

BEST *of* BAMA

AWARDS 2018

Your votes have been tallied, and we've got the winners!

In the following pages, we reveal readers' choices for the best of the best of Alabama's entertainment, restaurants, people, and places from our Tennessee border to the shores of the Gulf.

Who do you think should take the title of Best of Bama in 2019? Tell us! Visit alabama-magazine.com to cast your vote!

TEXT BY
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Amphitheater

Tuscaloosa Amphitheater
Tuscaloosa
tuscaloosaamphitheater.com

Located off the banks of the Black Warrior River, the Tuscaloosa Amphitheater offers a picturesque location for various performing artists from Keith Urban to John Mayer. Holding almost 8,000 people, it is also connected to the Tuscaloosa Riverwalk.

Arts Festival

Kentuck Festival of the Arts
Northport
kentuck.org

Taking place in late October, Kentuck Festival of the Arts celebrates folk, visionary, and contemporary artists. Located in Northport, this festival features live demonstrations by craftspeople, hands-on art-making for children, and live music.

Art Museum

Huntsville Museum of Art
Huntsville
hsvmuseum.org

The Huntsville Museum of Art has secured the title of the Best Art Museum for the fourth time. The museum houses 14 galleries and more than 3,000 permanent objects in its 75,000-square-foot building. The museum showcases work from all over the world as well as featuring local Southern artists. The Huntsville Museum of Art also offers a diverse range of programs from art classes to discussions about pieces from notable people in academia.

Golf Course

Grand National
Opelika
rtjgolf.com/grandnational

Named "America's Top 50 Affordable Courses" by *Golf Digest*, Grand National has been named Alabama's best golf course. Consisting of 54 holes and surrounded by Opelika's Lake Saugahatchee, this course offers an incredibly scenic golfing experience.

Heritage Tour

USS Alabama
Mobile Bay
ussalabama.com

Celebrating Mobile's rich history as a port city, the USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park allows visitors to experience firsthand one of the six battleships used in World War II. Offering activities ranging from birthday parties to group tours, the USS Alabama is a must-visit for history fans and those looking for a fun activity.

Historic Landmark

Helen Keller Birthplace
Tuscumbia
helenkellerbirthplace.org

For history buffs, Helen Keller's birthplace in Tuscumbia is a must-see. Six days a week, the tour takes you through the simple cottage and its grounds. The tour also includes a shrine to the "miracle" that occurred when Helen signed her first words. *The Miracle Worker* play, a dramatization of Helen's childhood, is held at the house during the summer.

Performing Arts

Saenger Theater
Mobile
mobilesaenger.com

Mobile's historic Saenger Theater has been voted Alabama's best performing arts theater. Founded in 1927, the theater seats 1,921 and channels the French Renaissance with its decor. Designed to



emulate European opera houses, the theater hosts a variety of performing arts events, from live shows to movies. The calendar of upcoming shows can be found on their website.

Zoo

Tigers for Tomorrow
Attalla
tigersfortomorrow.org

The Tigers for Tomorrow is home to more than 160 animals. It is open to the public and serves as a preserve for a variety of species from tigers to black leopards. The zoo also offers educational programs and private tours. Their goal is to bridge the gap between humans and animals through education, preservation, and conservation. Tigers for Tomorrow gives the option to be a "guardian angel" by donating to "adopt" an animal. Information on ticket prices and hours can be found on their website.



PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL CLEMMER





Bakery

Mason Dixon Bakery
Huntsville and Homewood
masondixonbakery.com

Mason Dixon Bakery is not only Alabama's first gluten-free bakery but also Alabama's favorite bakery. Dr. Ashley and Taylor Ramirez wanted to create a place where people with different dietary needs could find something they love. With locations in Huntsville and Homewood, Mason Dixon Bakery is a must-visit regardless of your diet.

Bar

The Hangout
Gulf Shores
thehangout.com

This beachfront restaurant and bar located in Gulf Shores has been a local and tourist favorite since its opening in 2008. The bar has a large selection of specialty cocktails to appeal to any mixed drink fan. If cocktails aren't your drink of choice, they also have 17 different beers and a variety of frozen beverages, including Gulf Shores favorite the Bushwacker. The relaxed vibe of The Hangout encourages visitors to kick back with a drink and enjoy the pristine beach environment.



MASON DIXON

BBQ

Dreamland BBQ
Statewide
dreamlandbbq.com

Dreamland BBQ has achieved legendary status amongst Alabama residents. First opened in Tuscaloosa in 1958, the restaurant specializes in barbecue ribs, smoked sausage, pulled pork, and chicken.

Brunch

Another Broken Egg Cafe
Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, Madison,
Huntsville, Orange Beach
anotherbrokenegg.com

Using only the finest ingredients, Another Broken Egg Cafe has become a favorite amongst foodies and families looking for a delicious and inviting brunch spot. Founded in 1996, the restaurant focuses on putting an artisanal flare on otherwise standard brunch dishes.

Burger

Callaghan's Irish Social Club
Mobile
callaghansirishsocialclub.com

Located in the Oakleigh Garden district in Mobile, Callaghan's Irish Social Club features Alabama's best burger—which it has been voted 7 years in a row! While the menu boasts of a simple burger, the quality and flavor are enough for people to flock from miles away for a taste of this award-winner and the live music at Callaghan's.

Cafe

Wildflower Cafe
Mentone
mentonewildflower.com

The Wildflower Cafe offers quality food and a fun environment for visitors. They offer gluten-free, organic, and vegan options, and cater to all appetites and dietary needs. Live local musicians provide entertainment. The cafe also features a country store stocked with local jams, pottery, and art.



