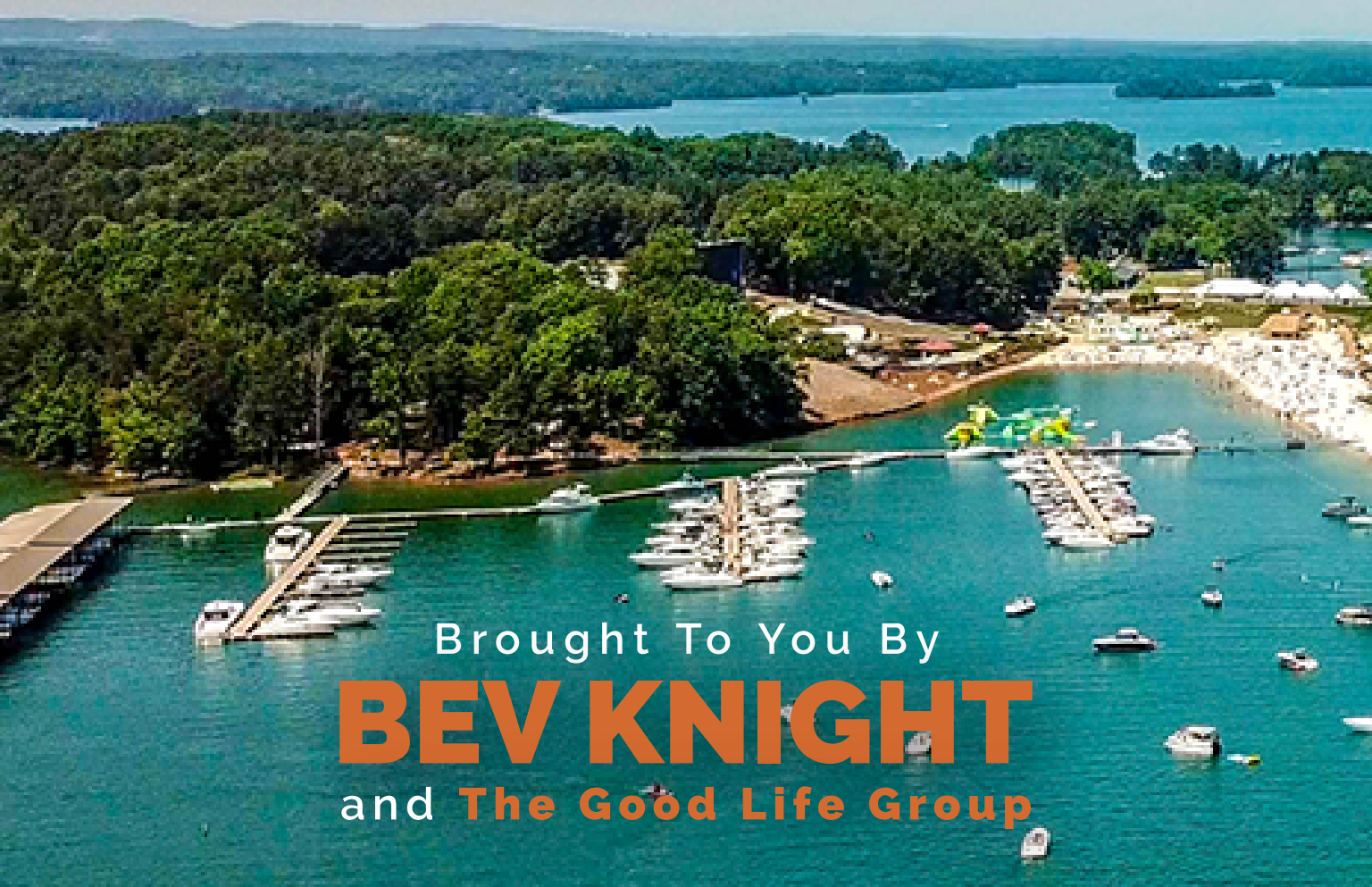


Lake Lanier

VISITORS GUIDE



Brought To You By

BEV KNIGHT

and **The Good Life Group**



Lake Lanier

LakeLanier.com

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CREDITS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We'd like to thank our sponsors, Bev Knight and The Good Life Group, and Lanier Islands for supporting this project and for having faith in us to produce this great resource.

Thanks also to Robert J. Sutherland for the fabulous cover photo and the countless hours and wisdom he put into making LakeLanier.com one of the best resources for Lake Lanier visitors. Most of the photos and much content in this guide were originally Robert's and published on LakeLanier.com. Robert is a travel writer and can be contacted at RJSutherland@hotmail.com.

Finally, thank you to Cagatay Eren for the beautiful cover design.

We hope you enjoy your time at Lake Lanier!

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Are you ready for *the good life* on Lake Lanier?

The Good Life Group is dedicated to helping clients buy and sell property on beautiful Lake Lanier. They have been the #1 team on the lake since 2012 (in cumulative sales) and have a reputation as being the go-to group for Lake Lanier real estate. They spend over \$300,000 a year on lake-targeted marketing, and it shows in their production. Just in 2020, they completed over \$70 million in transactions, mostly on the lake. They are experts in property values, lake-related issues, trends, regulations and basically any factor that affects Lanier's real estate values.

Lead agent and founder of the group, Bev Knight, is often sought after as an expert on lake property. She writes a column on Lake Lanier real estate for a local lake publication and is often quoted in business publication's articles regarding lake values and trends. All the team members strive to be responsive, informed, and available to their customers. They do answer their phones, and your needs *are* important to them. Each of the agents are Lake Lanier residents, members of the Lake Lanier Association, and heavily involved in the community. They're not just your agents, they're your neighbors!

If you are interested in living *the good life* on Lake Lanier, give them a call. They are ready to help.



