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Atlanta Restaurant Guide CKP Top Ten

If you are the kind of diner that needs to go right to the best, this is the section for you... our top ten choices in Atlanta.

While we have tried to make specific comments in the brief reviews, ratings, from K – KKKKK, are overall ratings, most heavily influenced by the food, but also factor in ambiance, décor and service. Our \$ estimates are based on one dinner with a cocktail & tip. \$ inexpensive, under \$18; \$\$ moderate, \$18 to \$30; \$\$\$ expensive, \$30 to \$50; \$\$\$\$ very expensive, over \$50.

Keep in mind that in Atlanta, as everywhere, restaurants and clubs can open and close, change hours, credit card policies, and even move with very short notice. Many restaurants are closed Sundays and Mondays, or even Tuesdays. We recommend calling ahead to address any special needs. Feel free to mention Chuck Klein Productions.

The following location abbreviations should help you as you try to plan your dining. **(BH)** Buckhead; **(DT)** Downtown; **(IP)** Inman Park; **(L5)** Little Five Points; **(MT)** Midtown; **(VH)** Virginia Highlands; **(WE)** West End

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Bacchanalia – 1198 Howell Mill Rd. (MT) 404-365-0410 www.starprovisions.com KKKKK \$\$\$ – Likely the toughest reservation in town, and maybe the best foodie value, too (prix fixe is \$68 or \$110 with wines.) Created by award-winning chef/owners Anne Quatrano and Clifford Harrison, the Contemporary American cuisine dazzles and the gussied up factory setting totally works (they moved from that cute cottage in 1999). A March 2006 menu included Virginia Black Bass Crudo with D'Avignon Radish and Honey Tangerine and Piquin Pepper Granita; Veal Sweetbreads Meunière; and Blue Crab Fritter with Thai Pepper Essence (thankfully, these fritters are almost always on the menu.) Did you save room for Meyer Lemon Upside Down Cake with Buttermilk Sorbet and Oatmeal Soufflé with Apple Cider Sorbet & Caramel Ice Cream? Good luck getting that reservation, and you'll probably feel more comfortable in a jacket (if you didn't bring yours, try their more casual Floataway Café.) Dinner Mon-Sat.

Canoe – 4199 Paces Ferry Rd. NW (Vinings) 770-432-2663 www.canoeatl.com KKKKK \$\$\$\$ – Trust us, the Chattahoochee River setting and exquisitely designed space are worth the drive, even before you taste a heavenly bite. But it's the *food*, the amazing eclectic-styled, fabulous *food* that you'll remember. Consider dishes like Canoe's Smoked Salmon (with a crispy Yukon Gold potato pancake, herb salad, and goat cheese dressing), Yellowfin Tuna Steak (with sunchoke sake puree, bok choy, roasted maitake mushrooms, and wasabi oil,) and Berkshire Pork Rack (with savory cabbage, braised cheek and Fuji apple pocket, baby carrots, and whole grain mustard.) Reservations recommended. Dinner 7 days, Lunch Mon-Fri, Sunday Brunch.

City Grill – Hurt Bldg., 50 Hurt Plaza (DT) 404-524-2489 www.citygrillatlanta.com KKKKK \$\$\$ – City Grill is one of the most beautiful dining rooms in Atlanta, with a curving marble staircase and 24-ft. ceilings. Chef Daniel Zoby's award-winning American menu changes daily, with winners for every taste like Pan Fried Georgia Quail, Asian Duck Salad, New Zealand Rack of Lamb, and Hickory Grilled Rib Eye with Georgia Brown Brown Ale Sauce. We recommend the four-course tasting menu to get a real feel for Zoby's talents (\$60, \$90 with wine.) Dinner Mon-Sat, Lunch Mon-Fri.

The Dining Room – Ritz-Carlton Buckhead, 3434 Peachtree Rd. NE (BH) 404-237-2700 KKKKK \$\$\$\$ – As befits the Ritz, the food is divine, the wines are superb, and the pampering is non-stop. Chef Arnaud Berthelie's inventive prix fixe menus are show-stoppers, and include dishes like a ceviche of Citrus-cured Maine Cod, Little Neck Clams, Fennel Froth, and Chorizo Dust; Lobster and Citrus Cocotte (casserole) with Banana Polenta and Verbena Broth; and a surprisingly fantastic dessert called "Pesto Composition" that included Pain De Gene, Olive Oil Ice Cream, Basil Gelée, Pine Nuts, and Lemon Cream. Magnifique! Reservations are de rigueur. Dinner Tues-Sat.