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN DERSHAM

WILDFLOWER CAFE

Chef

David Bancroft
Auburn
acreauburn.com

All *Iron Chef* fans need to visit Auburn to get a taste of what a winner looks like. David Bancroft, chef and owner of Auburn's Acre Restaurant, is one of the most renowned chefs in the state. Focusing on fresh and seasonal ingredients, Bancroft is able to capture the flavor of the seasons in a gourmet way.

Coffee

Karma's Coffee House
Cullman
karmascoffeehouse.com

With the slogan "Where good people come for good coffee," it's understandable why Karma's has been voted best coffee shop for 2 years in a row. Located in downtown Cullman, the shop is a hangout for students, businesspeople, and bibliophiles. Founded in 2015, this community-centered store prides itself on its inviting atmosphere. Karma's also has live shows on Friday nights. The menu ranges from barista-made drinks to savory sandwiches and smoothie bowls.

Fine Dining

Camellia Cafe
Fairhope
camelliacafe.com

Using only the freshest seafood and other local ingredients, Camellia Cafe in downtown Fairhope offers a fine dining experience guests will never forget. Chef Ryan Glass cooks up a wide range of dishes from seafood to steak to delectable desserts.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHEROKEE LAIR

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARDEN LUPTON

Seafood

Chuck's Fish
Birmingham, Mobile, Tuscaloosa
chucksfish.com

Named after former civil rights attorney Chuck Morgan, Chuck's Fish was founded by Chuck's son Charles. With fresh ingredients straight from the Gulf, Chuck's offers a top-notch dining experience. From sushi to shrimp and gumbo, there is something for everybody at Chuck's.

Steak

Highlands Bar and Grill
Birmingham
highlandsbarandgrill.com

Located in Five Points South in Birmingham, Highlands Bar and Grill has been selected as the best steak in Alabama. Internationally-renowned chef Frank Stitt's dishes showcase techniques he learned during his time in France. The tender New York strip steak is a favorite on the menu.

Sushi

Jinsei
Birmingham
jinseisushi.com

Sushi connoisseurs flock to Jinsei for an authentic sushi experience. Diners in the intimate dining room select from a diverse range of sushi choices. With its suburban location in downtown Homewood, the restaurant still manages to capture a swanky city vibe.



JINSEI





Shopping

Antiques

Pickwick Antiques
Montgomery
pickwickantiques.com

Specializing in 18th-, 19th-, and early-20th-century paintings, porcelain, clocks, and furniture, Pickwick is a favorite amongst interior designers and collectors. Due to its central location in Montgomery, Pickwick is easily accessible for Alabama citizens and those in neighboring big cities.

Bridal Boutique

Something Blue Bridal Shoppe
Hartselle
thesomethingblueshoppe.com

From prom to wedding dresses, the Something Blue Shoppe in Hartselle offers dresses for every formal occasion. In addition to dresses, the shop also provides wedding invitations. Brides turn to this northern Alabama boutique for all of their wedding needs. Appointments are recommended, but walk-ins are also welcome.

Children's Clothing

Once Upon a Time
Homewood and Mountain Brook
onceuponatimebaby.com

Since its opening in 1996, Once Upon a Time has been a local favorite source for children's clothing in the Birmingham area. Owner Linda Flaherty



PICKWICK ANTIQUES

PHOTOGRAPH BY KIM BOX PHOTOGRAPHY

designs her own line of charming essentials for babies and toddlers featured in the store. Swimsuits, gifts, bath accessories, and more are available at both locations. The store also offers an extensive baby registry for new parents.

Gift Shop

Alabama Gift Company
Gadsden
thealabamagiftcompany.com

Alabama is home to a huge variety of artisans and local businesses. Since its opening in 2006, Alabama Gift Company has made it easy for shoppers to buy local. Located in downtown Gadsden, this store supplies both gifts and foods, which are all made in Alabama. Hours and days of operation can be found on their website.



THE SHOPS AT GRAND RIVER

Jeweler

Ware Jewelers
Auburn, Montgomery,
and Spanish Fort
warejewelers.com

Founded in 1946, Ware Jewelers is the state's largest staffer of registered jewelers, appraisers, and watchmakers. With customer service as their highest priority, certified gemologists are always on hand offering expert advice. Luxurious brands such as Rolex, David Yurman, Roberto Coin, John Hardy, and Tag Hauer can be found at all locations as well as gifts and engagement rings.

Mall

Bridge Street Town Centre
Huntsville
bridgestreethuntsville.com

Bridge Street Town Centre is Huntsville's premier mall. Featuring a Westin hotel, Cinemark movie theater, carousel, train, walking trails, and live music, this mall offers just as much entertainment as it does excellent shopping. The combination of stores and restaurants makes Bridge Street Town Centre a popular draw.

Men's Boutique

The Locker Room
Auburn, Montgomery, and Tuscaloosa
tlreclothiers.com

With three locations throughout the state, The Locker Room has been selected as the best men's clothing store. Founded in 1977, the store carries a variety of exclusive brands and collegiate clothing guaranteed to appeal to any style and occasion. Clothing, accessories, and gifts carry such notable brands such as Peter Millar, Brax, and Smathers & Branson, to name a few.

Women's Boutique

JK Taylor
Cullman
shopjktaylor.com

This northern Alabama boutique offers the latest fashions for women from clothes to shoes to accessories. Founded in 2015 by Rita Dean, the store is a local favorite for Cullman residents. JK Taylor offers dressy clothes as well as casual items. The objective of the boutique is to provide shoppers with a unique and affordable shopping experience.



Shopping



PHOTOGRAPH BY JERROD BROWN

ALABAMA GIFT COMPANY