The Good Life Group

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The Good Life Group, Keller Williams Lanier Partners

L to R: Bev Knight, Darlene Plavcan, Angie Smart, Cynthia Runions, Taylor Lange

THE LAKE LANIER VISITORS GUIDE

Sponsored by Bev Knight and The Good Life Group - Lake, luxury and executive specialists with Keller Williams Lanier Partners and Lanier Islands

BRAD WAYLAND; BURGE, STACEY; STEVE BURGE; AND ROBERT SUTHERLAND

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Lake Lanier, Photograph by Robert Sutherland

1

Welcome to Lake Lanier

LAKE LANIER IS ONE OF AMERICA'S FAVORITE LAKES

With several million visitors every year, Lake Lanier is the most popular lake in the Southeast. You will enjoy the time you spend at Lake Lanier. We guarantee it!

Lake Lanier is the largest lake in Georgia, with nearly 700 miles of shoreline spread over 38,000 acres. The northern part of the lake sits in the foothills of Georgia's Blue Ridge Mountains and offers stunning views. The southern part is a short drive from Atlanta.

WHERE LAKE LANIER COMES FROM

The water in Lake Lanier is fed by the Appalachian Mountains. The tiny streams run over beautiful waterfalls and through magnificent forests before making their way down the Chattahoochee and Chestatee Rivers. In 1956, the Army Corps of Engineers built Buford Dam, which turned the two rivers into Lake Lanier.

GET ACTIVE ON LAKE LANIER

You'll never run out of ways to have fun on — or around — Lake Lanier. There is something for everyone to enjoy.

Lake Lanier boasts some of the world's best rowing, kayaking and water skiing.

Enjoy an afternoon with family and friends at one of Lanier's many luscious parks. Or, reserve a biplane ride to catch a bird's eye view of the lake. Rent a pontoon boat, giant houseboat, kayak or a canoe, or go for a canopy tour via an exhilarating zipline over the lake.

We have some of the best fishing spots anywhere! Think you're up to catching a giant "striper"? Sure you can! Rent a fishing boat for an amazing experience or hire a professional guide to take you to secret spots where "the big ones" hide.

You could book a tee time to play a round of golf at Lanier Islands' world-renowned golf course, or perhaps skip the golf and opt for a rejuvenating massage at their luxury spa. Once you've been to Margaritaville at Lanier Islands, magnificent beach and waterpark, you'll see why families can't wait to return to the resort year after year.

If your idea of a perfect vacation is to end a great day at a lakeside restaurant for live entertainment and a delicious meal while absorbing the sunset, you'll love Lanier Islands.

With so many great options to keep you busy, it's guaranteed fun for all who visit.

ENJOY THE BEAUTIFUL PARKS SURROUNDING LANIER

More than 45 parks and 10 campgrounds line the shores of Lake Lanier. In 2013, we welcomed our first state park, Don Carter, which is located in Hall County on the northern end of the lake.

Also in the northern section is Lake Lanier Olympic Park, which was the rowing venue for the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games. Buford Dam sits at the southernmost portion of the lake and has a variety of popular parks adjacent to it.

With so many lovely recreational areas and campgrounds scattered around the 700 miles of shoreline, visitors won't have difficulty finding a park to suit their needs. Whether you desire an RV hookup, boat ramp, beach, designated swim area, hiking trail, picnic table, playground, pavilion or barbecue, Lake Lanier has a special spot just for you.

EXPLORE AREAS AROUND LAKE LANIER

There's plenty to do off the water too. Visitors to Lanier can enjoy a wide variety of restaurants, shopping, and entertainment in the surrounding area. Buford and Gainesville are the two largest cities in the Lake Lanier vicinity. After a full day on the lake, many visitors love to end their day exploring the historic downtowns of these friendly cities.

There are bountiful opportunities for fantastic day-excursions as well. Visitors can enjoy the bright lights of the big city of Atlanta to tour The High Museum of Art or hang out at the artsy coffee and dessert shop, Café Intermezzo.

Others may want to pursue a day trip to the North Georgia Blue Ridge Mountains for a hike on the Appalachian Trail, or to enjoy a mountain waterfall or winery. Take a drive to eat and shop away from Lanier in the Bavarian Village of Helen, a trip you'll always remember. The charming Town Square in historic Dahlonega was home to America's first gold rush. This historic marvel has 70+ alluring shops filled with unique goodies that you'll wonder how you ever lived without.

FALL IN LOVE WITH LAKE LANIER

If, by chance, you fall in love with Lake Lanier and want to stay, we've got the perfect Lake Lanier realtor to recommend. The #1 Lake Lanier realty firm of Bev Knight and The Good Life Group will be pleased to assist in helping you find your dream house for the good life you've been seeking, with professionalism, knowledge and excellence.

We welcome you to Lake Lanier and hope you enjoy your time on Georgia's greatest lake.

Accommodations on Lake Lanier



Since Lake Lanier spans a wide area, you have many options for where you can base your stay. Choosing where to stay might primarily depend on your budget. However, you'll also need to consider what you want to do and where you want to explore while at the lake.

One of the most popular places for Lanier visitors to stay is Lanier Islands in Buford. In fact, many visitors come to Lake Lanier and then make it a tradition. Within their 1,200 scenic lakefront acres, there is an abundance of activities to keep everyone entertained and yearning to come back year after year.

Though the centerpiece of the resort is the Legacy Lodge and Conference Center, other options for accommodations at Lanier Islands include Villas, LakeHouses, Shoal Creek Campgrounds, and a brand new RV Resort at Margaritaville at Lanier Islands.

In the first part of this chapter, we'll provide a detailed listing of the accommodations options at Lanier Islands. We'll end the chapter with a listing of some of the hotels you'll find in the towns that surround the lake. If you're looking for campgrounds, we'll list those in detail in Chapter 3: Camping on Lake Lanier.

LANIER ISLANDS – BUFORD, GA

Visitors return annually to Lanier Islands for the beautiful and serene setting, quality of service and plethora of activities. Lanier Islands has it all. A perfect day for some may include playing a round of golf along the lake-lined shores at Legacy Golf Club. The kids may prefer to spend an entire sunny summer's day riding the water slides and enjoying the beach at Margaritaville at Lanier Islands beach and waterpark. Or, perhaps your ideal day is a relaxing massage at Legacy Spa, followed by an afternoon hike.

