions. We prefer the Hyatt, but this one can be a backup, with comfortable, modern rooms that aren't style-setters but are generous in space, with baths containing shower-tub combinations that are large enough to store your stuff and a generous supply of towels.

100 General McIntosh Blvd., Savannah, GA 31401. ☎ **800/228-9290** or 912/233-7722. Fax 912/233-3765. www.marriott.com. 383 units. \$160–\$200 double; from \$250 suite. Children 17 and under stay free in parent's room. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Parking \$7. **Amenities:** Restaurant; bar; lounge; 2 pools; fitness center; Jacuzzi; limited room service; laundry/dry cleaning.

Westin Savannah Harbor Golf Resort and Spa ✨ Savannah's largest hotel was opened in 1999 in a 16-story blockbuster format that dwarfs the city's existing B&Bs. It rises somewhat jarringly from what were, until the late 1990s, sandy, scrub-covered flatlands on the swampy, far side of the river from Savannah's historic core. Conceived as part of a massive resort development project, it derives

ALONG THE RIVERFRONT 41

the bulk of its business from corporate groups who arrive for conventions throughout the year. It's the newest and largest of the four large-scale hotels that dominate the city's convention business, yet despite a worthy collection (more than 250 pieces) of contemporary art that accents the labyrinth of high-ceilinged public rooms here, there's something a bit sterile, even lifeless, about this relatively anonymous blockbuster. Compounding the problem is its isolated position, both geographically and emotionally, from the bustle, grace, and charm of central Savannah—this in spite of cross-river shuttle ferries that deposit clients into the center of the River Street bar and restaurant frenzy. The most elaborate bedrooms are on the two top floors, and contain extras and comforts designated as Club Level. Otherwise, rooms are comfortable but bland, outfitted in pale colors and conservative furnishings. All units contain well-kept bathrooms with shower-tub combinations.

One Resort Drive, PO Box 427, Savannah, GA 31421. ☎ 800/WESTIN-1 or 912/201-2000. Fax 912/201-2001. www.westinsavannah.com. 403 units. \$239–\$299 double; \$325–\$800 suite. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Water taxi, free for hotel guests, \$3 round-trip for everyone else, shuttle across the river to Rousakis Plaza, on River Street, at 15-minute intervals. From I-95 and Savannah International Airport: Take Exit 17A to I-16 toward Savannah. Follow sign for Rt. 17-Talmadge Bridge. Take Hutchinson Island Exit onto Resort Drive. Amenities: 2 restaurants; bar; 2 pools; 18-hole golf course; 4 tennis courts; fitness center; Jacuzzi; sauna; beauty treatments; limited room service; babysitting; laundry/dry cleaning. In room: A/C, TV, minibar, hair dryer, safe.

MODERATE

Olde Harbour Inn ⚡ The neighborhood has been gentrified and the interior of this place is well furnished, but you still get a whiff of riverfront seediness as you approach from Factors Walk. It was built in 1892 as a warehouse for oil, and its masonry bulk is camouflaged with shutters, awnings, and touches of wrought iron. Inside, a labyrinth of passages leads to small but comfortable suites, many of which show the building's massive timbers and structural iron brackets and offer views of the river. Some decors feature the original brick, painted white. Each unit contains a well-maintained bathroom with a shower-tub combination along with its own kitchen—useful for anyone in town for an extended stay. Despite the overlay of chintz, you'll have a constant sense of the building's thick-walled bulk. Breakfast is the only meal served.



508 E. Factors Walk, Savannah, GA 31401. ☎ 800/553-6533 or 912/234-4100. Fax 912/233-5979. www.oldeharbourinn.com. 24 units. \$169–\$279 suite. Rates include continental breakfast. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Amenities: Breakfast room; lounge. In room: A/C, TV, hair dryer.

Family-Friendly Hotels

The Mulberry/Holiday Inn (p. 50) In the heart of the Historic District is a family hotel that lets kids under 18 stay free if they share a room with their parents. Children enjoy the pool, and cribs are provided free.

Hampton Inn Historic District (p. 52) One of the most appealing of the city's middle-bracket hotels, this family favorite rises on historic Bay Street. Rooms are spacious, and there's a pool and sundeck on the roof.

River Street Inn (below) The best bet along the riverfront for families with children is a converted cotton warehouse from 1817. Large rooms make family life easier, and children under 18 stay free. There's also a game room, and many fast-food joints are just outside the front door.

River Street Inn   When Liverpool-based ships were moored on the nearby river, this building stored massive amounts of cotton produced by upriver plantations. After the boll weevil decimated the cotton industry, it functioned as an icehouse, a storage area for fresh vegetables, and (at its lowest point) the headquarters of an insurance company. Its two lowest floors, built in 1817, were made of ballast stones carried in the holds of ships from faraway England.

In 1986, a group of investors poured millions into its development as one of the linchpins of Savannah's River District, adding a well-upholstered colonial pizzazz to the public areas and converting the building's warren of brick-lined storerooms into some of the most comfortable and well-managed rooms in town. All units have neatly kept bathrooms with shower-tub combinations. Breakfast is served in **Huey's** (see chapter 6, "Where to Dine"). A wine-and-cheese reception is held Monday through Saturday, and turndown service is offered each evening.