Food Studio – Kings Plow Arts Center, 887 W. Marietta St. (MT) 404-815-6677 www.thefoodstudio.com KKKKK \$\$\$ – Ok, the name's a little pretentious, but the New American food is creative and visually striking at this spectacularly revamped 90-yr. old farm equipment factory, and the crowd is très cool. Try dishes like House-made Fettuccine with Grilled Tevisio, Speck Ham, Poached Quail Egg, and 6-year-old Balsamic Vinegar; Seared Sea Scallops with Rock Shrimp Brindade, Micro Herb Salad, and Carrot-Ginger Butter Sauce; and Chocolate and Caramel Molten Cake with Caramel Banana Ice Cream and Salted Caramel. Reservations recommended. Dinner 7 days and super-reasonable takeout lunch available at the Food Studio Bar.

Floataway Café – 1123 Zonolite Rd. NE (VH) 404-892-1414 www.starprovisions.com KKKKK \$\$\$ – Another winner from the genius chefs behind Bacchanalia, Floataway offers a more casual (and out of the way) to enjoy their talents. (It's in an industrial area and a little hard to find.) The seasonal Mediterranean/Italian-ish menu combines superfresh local ingredients with delicacies from around the globe to produce compelling dishes like Georgia White Shrimp Bruschetta, Potato Gnocchi with Veal



Sweetbreads, and Roasted Yellow Snapper with Preserved Lemons. Deserts are special, too. Reservations recommended. Dinner Tues-Sat.

Nan – 1350 Spring St. NW (MT) 404-870-9933 www.nanfinedining.com KKKKK \$\$\$ – Wow, this one's good. The gorgeous, elegant room takes a back seat to the outstanding, authentic Thai flavors and cushy service. The soups and curries are delicious, but we recommend stepping outside of your comfort zone and trying one of Chef Nan's selections. Reservations recommended. Dinner 7 days, Lunch Mon-Fri. (Tamarind is the first jewel in Chef Nan's crown.)

Rathbun's – 112 Krog St. (IP) 404-524-8280 www.rathbunsrestaurant.com KKKKK \$\$\$\$ – Rathbun's does a great job, end-to-end, and we love it. It's got a great vibe, delicious New American food, a beautiful renovated factory setting, and they make you

feel so welcome. We adore acclaimed chef Kevin Rathbun's cooking. Our favorite starters were Yaya's Eggplant Steak Fries and the Roasted Bone Marrow with Horseradish and Irish Bleu Cheese. The scallop entrée wowed us and then the pastry chef's dessert sampler sent us to the moon. Reservations recommended (way in advance) for the dining room, but not accepted on the patio which is a little quieter. Dinner Mon-Sat.

Restaurant Eugene – The Aramore, 2277 Peachtree Rd. (BH) 404-355-0321 www.restaurant Eugene.com KKKKK \$\$\$+ – An understated, intimate feel sets Restaurant Eugene apart from some of the other stars on our list. Chef Linton Hopkins co-owns this jewel with wife Gina Hopkins and serves expertly prepared New American that incorporates seasonal local flavors every day. A recent tasting menu included Pan Roasted North Georgia Trout with Gulf Blue Crab Gratin, Braised Swiss Chard, and Saude Maltaise; Slow Roasted Tamworth Pork Belly with Savoy Cabbage, Georgia Apple Sauce and Crispy Shallots; and ended with Heirloom "Carolina Gold" Rice Pudding flavored with Saffron Dried Apricot Chutney and Toasted Almonds. Their \$35 3-course "Sunday Supper" is a steal. Reservations recommended. Dinner 7 days.

South City Kitchen – 1144 Crescent Ave. (MT) 404-873-7358 www.southcitykitchen.com KKKKK \$\$\$ – Sensational New Southern cuisine (done just about perfectly) in a renovated Old Southern townhouse. Draws a cool local clientele for both lunch and dinner, with an active (and attractive!) bar scene. The menu is also pretty tantalizing... start with fanciful Gulf Shrimp "Corn Dogs" with chipotle ketchup, horseradish mustard and crispy tater tots and then move on to the Crab Hash of jumbo lump crab, poached eggs, Idaho potatoes, crushed tomatoes, and chive hollandaise. We loved the Chocolate Caramel Sticky Buns (with cinnamon ice cream and root beer syrup) for dessert. Dinner and lunch 7 days. (And now there's South City Kitchen Vinings - 1675 Cumberland Pkwy, 770.435-0700.)