You have a choice of accommodations at Lanier Islands. You can reserve a room at Legacy Lodge, a Legacy Villa with multiple rooms, a LakeHouse, or a campsite for your RV or tent. We list the features and amenities of each in more detail below.

- **Address: Lanier Islands** 7000 Lanier Islands Parkway, Buford, GA 30518
 - **Phone:** (770) 945-8787
 - **Website:** <http://www.lanierislands.com/>
-
- **Address: Margaritaville at Lanier Islands** 7650 Lanier Islands Parkway, Buford, GA 30518
 - **Phone:** (470) 323-3440
 - **Website:** <http://www.lanierislands.com/margaritaville>

Legacy Lodge, Lanier Islands

At the heart of Lanier Islands, Legacy Lodge & Conference Center offers 216 comfortably furnished guest rooms, consisting of King Rooms, Double Queen Rooms and 4 King Suites. Their rooms offer the finest amenities, including spacious bathtubs and tiled walk-in showers, granite surfaces, balconies or patios, flat-screen televisions, complimentary wireless Internet, as well as concierge and room services. Enjoy the stunning lake view from your room while you rest, before exploring the activities and amenities Lanier Islands has to offer. Legacy Lodge is home to multiple dining options, walk-up lobby bar, 22,000 square feet of flexible meeting space, a rejuvenating spa, an outdoor pool, a fitness center, gaming area, and a full-service business center. Legacy Lodge is also pet-friendly. Find out more about Legacy Lodge: <http://www.lanierislands.com/accommodations/lodge>.

Legacy Villas, Lanier Islands

Located adjacent to Legacy Lodge & Conference Center, the 6 Legacy Villas include six individually keyed rooms that total 4,500 square feet of space. Villa rooms are equipped with premium amenities and beautiful views of the lake. Legacy Villas each consist of two king rooms, two double king rooms, and two king suites, which feature private bathrooms and balconies or terraces. Guests enjoying the Villas are within walking distance of Legacy Lodge and enjoy all of the Resort's onsite amenities. Find out more about Legacy Villas: <http://www.lanierislands.com/accommodations/villas>.



Legacy Lodge Front Entrance, photograph from Lanier Islands



Legacy-Villas-King Suite, photograph from Lanier Islands

LakeHouses at Legacy, Lanier Islands

Located in a beautifully wooded private setting on the glimmering shores of Lake Sidney Lanier, the LakeHouses at Legacy are relaxing and conveniently designed for families and small groups. Each of these lake cabin rentals in North Georgia feature two private bedrooms, each with its own private bathroom, washer and dryer, kitchen (no oven), dining area, living area with a sleeper sofa, fieldstone gas fireplace, and a wooden deck with gas grill. Each LakeHouse contains 1 king bed, 2 full size beds and 1 sleeper sofa, and will accommodate up to 8 guests. There are 2 assigned parking spaces for



Legacy-Villas-Living Room, photograph from Lanier Islands

each LakeHouse. The LakeHouses at Legacy are pet-friendly. Find out more about LakeHouses at Legacy: <http://www.lanierislands.com/accommodations/lakehouses>.



Legacy LakeHouses, photograph from LanierIslands.com

Campgrounds and RV Resort, Margaritaville at Lanier Islands

For those who love being one with nature Margaritaville at Lanier Islands has the campground just for you. Enjoy the serenity and natural beauty of Lake Lanier at one of their lakefront campsites at the beautiful foothills of the North Georgia Mountains: the Margaritaville at Lanier Islands RV Resort and Shoal Creek Campgrounds. A boat ramp is available at Shoal Creek. The campgrounds are pet-friendly. Find out more about camping: <http://www.lanierislands.com/margaritaville/visit/camping>.

OTHER HOTELS NEAR LAKE LANIER

Hampton Inn – Cumming, GA

This hotel is located in downtown Cumming on the southwest area of the lake. It's a short drive from Atlanta and conveniently located close to the Buford Dam and many parks and boat ramps.

- **Address:** 915 Ronald Reagan Blvd, Cumming, GA 30041
- **Phone:** (770) 889-0877
- **Website:** <http://hamptoninn3.hilton.com/>

Quality Inn and Suites – Dawsonville, GA

This hotel is in Dawsonville on the northwest part of the lake. It is near the North Georgia Premium Outlet Malls and is a short drive to Amicalola Falls State Park, the North Georgia town of Dahlonega, and the Appalachian Trail.

- **Address:** 127 Beartooth Parkway, Dawsonville, GA 30534
- **Phone:** (706) 216-1900
- **Website:** <https://www.choicehotels.com/>

Holiday Inn – Gainesville, GA

This hotel on the north end of the lake has a convenient location in the center of downtown Gainesville. It is close to the Atlanta Botanical Garden – Gainesville. The children's museum "INK" — the Interactive Neighborhood for Kids — is nearby, as are many beautiful Lake Lanier parks and boat ramps. Don Carter State Park is a short drive north from this location.

- **Address:** 400 EE Butler Parkway, Gainesville, GA 30501
- **Phone:** (770) 531-0907
- **Website:** <http://www.ihg.com/holidayinn/>



Camping on Lake Lanier, photograph by Robert Sutherland

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Camping on Lake Lanier

Camping on Lake Lanier is more than “heaven on earth.” It’s also a bit of heaven on the lovely shores of one of America’s most popular lakes. Lake Lanier is a great place to rest, whether in a cabin, RV or tent.

Camping doesn’t have to be “roughing it.” You don’t have to get dirty, build a fire or fight ravenous bears. All you have to do is spend a night or two at one of the stunningly beautiful sites on Lake Lanier — any way you would like. Even campsites that are labeled as “primitive” are cozy with nearby restrooms.

Sites for camping of all sorts are all around the lake. You won’t have to look far to find just what you’re looking for.