115 E. River St., Savannah, GA 31401. © 800/253-4229 or 912/234-6400. Fax 912/234-1478. www.riverstreetinn.com. 86 units. \$159–\$229 double; \$275 suite. Rates include breakfast. Children 16 and under stay free in parent's room. AE, DC, MC, V. Parking \$4. **Amenities:** Restaurant; lounge; Jacuzzi. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer.

IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT

VERY EXPENSIVE

Ballstone Inn ★★ This glamorous inner-city B&B occupies a dignified 1838 building separated from the Juliette Gordon Low House (home of the founder of the Girl Scouts of America) by a formal garden; it's richly decorated with all the hardwoods, elaborate draperies, and antique furniture you'd expect. For a brief period (only long enough to add a hint of spiciness), the place functioned as a bordello *and* a branch office for the Girl Scouts (now next door).

There's an elevator, unusual for Savannah B&Bs, but no closets (they were taxed as extra rooms in the old days and so never added); there are many unusual furnishings—cachepots filled with scented potpourri, and art objects that would thrill the heart of any decorator. A full-service bar area is tucked into a corner of what was originally a double parlor. The four suites are in a clapboard townhouse a 5-minute walk away and staffed with its own live-in receptionists. Every unit has a well-maintained bathroom with a shower-tub combination. A yearlong refurbishment project in 1997 resulted in a four-star, four-diamond distinction.

14 E. Oglethorpe Ave., Savannah, GA 31401. ☎ 800/822-4553 or 912/236-1484. Fax 912/236-4626. 16 units. \$275–\$375 double; \$475 suite. Rates include full breakfast, afternoon tea, and evening hors d'oeuvres. AE, MC, V. Free parking. No children. **Amenities:** Breakfast room; lounge. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer.

The Gastonian ★★ One of the two or three posh B&Bs in Savannah, the Gastonian incorporates a pair of Italianate Regency buildings constructed in 1868 by the same unknown architect. Hard times began with the 1929 stock market crash—the buildings were divided into apartments for the payment of back taxes. In 1984, the Lineberger family, who were visiting from California, saw the place and fell in love with it. They poured \$2 million into restoring it. Today everything is a testimonial to Victorian charm, except for a skillfully crafted serpentine bridge connecting the two buildings curving above a semitropical garden. The rooms are appropriately plush, comfortable, cozy, and beautifully furnished. Each unit comes with a well-kept bathroom with a shower-tub combination.

220 E. Gaston St., Savannah, GA 31401. ☎ 800/322-6603 or 912/232-2869. Fax 912/232-0710. www.gastonian.com. 17 units. \$250–\$355 double; \$395 suite. Rates include full breakfast. AE, DISC, MC, V. No children under 12. **Amenities:** Breakfast room; lounge; Jacuzzi. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer.

44 CHAPTER 5 · WHERE TO STAY

Granite Steps Inn ★ *(Finds)* This inn is glossier, larger, more opulent, and contains fewer accommodations than most of its other competitors in Savannah. Built in 1881 as a showy Italianate residence for a successful cotton merchant, it later belonged to celebrity decorator Jim Williams (the alleged murderer of Danny Hansford in *The Book*) just before his death. In May 1998, it was lavishly restored by a team of hardworking entrepreneurs associated with George's premier spa, the Chateau Elan, outside Atlanta. Consequently, you'll find more emphasis on hot tubs (most rooms contain one) and somewhat fussy pampering than at any other B&B in town. None of this is lost on such clients as Hollywood producer Nora Ephron (*Sleepless in Seattle; You've Got Mail*) and other West Coast customers who appreciate the inn's striking mixture of Gilded Age glamour, gilded Japanese screens, and free-form modern art decorating the public areas. The midsize-to-spacious bedrooms are endlessly tasteful and very upscale. Each room comes with a neatly kept bathroom with a shower-tub combination. If you decide to stay here, don't expect down-home Southern folksiness, as the setting is simply too urbane, too discreet, too restrained, and too linked to the European spa motif for hush-puppy, cornpone regionalisms to surface, let alone survive.

126 E. Gaston St., Savannah, GA 31401. ☎ 912/233-5380. Fax 912/236-3116. www.granitesteps.com. 7 units. \$275 double; \$275-\$500 suite. AE, MC, V. **Amenities:** Breakfast room; lounge. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer, safe.

Hamilton-Turner Inn ★★ In its way, this is one of the most noteworthy B&Bs in Savannah, boasting a unique (and sometimes bizarre) pedigree that's unlike any other in town. It was built for the then-astronomical price of \$100,000 by a local power broker, Samuel Hamilton, in 1873. Mayor of Savannah, president of the Shriners, and owner of the local electrical company, the waterworks, the icehouse, and the town's biggest "fancy goods store," with a reputation as a blockade-runner during the Civil War, he was one of the inspirations for Margaret Mitchell's character of Rhett Butler in *Gone With the Wind*. His four-story French Empire house was almost obscenely ostentatious at the time, and today, with more than 10,000 square feet, it's the largest upscale B&B (in terms of square footage) in Savannah.

Most of the modern-day notoriety associated with this place came from its portrayal in John Berendt's *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, as the party house of Savannah's favorite rakish twosome, Joe and Mandy Odom. Long after all that died down, in 1997, the building was acquired by native Savannahians Charles and Sue

Strickland, who poured money and a strong dose of respectability back into the place, restoring it to a grand and grandiose testimonial to a robber-baron's Gilded-Age fortune in the Deep South. Bedrooms—most of them with 14-foot ceilings, fireplaces, and shower-tub combinations—are outfitted with Empire, Eastlake, and/or Renaissance Revival antiques and a kind of dignified, slightly chilly-looking grandeur. The staff, some remaining from the Joe and Mandy era, maintain a healthy perspective on the building's infamy and larger-than-life past. Breakfasts are full and prolonged Southern rituals, including everything from grits to quiche. An English-inspired high tea, served every afternoon from 4 to 5pm, is included in the price. In a radically different context from the much-battered and much-abused venue of yesteryear, this is now one of only four Four Diamond Award B&Bs in Savannah.

330 Abercorn St., Savannah, GA 31401-4636. ☎ 888/448-8849 or 912/233-1833. www.hamilton-turnerinn.com. 18 units. \$169–\$358 double. Rates include full breakfast. Free parking. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. *In room:* A/C, TV.

Magnolia Place Inn ⚡ This building was begun in 1878 on a desirable plot overlooking Forsyth Square and completed 4 years later by a family who'd been forced off their upriver plantation after the Civil War for nonpayment of taxes. An ancestor had represented South Carolina at the signing of the Declaration of Independence, and so the Second Empire ("steamboat Gothic") house was designed to be as grand as funds would allow. The result includes the most endearing front steps in town (Neiman Marcus once asked to display them as a backdrop for one of its catalogs), verandas worthy of a Mississippi steamer, and an oval skylight (an "oculus") that illuminates a graceful staircase ascending to the dignified rooms. Each unit contains beautifully maintained bathrooms with shower-tub combinations.

503 Whitaker St., Savannah, GA 31401. ☎ 800/238-7674 outside Georgia, or 912/236-7674. Fax 912/236-1145. www.magnoliaplaceinn.com. 13 units. \$165–\$325 double. Rates include full breakfast, afternoon tea, and evening hors d'oeuvres. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Free parking. **Amenities:** Breakfast room; lounge; Jacuzzi; room service. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer.

William Kehoe House ⚡⚡⚡ The Kehoe was built in 1892. In the 1950s, after the place had been converted into a funeral parlor, its owners tried to tear down the nearby Davenport House to build a parking lot. The resulting outrage led to the founding of the Historic Savannah Association and the salvation of most of the neighborhood's remaining historic buildings.

46 CHAPTER 5 · WHERE TO STAY

Today, the place functions as a spectacularly opulent B&B, with a collection of fabrics and furniture that's almost forbiddingly valuable. However, it lacks the warmth and welcome of the Ballastone. This isn't a place for children—the ideal guest will tread softly on floors that are considered models of historic authenticity and flawless taste. Breakfast and afternoon tea are part of the ritual that has seduced such clients as Tom Hanks, who stayed in room 301 during the filming of *Forrest Gump*. The rooms are spacious, with the typical 12-foot ceilings, and each is tastefully furnished in English period antiques. Each unit is equipped with a well-kept bathroom containing a shower-tub combination. Owners Rob and Jane Sales and Kathy Medlock acquired it in 1997 and immediately renovated the back garden, in addition to expanding the guest parking area. Amenities include a concierge and twice-daily maid service with turndown.

123 Habersham St., Savannah, GA 31401. ☎ 800/820-1020 or 912/232-1020. Fax 912/231-0208. www.kehoehouse.com. 15 units. \$205–\$295 double; \$275–\$325 suite. Rates include full breakfast. AE, MC, V. **Amenities:** Breakfast room; lounge. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer.

EXPENSIVE

Azalea Inn ★ The furnishings of this B&B are a bit richer, its colors a bit more evocative, and its decor more appealingly cluttered than many of its nearby competitors. The setting is a circa 1889 Italianate house set less than 2 blocks east of Forsyth Park, within a garden that has a swimming pool. It was originally built for Captain Walter Coney, an army officer whose fortune derived from a then-flourishing maritime supply company. Rooms are furnished with period antiques, and each comes with a different Victorian-era decor. Especially appealing is the Gentleman's Parlor, a ground-floor room once dominated by men discussing manly things, which still carries a hint of the bourbon and cigars consumed liberally within its confines. More frilly and feminine looking is the Magnolia Room, where white walls offset a four-poster bed with upholsteries depicting—you guessed it—magnolia blossoms. Newest of all is the Captain's Room, with a massive four-poster and a newly built deck overlooking the swimming pool. Some of the rooms have a fireplace, and all have bathrooms, most of them with showers. A hand-painted mural on the wall of the dining room—site of morning breakfasts—depicts a painted version of the history of Savannah. Children under 12 are not welcome. There's usually someone on hand to deliver a cold or warm (non-alcoholic) drink, depending on the season, to clients whenever one is needed.

ALONG THE RIVERFRONT 47

217 E. Huntingdon St., Savannah, GA 31401. © 800/582-3823 or 912/236-2707. www.azaleainn.com. 9 units. \$140–\$260 double. Rates include full breakfast. MC, V. **Amenities:** Pool. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer, iron.