OVERVIEW OF LAKE LANIER CAMPGROUNDS

There are 12 campgrounds around the lake offering everything from new and nicely maintained lakeside cabins in Don Carter State Park to primitive, back-to-nature campsites in Toto Creek.

The campgrounds are owned and operated by various organizations so the rules for each will vary.

Campgrounds in Buford

RV Resort, Margaritaville at Lanier Islands

- **Address:** 7650 Lanier Islands Parkway, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (470) 323-3440
- **Operated by:** Margaritaville at Lanier Islands

Shoal Creek

- **Address:** 6300 Shadburn Ferry Road, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (470) 323-3440
- **Operated by:** Margaritaville at Lanier Islands

Campgrounds in Cumming

Bald Ridge Creek

- **Address:** 4100 Bald Ridge Road, Cumming, GA, 30041
- **Phone:** (770) 889-1591
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Sawnee

- **Address:** 3200 Buford Dam Road, Cumming, Georgia
- **Phone:** (770) 887-0592
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Shady Grove

- **Address:** 7800 Allyn Lane Memorial Way, Cumming, GA
- **Phone:** (770) 205-6850
- **Operated by:** Forsyth County, Georgia

Campgrounds in Dawsonville

Toto Creek

- **Address:** 154 Toto Creek Park Road, Dawsonville, GA 30534
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers, for reservations call (877) 444-6777

War Hill

- **Address:** 4081 War Hill Park Road, Dawsonville, GA 30534

- **Phone:** (706) 344-3646
- **Operated by:** Dawson County, Georgia

Campgrounds in Flowery Branch

Old Federal Park

- **Address:** 6219 Old Federal Road, Flowery Branch, GA 30542
- **Phone:** (770) 967-6757
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Campgrounds in Gainesville

Bolding Mill

- **Address:** 4055 Chestatee Road, Gainesville, GA, 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 534-6960
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Don Carter State Park

- **Address:** 5000 N. Browning Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA, 30506.
- **Phone:** (800) 864-7275
- **Operated by:** Georgia State Parks

Duckett Mill

- **Address:** 3720 Duckett Mill Road, Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 532-9802
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

River Forks

- **Address:** 3500 Keith Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30507
- **Phone:** (770) 531-3952
- **Operated by:** Hall County, Georgia



Lake Lanier Park, photograph by Robert Sutherland

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Lake Lanier Parks

Parks on Lake Lanier are prettier than words can describe. On most days you'll find blue skies and shimmery blue water.

Relax lakeside at one of the hundreds of picnic tables all around the hundreds of miles of shoreline. Frolic on a clean sandy beach, enjoy a barbecue with your family, fish from the shores, launch your boat, or wisely invest whatever time you have at one of the relaxing shelters on Lake Lanier.

Parks on Lake Lanier are managed by several cities, counties, the state of Georgia and the federal government. What that means is there is no single set of rules, operating hours or seasons, and no single pass that can get you into them all. Yes, that's a pain, but it's a result of having so many parks in so many places to choose from. That's the nice part.

OVERVIEW OF LAKE LANIER PARKS

Lake Lanier has 45 parks and day-use areas hugging its shoreline.

Parks in Buford

Big Creek Park

- **Address:** 3050 Big Creek Road, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Buford Dam Park

- **Address:** 1050 Buford Dam Road, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

East Bank Park

- **Address:** 250 Buford Dam Road, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Lanier Park

- **Address:** 1360 Buford Dam Road, Buford, GA, 30518
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Lower Overlook Park

- **Address:** 1060 Buford Dam Road, Buford, GA 30515
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Shoal Creek Park

- **Address:** Shadburn Ferry Road, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Parks in Cumming

Bald Ridge Creek Campground

- **Address:** 4100 Bald Ridge Road, Cumming, GA 30041
- **Phone:** (770) 889-1591

- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Charleston Park

- **Address:** 5850 Charleston Park Road, Cumming, GA 30041
- **Phone:** (770) 781-2215
- **Operated by:** Forsyth County Parks and Recreation

Little Ridge Park

- **Address:** 3295 Lanier Beach South Road, Cumming, GA, 30041
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Lower Pool Park

- **Address:** Little Mill Road, Cumming, GA 30041
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Mary Alice Park

- **Address:** 1820 Mary Alice Park Road, Cumming, GA 30041
- **Phone:** (770) 886-0635
- **Operated by:** Cumming Fairgrounds, GA

Six Mile Park

- **Address:** 6020 Browns Bridge Road, Cumming, GA 30041
- **Phone:** (770) 781-2215
- **Operated by:** Forsyth County, GA

Tidwell Park

- **Address:** 4900 Pilgrim Mill Road, Cumming, GA 30041
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Vanns Tavern Park

- **Address:** 9300 Vann's Tavern Road, Cumming, GA 30041
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

West Bank Park

- **Address:** West Bank Park, Cumming, GA 30041
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

West Bank Overlook Park

- **Address:** 3400 Buford Dam Road, Cumming, GA 30041
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Young Deer Park

- **Address:** 7300 Heard Road, Cumming, GA 30041
- **Phone:** (770) 781-2215
- **Operated by:** Forsyth County, GA

Parks in Dawsonville

Nix Bridge Park

- **Address:** 3600 Nix Bridge Road, Dawsonville, GA 30534
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Toto Creek Park

- **Address:** 154 Toto Creek Park Road, Dawsonville, GA 30534
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

War Hill Park

- **Address:** 4081 War Hill Park Road, Dawsonville, GA 30534
- **Phone:** (706) 344-3646
- **Operated by:** Dawson County, GA

Parks in Flowery Branch

Burton Mill Park

- **Address:** Burton Mill Park Road, Flowery Branch, GA 30542
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531

- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Flowery Branch Park

- **Address:** 6334 Mitchell Street, Flowery Branch, GA 30542
- **Phone:** (770) 967-6371
- **Operated by:** City of Flowery Branch, GA