Catherine Ward House Inn ✨ *Finds* The restoration of this house has won several civic awards, and it's so evocative of Savannah's "carpenter Gothic" Victorian revival that Clint Eastwood inserted a long, graceful shot of its exterior in *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*. Built by a sea captain for his wife (Catherine Ward) in 1886 in a location a short walk from Forsyth Park, it offers one of the most lavishly decorated interiors of any B&B in Savannah, but at prices that are significantly less than those offered at better-known B&Bs a few blocks away. Alan Williams, the owner and innkeeper, maintains a policy that discourages children under 16 and that stresses a gay-friendly but even-handed approach to a diverse clientele. Breakfast is relatively elaborate, served on fine porcelain in a grandly outfitted dining room. A garden in back encourages languid sun-dappled dialogues. Each midsize bedroom is richly decorated and equipped with well-kept bathrooms with shower-tub combinations.

118 East Waldburg St., Savannah, GA 31401. © 912/234-8564. Fax 912/231-8007. www.catherinewardhouseinn.com. 10 units. \$139–\$300 double. Rates include full breakfast. DISC, MC, V. **Amenities:** Breakfast room; lounge; tennis courts (nearby); laundry/dry cleaning. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer.

Claudia's Manor ✨ *Finds* The solid-looking Spanish colonial house that contains this building was erected by a local cattle baron, W. C. Lawson, in 1915. Inside, the Iberian/Mediterranean theme was deliberately abandoned in favor of a good-looking Victorian decor that's more or less consistent with many of its competitors around town. The inn is owned and managed by Claudia and Larry Collins, who live within one wing of this generously sized house, and who devote long hours to maintaining the relaxed and convivial ambience of their gracious inn. Rooms are outfitted with a limited number of antiques and high-quality reproductions, each room with lots of sunlight from big windows. Some of the larger units have themes that include "View over Africa" and "View over China" that stresses art objects and sculpture from Africa and Asia, respectively. Each has its own tile-sheathed bathroom with shower-tub combination and, in some cases, with whirlpool jets. Frillest of the rooms is "Jackie's Sweetheart Room," outfitted in a way that might appeal to an ingénue prom queen. In other words, bedrooms carry such a range of decorative themes that you can pick and choose

48 CHAPTER 5 · WHERE TO STAY

whichever decorative ambience is most conducive to your pleasant dreams. Most of the day-to-day operations of this place are maintained by Claudia; a former administrator at Lockheed-Marietta in North Atlanta. Her husband is pastor of the New Hope Christian Fellowship Church in Atlanta. Both are members of the Africa-American Association of Inn Keepers.

101 E. 35th St., Savannah, GA 31401-8111. ☎ 800/773-8177 or 912/233-2379. www.claudiasmanor.com. 8 units. \$125–\$225 double. Rates include full breakfast. AE, DC, MC, V. **Amenities:** Breakfast room. *In room:* A/C, TV.

East Bay Inn ★ Though the views from its windows might be uninspired, the East Bay is conveniently located near the bars and attractions of the riverfront. It was built in 1853 as a cotton warehouse; green awnings and potted geraniums disguise the building's once-utilitarian design. A cozy lobby contains Chippendale furnishings and elaborate moldings. The rooms have queen-size four-poster beds, reproductions of antiques, and neatly kept bathrooms with shower-tub combinations. The hotel frequently houses tour groups from Europe and South America. In the cellar is **Skyler's** (☎ 912/232-3955), an independently managed restaurant specializing in European and Asian cuisine.

225 E. Bay St., Savannah, GA 31401. ☎ 800/500-1225 or 912/238-1225. Fax 912/232-2709. www.eastbayinn.com. 28 units. \$149–\$210 double. Rates include continental breakfast. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. **Amenities:** Breakfast room; lounge. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer.

Eliza Thompson House ★★ The rooms of this stately home are equally divided between the original 1847 building and a converted carriage house. Both were the domain of Eliza Thompson, a socially conscious matriarch whose husband (a cotton merchant) died shortly after the foundations were laid. After serving as a shop for antiques dealers, it was bought by new owners in 1997. Steve and Carol Day have completely redecorated, using original Savannah colors, beautiful antiques, and oriental carpets. The heart pine floors have been restored to their original luster, the linens have been replaced, and a program of ironing each sheet and pillowcase has begun. The inn now provides comfortable cotton robes in each room and turndown service. It's also graced with one of the most beautiful courtyards in the city, featuring three large fountains, sago palms, and camellias. The rooms are comfortable, elegant, and cozy, furnished with tradition and taste. All units contain a well-maintained bathroom with a shower-tub combination. Breakfast is usually a lavish affair, featuring sausage casserole, muffins, and croissants. During nice weather, it's

usually served on the brick terrace of the garden patio separating the two components of this historic inn.

5 W. Jones St., Savannah, GA 31401. ☎ 800/348-9378 or 912/236-3620. Fax 912/238-1920. www.elizathompsonhouse.com. 25 units. \$149–\$269 double. Rates include continental breakfast. AE, DC, MC, V. **Amenities:** Breakfast room; lounge. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer.

Foley House Inn ⚡ Decorated with all the care of a private home, this small B&B occupies a brick-sided house built in 1896. Its owners doubled its size by acquiring the simpler white-fronted house next door, whose pedigree predates its neighbors by half a century. All rooms are neatly furnished and contain well-kept bathrooms with shower-tub combinations. The staff will regale you with tales of the original residents of both houses—one was the site of a notorious turn-of-the-century suicide. Breakfast and afternoon hors d'oeuvres, tea, and cordials are served in a large, verdant space formed by the two houses' connected gardens.