Old Federal Park

- **Address:** 6175 Jim Crow Road, Flowery Branch, GA, 30542
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Van Pugh Park

- **Address:** 6838 Gaines Ferry Road, Flowery Branch, GA, 30542
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Parks in Gainesville

Bethel Park

- **Address:** 8595 Swiss Air Road, Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Bolding Mill Park

- **Address:** 4044 Chestatee Road, Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Clarks Bridge Park

- **Address:** 3105 Clarks Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30501
- **Phone:** (770) 535-6865
- **Operated by:** City of Gainesville and Hall County, GA

Don Carter State Park

- **Address:** 5000 N. Browning Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA, 30506
- **Phone:** (800) 864-7275

- **Operated by:** Georgia State Parks and Recreation

Duckett Mill Park

- **Address:** 3720 Duckett Mill Road, Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Holly Park

- **Address:** 2603 Old Thompson Bridge Road, NW, Gainesville, GA 30501
- **Phone:** (770) 535-3078
- **Operated by:** City of Gainesville, GA

Keith Bridge Park

- **Address:** 9270 Old Keith Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Lanier Point Park

- **Address:** 1579 Lee Waldrup Drive, NW; Gainesville, GA, 30501
- **Phone:** (770) 287-0208
- **Operated by:** City of Gainesville, GA

Laurel Park

- **Address:** 3100 Old Cleveland Highway, Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 535-8280
- **Operated by:** Hall County, Georgia

Little Hall Park

- **Address:** Little Hall Road (off Route 53), Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Little River Park

- **Address:** 2665 Little River Park Road, Gainesville, GA, 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Long Hollow Park

- **Address:** 8525 Bryant Road, Gainesville, GA, 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Longwood Park

- **Address:** 20 Pearl Nix Parkway, NW, Gainesville, GA, 30501
- **Phone:** (770) 531-2680
- **Operated by:** City of Gainesville, GA

Mountain View Park

- **Address:** 5450 Old 141 Road, Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Robinson Park

- **Address:** 3555 Robinson Road, Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Sardis Creek Park

- **Address:** A Thomas Road Ext. (off Antioch Church Road), Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Simpson Park

- **Address:** 3235 Simpson Park Road, Gainesville, GA, 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Thompson Bridge Park

- **Address:** Dunlap Landing Road, Gainesville, GA 30566
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Two Mile Creek Park

- **Address:** 9200 Bethel Road, Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Wahoo Creek Park

- **Address:** 3956 Mount Vernon Road, Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Parks in Oakwood

Balus Creek Park

- **Address:** 4799 Mountain View Road, Oakwood, GA 30566
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers



Lake Lanier Marinas, photograph by Robert Sutherland

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Lake Lanier Marinas

From fuel docks to ship stores, marine repair to yacht sales, lakeside dining to boat rentals, Lake Lanier marinas have much more to offer than just boat slips.

There are nine marinas that serve Lake Lanier. Combined, they can hold over 7,500 boats in their wet and dry slips. They are open year-round and offer complete boating amenities. There is gas available, and some of the marinas have lakeside restaurants.

If you don't have a boat, no worries. You can rent a boat, jetski or houseboat for the day from some of these marinas. Or, maybe you just want to unwind at a lakeside restaurant or bar to enjoy a nice meal with a view and a cocktail with the sunset. Not exciting enough? Plan a lakeside evening out with friends and live entertainment.

OVERVIEW OF LAKE LANIER MARINAS

Marinas in Buford

Port of Indecision Marina

- **Address:** 7650 Lanier Islands Parkway, Buford, GA 30518

- **Phone:** (470) 323-3444
- **Website:** www.lanierislands.com/margaritaville/port-indecision-marina

Lazy Days at Holiday Marina

- **Address:** 6700 Lanier Islands Parkway, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (770) 945-1991
- **Website:** www.holidaylakelanier.com/

Holiday Marina

- **Address:** 6900 Lanier Islands Parkway, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (770) 945-7201
- **Website:** www.holidaylakelanier.com/

Cumming, GA

Bald Ridge Marina

- **Address:** 1850 Bald Ridge Marina Road, Cumming, GA 30041
- **Phone:** (770) 887-5309
- **Website:** www.baldridgemarina.com/

Habersham Marina

- **Address:** 2200 Habersham Marina Road, Cumming, GA 30041
- **Phone:** (770) 887-5309
- **Website:** www.habershammarina.com/

Marinas in Flowery Branch

Aqualand Marina

- **Address:** 6800 Lights Ferry Road, Flowery Branch, GA 30542
- **Phone:** (770) 967-6811
- **Website:** www.aqualandmarina.com/

Hideaway Bay Marina

- **Address:** 6334 Mitchell Street, Flowery Branch, GA 30542
- **Phone:** (770) 967-5500
- **Website:** www.hideawaybaymarina.com/

Marinas in Gainesville

Port Royale Marina

- **Address:** 9200 Lan Mar Road, Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 887-5715
- **Website:** www.bestinboating.com/ga/lake-lanier/port-royale/

Gainesville Marina

- **Address:** 2145 Old Dawsonville Hwy, Gainesville, GA 30501
- **Phone:** (770) 536-2171
- **Website:** www.gainesvillemarina.com/

Harbor Landing Boat Rentals

- **Address:** 7650 Lanier Islands Pkwy, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (470) 323-3465
- **Website:** www.lanierislands.com/margaritaville/boating-pricing

Sunrise Cove Marina

- **Address:** 5725 Flat Creek Road, Gainesville, GA 30504
- **Phone:** (770) 536-8599
- **Website:** www.sunrisecovemarina.com



Boats on Lake Lanier, photograph by Robert Sutherland

6

Boating on Lake Lanier

Few recreational activities can top a boat ride on Lake Lanier on almost any day of the year. Getting out at sunrise to fish or to paddle around in a canoe or a kayak is the perfect way to start the day.

Blasting around Lanier in a souped-up speedboat on a sunny afternoon is invigorating, especially because there are no speed limits on the lake. Evening rides — puttering around with friends, family and a refreshing beverage — can pacify even the most stressful days.