14 W. Hull St., Savannah, GA 31401. ☎ 800/647-3708 or 912/232-6622. Fax 912/231-1218. www.foleyinn.com. 18 units. \$195–\$345 double. Rates include full breakfast, afternoon hors d'oeuvres, tea, and cordials. AE, MC, V. No children under 12. **Amenities:** Breakfast room; lounge. *In room:* A/C, TV, minibar, Jacuzzi (in some).

Hilton Savannah DeSoto ⚡ The name still evokes a bit of glamour—built in 1890, this hotel was for generations the city's grandest. In 1967, thousands of wedding receptions, Kiwanis meetings, and debutante parties later, the building was demolished and rebuilt in a bland modern format. It's a well-managed commercial hotel, renovated by new owners in 1995. The rooms are conservatively modern and reached after registering in a stone-sheathed lobby whose decor was partly inspired by an 18th-century colonial drawing room. All units contain well-maintained bathrooms with shower-tub combinations. Despite the absence of antique charm, many guests like this place for its polite efficiency and modernism.

In the late 1990s, the inn was acquired by one of Georgia's most dedicated and successful innkeepers, Phil Jenkins, a noted musicologist and conductor responsible for the revitalization of a historic landmark (the 1842 Inn) in Macon. Emphasizing his new inn's colonial coastal theme, and adding sophisticated touches of *trompe l'oeil* to hallways and salons, he presents a unique afternoon experience every day between 5:30 and 7pm. Then, garnished with glasses of wine and platters of fruit and cheese, Phil or any of his talented employees will sing and play the piano or guitar as part of a roster of afternoon entertainment. The property really isn't suitable for children under 12.

50 CHAPTER 5 · WHERE TO STAY

15 E. Liberty St. (P.O. Box 8207), Savannah, GA 31412. © 800/426-8483 or 912/232-9000. Fax 921/232-6018. www.hilton.com. 246 units. \$109–\$249 double. AE, DC, MC, V. **Amenities:** 2 restaurants; bar; pool; fitness center; boutiques; limited room service; massage; babysitting; laundry/dry cleaning. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer.

The Manor House ★ *Finds* There's more heroism associated with the rescue of this inn than you'll find in many of the newer competitors scattered throughout other parts of the city. The oldest remaining building south of Liberty Street, it was built in 1838 as an inn and tavern, and used to house much-hated Union officers after Savannah fell to Sherman in 1864. Since then, in progressive states of decay, it has functioned as a rundown apartment building, a store, a bar and grill, and—at its lowest—a squatter's haven for Savannah's homeless. In 1980, three wives of local doctors bought the building and over a decade of labor, restored it, then sold it to a pair of hotel-industry pros (Richard Carlson and Tim Hargus) who transformed it into a small-scale inn of prestige and charm. Today, bedrooms are outfitted with an appealing combination of English and American antiques scattered among tasteful and authentic-looking reproductions. Floors are of heart pine, covered in some spots with Oriental carpets, and windows are the oversized kind that flood the interior with sunlight in any season. Rooms have tiled bathrooms with nostalgic, old-fashioned fixtures and trim, and in every case, a shower-tub combination. Two of the larger units also offer private kitchenettes. It's also one of the few hotels in the city's historic core that accepts well-behaved pets.

201 West Liberty St., Savannah, GA 31401-3909. © 800/462-3595 or 912/233-9597. 5 units. \$185–\$225 double. Off-season discounts apply. Rates include continental breakfast. Free parking. AE, DISC, MC, V. **Amenities:** Breakfast lounge. *In room:* A/C, TV, fridge, some rooms with fireplace.

The Mulberry/Holiday Inn ★ *Kids* Locals point with pride to the Mulberry as a sophisticated adaptation of what might've been a derelict building into a surprisingly elegant hotel. Built in 1868 as a stable and cotton warehouse, it was converted in 1982 into a simple hotel, and in the 1990s it received a radical upgrade and a dash of decorator-inspired Chippendale glamour. Today, its lobby looks like that of a grand hotel in London, and the rooms, though small, have a formal decor (think English countryhouse look with a Southern accent). Each unit comes with a well-kept bathroom with a shower-tub combination. The hotel's brick-covered patio, with fountains, trailing ivy, and wrought-iron furniture, evokes the best aspects of New Orleans.

ALONG THE RIVERFRONT 51

601 E. Bay St., Savannah, GA 31401. © 800/465-4329 or 912/238-1200. Fax 912/236-2184. www.savannahhotel.com. 145 units. \$229 double; \$269 suite. Children under 18 stay free in parent's room. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Parking \$8. **Amenities:** Restaurant; lounge; pool; fitness center; Jacuzzi; limited room service. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer.

Olde Georgian Inn ★ *(Finds)* Small-scale, with a vivid sense that you're a paying guest in the carefully furnished home of a family that's devoted to Old Southern nostalgia, this B&B occupies a clapboard-sided Victorian house built in 1890. Set within 2 blocks from the western flank of Forsyth Park, behind a bow-fronted facade adorned with intricate decorative detailing, it's loaded with a sense of Victorian propriety, an occasional tribute to works by African-American artists, and flooded with sunlight from big windows. Bedrooms have heart pine floors and a mixture of 19th- or early-20th-century antiques and latter-day reproductions. Each has a fireplace, all have showers, and about half have shower-tub combinations. If you have pets, children under 12, or the propensity to carouse late into the night, consider a stay in the carriage house, since none of those things are tolerated within the main house. The carriage house contains a loft bedroom with a queen-size four-poster bed and access to a private rooftop deck. It also offers its own washer and dryer, a kitchen, and a living area downstairs with a queen-sized pullout sofa bed along with a half bath.