In this chapter, we'll guide you through what you need to know to go boating on Lake Lanier.

- For information about canoeing, kayaking or rowing, go to Chapter 7: Canoeing, Kayaking and Rowing.
- For information about water skiing, wakeboarding or paddle-boarding, go to Chapter 8: Water Skiing, Wakeboarding and Paddleboarding.

WHERE TO GO BOATING

The south end of the lake is by far the most popular. It's closer to Atlanta and has much wider, more

open water. On a busy summer weekend, you'll see thousands of boats. The water can get choppy, but you can always stay close to shore for a smoother ride.

The north end is comparatively quiet and has narrower banks. You'll find the most picturesque water skiing here. On a winter cruise northward, you might find yourself alone on the lake.

MARINAS AND BOAT RAMPS

You can launch from one of the many marinas on the lake (for a complete listing, see Chapter 5: Lake Lanier Marinas). All of the marinas have gas available. A few have restaurants with lakeside dining where you can dock your boat while you enjoy a nice meal. There are no marinas north of Gainesville.

Lake Lanier is surrounded by 45 parks and day-use areas (for a complete listing, see Chapter 4: Lake Lanier Parks) with more than 100 free boat ramps. When lake levels are low, you'll want to check to see which boat ramps are open.

- To find out more information about lake levels, <https://lakelanier.com/lake-lanier-water-levels/>.
- To determine if a boat ramp is open, <https://lakelanier.com/2016/10/list-of-open-boat-ramps-on-lake-lanier/>.

BOAT REGISTRATION

All boats must have a Georgia Certificate of Boat Registration and a validation decal to legally operate on Georgia public waters.

The only exceptions include:

- Sailboats under 12 feet in length.
- Canoes, kayaks, rowboats, and rubber rafts that have no mechanical propulsion.
- Boats operated exclusively on private ponds or lakes.

Your registration card must be onboard and available for inspection by a law enforcement officer whenever the boat is in operation.

There are three ways you can register or renew your boat:

- Online at: <https://www.gooutdoorsgeorgia.com/>
- By phone: 1-800-366-2661
- By mail: Print the application, complete and mail it to: GA Dept of Natural Resources, PO Box 934943, Atlanta, GA 31193-4943

After applying, you can legally operate your watercraft for 60 days and until you receive the permanent certificate and decal. Because you must show proof of registration, you must have the following on board your vessel:

- For online registrations: the temporary authorization number and printed receipt.
- For phone registrations: the temporary authorization number.

- For mailed applications: a copy of the registration form and proof of payment.

Certificates are valid for three years and expire on the last day of the owner's birth month. Renewal forms are mailed to the boat owner at least 30 days prior to expiration.

For more information about registering your boat in Georgia, visit Georgia's Department of Natural Resources website at <http://www.georgiawildlife.com/boating/registration>.

BOATING CLUBS

There are several boating clubs on Lake Lanier. Whether you're into sailing, canoeing, rowing, kayaking, or cruising, these groups will help you meet others who share your passion. Here is a list of the boating clubs that you'll find on Lake Lanier.

Atlanta Sail and Power Squadron

- <http://atlantasboatingclub.com>

Barefoot Sailing Club

- <http://barefootsailing.org>

Freedom Boat Club

- Location: Holiday Marina, Buford, GA
- <http://freedomboatclub.com/locations/14-lake-lanier-ga/>

Lanier Canoe & Kayak Club

- Location: Lake Lanier Olympic Park
- <http://lckc.org/>

Lake Lanier Rowing Club

- Location: Lake Lanier Olympic Park
- <http://www.lakelanierrowing.org/>

Lake Lanier Sailing Club

- Location: Flowery Branch, GA
- <http://www.llsc.com/>



Dragon Boat Festival on Lake Lanier, photograph by Robert Sutherland

7

Canoeing, Kayaking and Rowing on Lake Lanier

Go for a nice leisurely paddle or do a long section along the Chattahoochee River. Race or relax. It's your call. Soon you'll understand why folks come from all around the globe for rowing, canoeing and kayaking on Lake Lanier.

Lake Lanier hosted the rowing events for the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games. The site on the northern end of the lake in Gainesville now hosts Lake Lanier Olympic Park. The park was rebranded in 2016 and includes a beach and picnic area, the Olympic Timing Tower, the Boat House and Clarks Bridge Park. The Lake Lanier Olympic Park continues to host visitors from all over the world for races, regattas and training.

In this section, we'll introduce you to Lanier's rowing and paddling clubs. If you are interested in renting a kayak, we provide a listing or rental options at the end of the chapter.

LANIER CANOE AND KAYAK CLUB

Located at the former 1996 Atlanta Olympic Venue in Gainesville, Lanier Canoe and Kayak Club (LCKC) continues to train Olympic-class athletes for competitive water sports on Lake Lanier. Regattas, festivals and other events are sponsored by the LCKC.

The Lanier Canoe and Kayak Club offers lessons and rentals.

- **Address:** 3105 Clarks Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone Number:** (770) 287-7888
- **Website:** <http://lckc.org/>

LAKE LANIER ROWING CLUB

For world-class training, competition and workouts, you can't beat the Lake Lanier Rowing Club (LLRC) at Clarks Bridge Park by the Lake Lanier Olympic Park, where the 1996 Olympic Games took place. LLRC has activities and opportunities — from learning to row to national competitions — for novices and experts.

- **Address:** 3105 Clarks Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 287 0077
- **Website:** <http://lakelanierrowing.org>

KAYAK FISHING

There's a great online forum for kayak fishing on Lake Lanier at <http://lanierkayakfishing.proboards.com>. The site is maintained by the Lanier Kayak Fishing Enthusiasts, who are dedicated to promoting the enjoyment of kayak fishing on Lake Lanier and the surrounding watershed. Their club and message board are free.