212 W. Hall St., Savannah, GA 31401-5521. © 800/835-6831 or 912/236-2911. www.oldegeorgianinn.com. 4 units, 1 carriage house. \$145-\$185 double; \$175-\$225 carriage house. Rates include full breakfast. AE, MC, V. *In room:* A/C, TV, fireplace.

Whitaker-Huntington Inn ★ Dignified and permeated with a sense of decency and Southern honor, this house was built in 1883 for a member of the eight-member Confederate delegation that had surrendered the city of Savannah to General Sherman in December of 1864. Later, a local cotton merchant who served a 4-year term as the city's mayor owned it. In 1923, the doctor who was using the house as the base for his medical practice added an all-brick addition onto the house's backside. Today, the much-restored interior boasts 12-foot ceilings where period antiques and Oriental carpets rest on pine floors—all of it gracefully arranged for a look that's faithful to the original decorative theme but a lot more comfortable than it was in the building's original days. Each of the three units is a two-bedroom suite, each with at least one bathroom (one unit has two), and two of them with a kitchenette. All units are equipped with a shower-tub combination. There's also a resident ghost.

52 CHAPTER 5 · WHERE TO STAY

601 Whitaker St., Savannah, GA 31401-5543. © 877/232-8911 or 912/232-8911. www.whinn.com. 3 units. \$125–\$275 double. Rates include continental breakfast. AE, DISC, MC, V. **Amenities:** Lounge. *In room:* TV, kitchenette/kitchen.

MODERATE

The Forsyth Park Inn ★ One of the grandest houses on the western flank of Forsyth Park is this yellow frame place built in the 1890s by a sea captain (Aaron Flynt, aka Rudder Churchill). A richly detailed staircase winds upstairs from a paneled vestibule, and the Queen Anne decor of the formal robin's-egg-blue salon extends through the rest of the house. Guest rooms have oak paneling and oversize doors that are testimonials to turn-of-the-century craftsmanship. The more expensive rooms, including one in what used to be the dining room, are among the largest in town. All units contain well-kept bathrooms with shower-tub combinations. Home-baked breads and pastries are a staple of the breakfasts. Don't expect frivolity: The inn is just a bit staid.

102 W. Hall St., Savannah, GA 31401. © 912/233-6800. Fax 912/233-6804. www.forsythparkinn.com. 9 units, 1 cottage with kitchenette. \$115–\$230 double; \$220 cottage. Rates include full breakfast. AE, DISC, MC, V. **Amenities:** Breakfast room; lounge. *In room:* A/C, TV.

Gaston Gallery Bed & Breakfast This major investment in period restoration was built as two separate houses united by a shared Italianate facade. In 1997, a lavish reunification of the two houses was undertaken. Today, the unified building bears the distinction of having the city's longest and most stately front porch (called a gallery in Savannah) and inner ceilings that are almost dizzyingly high. Each unit is beautifully furnished and is equipped with a well-maintained bathroom containing a shower-tub combination. The breakfasts are social events, each featuring a different dish, like curried eggs or Southern grits casserole. Wine and cheese are served every day at 5pm or on your arrival, according to your wishes.

211 E. Gaston St., Savannah, GA 31401. © 800/671-0716 or 912/238-3294. Fax 912/238-4064. www.gastongallery.com. 15 units. \$90–\$200 double. AE, DISC, MC, V. **Amenities:** Breakfast room; lounge. *In room:* TV.

Hampton Inn Historic District ★ *Kids* This is the most appealing of the city's middle-bracket large-scale hotels. Opened in 1997, it rises seven redbrick stories above the busy traffic of historic Bay Street, across from Savannah's Riverwalk and some of the city's most animated nightclubs. Its big-windowed lobby was designed to mimic an 18th-century Savannah salon, thanks to the recycling of heart pine flooring from an old sawmill in central Georgia and the

ALONG THE RIVERFRONT 53

use of antique Savannah bricks. Comfortably formal seating arrangements, a blazing fireplace, and an antique bar add cozy touches. The rooms are simple and comfortable, with wall-to-wall carpeting, medium-size tile baths with shower-tub combinations, and flowered upholstery. On the roof is a small pool and sundeck that's supplemented with an exercise room on the seventh floor. There's no restaurant, but many eateries are a short walk away.

201 E. Bay St., Savannah, GA. ☎ 800/426-7866 or 912/232-9700. Fax 912/231-0440. www.hampton-inn.com. 144 units. Sun–Thurs \$155 double; Fri–Sat \$179 double. AE, DC, MC, V. Parking \$8. **Amenities:** Breakfast room; lounge; rooftop pool. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer.