CANOE AND KAYAK RENTALS

Energy Watersports

For active fun on the open water and a close-up view of the incredible scenery at Lake Lanier, try kayaking, paddle-boarding, and wakeboarding. Beginners can receive instruction from the skilled professionals and groups can enjoy the thrill of kayaking expeditions and more.

Information for Energy Watersports:

- **Address:** Land Shark Landing at Margaritaville at Lanier Islands, 7650 Lanier Islands Parkway, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (678) 300-0018
- **Website:** <https://www.lanierislands.com/margaritaville/attractions/landshark-landing>

The Lanier Canoe and Kayak Club

The Lanier Canoe and Kayak Club rents out canoes, kayaks, SUPs (Stand Up Paddle-Boards) and paddle boats on Saturdays and Sundays, seasonally. Rent any of these watercraft for one or two hours:

- Single kayaks, canoes and SUPs
- Double kayaks
- Stand Up Paddle-Boards (SUPs)
- Paddle boats

Here is information for the Lanier Canoe and Kayak Club:

- **Address:** 3105 Clarks Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 287-7888
- **Website:** <http://www.lckc.org/>

Don Carter State Park

Don Carter has kayaks available to rent year-round and SUPs (Stand Up Paddle-Boards) available seasonally. Make your reservation at the park's Visitors Center. Kayaks and SUPs are kept at the beach for easy launching.

- **Address:** 5000 N. Browning Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA, 30506
- **Phone:** (800) 864-7275
- **Operated by:** Georgia State Parks and Recreation



Wake-surfing on Lake Lanier, photograph by Robert Sutherland

8

Water Skiing, Wakeboarding and Paddleboarding on Lake Lanier

Although some of us prefer watersports that use paddles or oars, others can't have a lake vacation without "having a go" at being pulled by a mighty speed boat, jumping, flipping and dare-deviling amongst the motorcrafts' wakes.

You will have an easy time finding a spot on Lanier to explore via skis or boards. There are loads of nice tranquil coves with calm water.

Regardless of what kind of watersport you find enthralling, Lake Lanier is a great lake for those who are new and old to water skiing, wakeboarding and paddleboarding.

WATER SKIING AND WAKEBOARDING ON LAKE LANIER

Water skiing on Lake Lanier can be fun ... and frightening. Let's face it, Lake Lanier is a very busy lake. On the weekends it can be crazy to even try to water ski. Regardless of the day of the week, the best time to head out on the lake is between sunrise and 9:00 AM. You may see some fishermen, but even in the southern parts, near Young Deer Park, behind Bald Ridge Park or Shoal Creek Park, you can find calm water.

According to the Georgia State Department of Natural Resources, it's illegal for a boat or Personal Watercraft to pull a water skier or wake boarder within 100 feet of a non-moving boat, dock, bridge, person in the water, shoreline adjacent to a residence, swimming beach, marina, or other public use area.

This law will limit you because the lake is covered in boats who don't observe the rules. Boaters and jet skiers will cross your wake behind the skier, so boat drivers need to be aware at all times.

It's also difficult to ski in the narrow parts of the lake, such as up the Chestatee River, especially on the weekends. Your best bet is to find a cove and stay there.

Water skiing on Lake Lanier is legal with just a driver in the boat, unlike in some states (such as Wisconsin). Your boat must have a wide-angle rearview mirror. If you don't have a mirror, by law, you will need an observer in addition to the driver.

The lake is diligently patrolled by law enforcement officers in the summer, so make sure you have the proper number of life jackets and equipment in the boat. Also, make sure that your boat registration is current and you have proof of registration on board.

SUP (STAND UP PADDLEBOARDING) ON LAKE LANIER

We've been seeing more and more Stand Up Paddle-Boarders out on the lake each year. There's no denying that standing up and paddling yourself around on the lake is not only a great way to get some exercise, it's a wonderful way to pass an hour or two away from your kids, desk or stress. If you want to give it a try while here, there are a number places on the lake where you can rent SUPs.

The Lanier Canoe and Kayak Club

The Lanier Canoe and Kayak Club has a limited amount of SUPs that they rent out seasonally on Saturdays and Sundays. SUPs rent for one hour or two hours. Visit <http://www.lckc.org> to find out more information.

- **Address:** 3105 Clarks Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 287-7888

Energy Watersports

For active fun on the open water and a close-up view of the incredible scenery at Lake Lanier, try kayaking, paddle-boarding, and wakeboarding. Beginners can receive instruction from the skilled professionals and groups can enjoy the thrill of kayaking expeditions and more.

Information for Energy Watersports:

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- **Phone:** (678) 300-0018
- **Website:** <https://www.lanierislands.com/margaritaville/attractions/landshark-landing>

Don Carter State Park

Don Carter State Park has SUPs seasonally available. Make your reservation at the park's Visitors Center. Paddleboards are kept at the park's beach. If you call ahead, you might be able to rent SUPs for a group of people, even at other times of the year.

SUPs rent for one hour, for 4 hours or for 8 hours.

- **Address:** 5000 N. Browning Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA, 30506
- **Phone:** (678) 450-7726
- **Operated by:** Georgia State Parks and Recreation



Fishing on Lake Lanier, photograph by Robert Sutherland

9

Fishing and Fishing Guides on Lake Lanier

Lake Lanier is one of America's favorite fishing spots. Finding a spot to launch is never a problem. There is an abundant supply of boat ramps. They're scattered all around the 38,000 acres of our freshwater lake that is filled with hungry fish.

If casting your line from a park or taking a boat out on your own doesn't suit you, Lake Lanier has some awesome Fishing Guides who have made successful careers sharing their passion and knowledge for fishing Lake Lanier. Offering everything from fun family outings to corporate charter trips to trophy trips, there's memorable fishing on Lake Lanier.

We'll begin the chapter with an overview of the services of Lanier's go-to fishing guide, "BIG FISH ON." We also include information about what you might need to know to have a successful day fishing Lake Lanier.

If you are serious about wanting to reel in one of Lake Lanier's Striped Bass, we've got a must read article at the end of the chapter. In this article, Mike of "BIG FISH ON" details everything you need to know about "Down Rod Fishing for Lake Lanier Striped Bass."