Marshall House Some aspects of this hotel—especially the second-story cast-iron veranda that juts out above the sidewalk—might remind you of a 19th-century hotel in the French Quarter of New Orleans. When it originally opened in 1851, it was considered the finest hotel in Savannah. In 1864–65, it functioned as a Union Army hospital, before housing such luminaries as Conrad Aiken and Joel Chandler Harris, author of *Stories of Uncle Remus*. After a ratty-looking decline, it closed—some people thought permanently—in 1957. In 1999, it reopened as a “boutique-style” inn. Despite the fact that this place has some of the trappings of an upscale B&B, don't think that it will provide the intimacy or exclusivity of, say, the Foley House. There's something a bit superficial about the glamour here, and some aspects evoke a busy motel, albeit with a more than usual elegant set of colonial-era reproductions in the public areas. Bedrooms succeed at being mass-production-style cozy without being particularly opulent; each sheathed in one of three standardized possibilities: yellow with pinewood furniture, green with wrought-iron furniture, and blue with white-painted furniture. Seven of the largest and most historically evocative rooms in the hotel are on the second floor, overlooking noisy Broughton Street, and are prefaced with wrought-iron verandas with wrought-iron furniture. All rooms contain neatly kept bathrooms with shower units. Chadwick's is a bar with exposed brick, a very Southern clientele, green leather upholstery, and occasional presentations of live jazz. The Café M, set beneath the glassed-in roof of what used to be the hotel's rear stable yard, is a restaurant serving Southern and international cuisine.

123 E. Broughton St., Savannah, GA 31401. ☎ 800/589-6304 or 912/644-7896. www.marshallhouse.com. 68 units. \$99–\$199 double; \$179–\$239 suite. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. **Amenities:** Restaurant; bar; room service; laundry/dry cleaning. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer.

54 CHAPTER 5 · WHERE TO STAY

Park Avenue Manor Historic and cozy, this is Savannah's premier gay-friendly guesthouse. An 1897 Victorian B&B, it has an old-fashioned charm with antiques, double staircases, two formal parlors, and angel ceiling borders. Many accommodations have four-poster beds with antiques, silk carpets, porcelains, working fireplaces, and period prints. All units contain neatly kept bathrooms with shower units. The small-scale inn has a well-rehearsed management style and an emphasis on irreverently offbeat Savannah. Many straight clients also book here, as the place is noted not only for its comfort but its warm welcome and one of the best Southern breakfasts served in town. The guesthouse was created in 1997, when a pair of Victorian houses were "sewn" together into a tasteful whole. A favorite is the Robert E. Lee room with a large bay window.

107–109 W. Park Ave., Savannah, GA 31401. ☎ 912/233-0352. Fax 912/236-7971. www.bbonline.parkavenuemanor.com. 4 units. \$99–\$125 double; \$170 suite. AE, MC, V. **Amenities:** Breakfast room; lounge; massage; tennis courts (nearby). *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer.

Planters Inn This small European-style inn is more businesslike than the average Savannah B&B. Built adjacent to Reynolds Square in 1912 as a seven-story brown brick tower, it boasts a lobby with elaborate millwork, a scattering of Chippendale reproductions, and an honor bar (sign for whatever drink you consume). The rooms are comfortably outfitted with four-poster beds and flowery fabrics; they're rather dignified and formal. Each unit contains a neatly kept bathroom with a shower-tub combination. The Planters Inn isn't associated with the well-recommended Planters Tavern (which stands next door and is separate).

29 Abercorn St., Savannah, GA 31401. ☎ 800/554-1187 or 912/232-5678. Fax 912/232-8893. www.planterinsavannah.com. 59 units. \$115–\$195 double. Rates include continental breakfast. AE, DC, MC, V. Parking \$6.95. **Amenities:** Breakfast room; lounge; limited room service; laundry/dry cleaning. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer.

The Presidents' Quarters ✨ This hotel has many appealing aspects. The rooms and baths (each with a shower-tub combination) are among the largest and most comfortable of any inn in Savannah. It manages simultaneously to combine the charm of a B&B with the efficiency of a much larger place. It has appealed to guests as diverse as the former president of Ireland and numbers of Hollywood actors. Each accommodation is named after a U.S. president who visited Savannah during his term in office.

ALONG THE RIVERFRONT 55

255 E. President St., Savannah, GA 31401. ☎ **800/233-1776** or 912/233-1600. Fax 912/238-0849. www.presidentsquarters.com. 19 units. \$147–\$167 double; \$187–\$235 suite. Rates include breakfast. DC, DISC, MC, V. Free parking on premises. **Amenities:** Breakfast room; lounge; Jacuzzi; limited room service. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer.

17 Hundred 90 ✨ A severely dignified brick-and-clapboard structure, this place will remind you of New England's low-ceilinged 18th-century houses. It's the oldest inn in Savannah, permeated with conversation and laughter from the basement-level bar and restaurant, and by the spirits of its resident ghosts. The most famous is the daughter of the building's first owner, young Anna, who hurled herself over the balcony to her death on the brick walk below as her sailor love sailed away. Accessible via cramped hallways, the rooms are small yet charming, outfitted with the colonial trappings appropriate for an inn of this age and stature. All units contain well-maintained bathrooms with shower-tub combinations. About a dozen contain fireplaces.

307 E. President St., Savannah, GA 31401. ☎ **800/487-1790** or 912/236-7122. Fax 912/236-7123. www.17hundred90.com. 14 units. \$119–\$169 double. Rates include full breakfast. AE, MC, V. **Amenities:** Restaurant; bar; limited room service. *In room:* A/C, TV, minibar, hair dryer.

INEXPENSIVE

Bed and Breakfast Inn ✨ *Value* Adjacent to Chatham Square, in the oldest part of historic Savannah, this is a dignified stone-fronted townhouse built in 1853. You climb a gracefully curved front stoop to reach the cool, high-ceilinged interior, outfitted with a combination of antique and reproduction furniture. All of the good-size comfortable and tastefully furnished accommodations contain well-kept bathrooms with shower-tub combinations. There's no smoking.

117 W. Gordon St. (at Chatham Sq.), Savannah, GA 31401. ☎ **912/238-0518**. Fax 912/233-2537. www.savannahbnb.com. 15 units. \$89–\$169 double. Rates include full breakfast. AE, DISC, MC, V. **Amenities:** Breakfast room; lounge. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer.

Courtyard by Marriott Built around a landscaped courtyard, this is one of the more recommendable motels bordering the Historic District. Many Savannah motels, though cheap, are quite tacky, but this one has renovated rooms with separate seating areas, oversized desks, private patios, and well-kept bathrooms with shower-tub combinations. The restaurant serves a la carte and buffet breakfasts.

56 CHAPTER 5 · WHERE TO STAY

6703 Abercorn St., Savannah, GA 31405. ☎ 800/321-2211 or 912/354-7878. Fax 912/354-1432. www.marriott.com. 144 units. \$99–\$102 double; from \$129–\$139 suite. Children 15 and under stay free in parent's room. Senior discounts available. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Free parking. From I-16, take Exit 164A to I-516 East and turn right on Abercorn St. **Amenities:** Breakfast room; bar; lounge; pool; exercise room; Jacuzzi; laundry/dry cleaning. *In room:* A/C, TV, hair dryer.

Fairfield Inn by Marriott Not quite as good as Marriott's other recommended motel (above), this reliable budget hotel offers standard but comfortably appointed rooms, with well-kept bathrooms containing shower-tub combinations and a large, well-lit desk. Health-club privileges are available nearby, as are several good moderately priced restaurants.

2 Lee Blvd. (at Abercorn Rd.), Savannah, GA 31405. ☎ 800/228-2800 or 912/353-7100. Fax 912/353-7100. www.marriott.com. 135 units. \$59–\$99 double. Rates include continental breakfast. Children 17 and under stay free in parent's room. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Free parking. From I-16, take Exit 34A to I-516 East, then turn right on Abercorn St. and go right again on Lee Blvd. **Amenities:** Breakfast room; lounge; pool. *In room:* A/C, TV.

2 Nearby Hotels & Inns

MODERATE

Homewood Suites by Hilton Built in 1990 about a 6-mile drive south of Savannah's historic core, this is a blandly modern member of a nationwide chain, wherein each accommodation is a suite with either one or two bedrooms. Favored by business travelers who sometimes opt to stay in larger-than-usual quarters on extended business trips, it occupies a commercial neighborhood with suburban mall-style traffic and plenty of nearby restaurants and shopping malls. An evening cocktail party, hosted by the manager, takes the edge off the sense of anonymity that sometimes prevails here, but if you're looking for space to move around within a modern, uncontroversial setting, this place might be fine for you. Each unit, regardless of its size, has a fully equipped kitchen with a microwave, full-size refrigerator, and cooking utensils. Bathrooms are tiled, each with shower-tub combinations.

5820 White Bluff Rd., Savannah, GA 31405-5523. ☎ 912/353-8500. Fax 912/354-3821. www.homewood-suites.com. 106 units. \$109–\$169 double. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. **Amenities:** Restaurant, pool; gym. *In room:* A/C, TV, kitchen, hair dryer, iron.

INEXPENSIVE

Master's Inn Suites If it's raining hard, and if every inn in the city's historic core is fully booked, and if you have no other option,

NEARBY HOTELS & INNS 57

you might opt for a stay in this modern hotel, built in 1983, where you can sustain life in between the visits you'll make, 7 miles north, to Historic Savannah. Each accommodation is divided with a lattice into a sleeping area and, on its other side, a sitting area where there's a small refrigerator, a coffeemaker, and a microwave—a somewhat uninspired setup which isn't by anyone's evaluation a genuine "suite," despite the large signs on the building's exterior advertising accommodations as such. Rooms have your choice of either two double beds or a king-size bed. Bathrooms are modern, tiled, motel-style in their design, each with a shower-tub combination. In the center of this hotel is a glass-roofed atrium, with a scattering of plants, and there's a swimming pool outside in the garden.

7110 Hodgson Memorial Dr. Savannah, Georgia, 31406. ☎ 912/354-8560. Fax 912/356-1438. 51 units. \$86–\$106 double. Rates include continental breakfast. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. **Amenities:** Pool; gym; sauna; laundry/dry cleaning. *In room:* A/C, TV, fridge, coffeemaker, microwave, hair dryer, iron.

Wingate Inn This is one of the newer and more comfortable hotels in the shopping-mall zone south of Savannah. Although the distance to the city's historic core is about 8 miles, part of the transit is via interstate highways, sometimes (if traffic is light) only about 18 minutes away. Built in a four-story brick-and-stucco format in 1999, with a bit of architectural flair, it offers comfortable, family-friendly rooms outfitted with modern furniture that carries no pretensions of Southern colonial plantation life. (This might be a relief after too heavy a dose of that style in other modern hotels nearby.) Each unit has a modern-looking bathroom with a shower-tub combination, in some cases with whirlpool jets.

11 Gateway Blvd. East, Savannah, GA 31419. ☎ 912/925-2525. Fax 912/925-7904. 101 units. \$69–\$129 double. Rates include continental breakfast. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. **Amenities:** Pool; gym; spa. *In room:* A/C, TV, fridge, coffeemaker, microwave, hair dryer, iron, safe.