*"Big Fish On" Lake Lanier Fishing Charters and Guide,
photograph from "Big Fish On"*

FISHING GUIDES

"BIG FISH ON" Lake Lanier Fishing Guides & Charters is your go-to fishing guide for Lake Lanier fishing.

They are full-time, family oriented, licensed and professional fishing guides, with over 50 years of combined Lake Lanier fishing experience.

They have enjoyed taking people on adventures since 2006. Their family "Fun Striper Guide" trips are perfect for creating wonderful memories! To support family fishing, they do not charge for kids under the age of 16, when accompanied by a parent or grandparent.

Please give BIG FISH ON a chance to "scratch" your family's Lake Lanier fishing itch!

To find out more information, contact "BIG FISH ON":

- **Captain Ken West Phone:** (404) 561-2564
- **Captain Mike Maddalena Phone:** (770) 598-5195
- **Address:** 2040 Foster Drive, Cumming, GA 30040
- **Email:** info@bigfishonguide.com
- **Website:** www.bigfishonguide.com

FISHING LICENSE INFORMATION

If you are older than 16 and younger than 65, you need a fishing license to cast a line into Lake Lanier. You can get a license one of three ways:

- In person, at a license dealer, such as sporting goods outlets, major discount retailers, marinas, bait and tackle shops and hardware stores. Don't forget your proof of residence!
- By telephone: (800) 366-2661

- Online at <http://www.georgiawildlife.com/licenses-permits-passes>

Visit the <http://georgiawildlife.com/licenses-permits-passes> for a detailed listing of the various licenses and fees. You can also contact the DNR Wildlife Resources Division office in Gainesville at (770) 535-5498 or visit their website.

FISH AND TIPS

The most common fish in Lake Lanier include:

- Spotted Bass
- Striped Bass
- Largemouth Bass
- Black Crappie
- Walleye
- Catfish
- Longnose Gar

Visit <http://georgiawildlife.org/Fishing/Lanier> for Georgia Department of Natural Resources “Prospects and Fishing Tips” chart.

Many of the fishing guides on Lake Lanier provide weekly fishing reports. Be sure to check your latest Lake Lanier fishing reports for the most up-to-date tips. Visit <http://bigfishonguide.com/category/lake-lanier-fishing-reports/> to view Lanier Fishing Reports by “BIG FISH ON.”

LAUNCHING YOUR BOAT ON LAKE LANIER

You can launch from one of the many marinas on the lake (for a complete listing, see Chapter 5: Lake Lanier Marinas). All of the marinas have gas available, and some of the marinas have restaurants with lakeside dining.

Lake Lanier is also surrounded by parks with day-use areas (for a complete listing, see Chapter 4: Lake Lanier Parks) with more than 100 free boat ramps.

When lake levels are low, you’ll want to check to see which boat ramps are open, because some close when lake levels dip below a certain level.

- To find out more information about lake levels, <https://lakelanier.com/lake-lanier-water-levels/>.
- To find out how to tell if a boat ramp is open, <https://lakelanier.com/2016/10/list-of-open-boat-ramps-on-lake-lanier/>.



*"Big Fish On" Lake Lanier Fishing Guides & Charters,
photograph from "Big Fish On"*

DOWN ROD FISHING FOR LAKE LANIER STRIPED BASS

BY CAPT. MIKE MADDALENA WITH "BIG FISH ON"

The down rod is one of the most effective and consistent methods of catching freshwater stripers. Day in and day out, throughout the entire year, it is hard to beat catching stripers on a down rod.

A down rod is basically a Carolina rig with a heavy weight and relatively long leader. A standard down rod (if there were such a thing) consists of a line counter reel, a fairly limber 6' to 9' rod, the main line, some type of sinker placed between the main line and the leader. At the end of the leader will be your hook and most importantly — a lively, frisky bait!

Let's cover each component of a down rod rig in more detail.

Your decision of what rod and reel combination to use is primarily based on the size of striper that you are targeting. All reels should have a good drag and a line counter, so that you can get your baits to the strike zone as quickly as possible. For "average" size fish between 5-20 pounds, use a "normal" striper sized line counter reel, spooled with 15 pound mono and a 7' light/medium action rod. You want a softer tip to allow the smaller baits that are used to target this class of fish to have some freedom of movement.

Some entry level equipment would be the Daiwa Accudepth Plus 27LC or Okuma Convector CV-20D reels mounted on fishing rods, such as the Shakespeare UGLY Stick Striper rod model #USCA70 or an Okuma Classic Pro GLT Striper Live Bait rod model # CST-LB-701ML. Again, this is entry level equipment.

As you progress in your angling skills, you might want to upgrade the quality of your gear. A longer rod, such as 8' or 9' is sometime used to cover more water. The additional 2' spread on each side of the boat sometimes makes the difference in getting bit or not.

Another important part of the down rod equation is your rod holders. You need a quality rod holder that is very strong, holds the rod firmly and allows for easy removal of the rod under the heavy

pressure that a hooked striper generates when making a “run.” My favorite rod holders are made by DriftMaster. I prefer the heavy duty “Pro” series models.

Since you are fishing straight down, the reel does NOT need to be “locked” into the holder, simply having the rod in the holder is enough. If your reel is “locked” into the holder, there is a very good chance you will NOT be able to remove it once a fish is on.

The terminal tackle used for down rods can vary. It is basically personal preference.

Regarding swivels, a simple barrel swivel matched to the line class you are using is sufficient. Less expensive barrel swivels work as well as the more expensive crane swivels.

The weight used can run from 1/2 to 4 ounces. If you’re fishing with dissimilar sized weights, the heaviest weights should always go in the front of the boat and the lightest in back. This way, as you move around on the trolling motor, the lines won’t tangle as much.

When you place your lighter weight rigs in the front, they will kick back into the more vertical hanging, heavier rigs in the back. Using the light weights in the back allows you to cover a wider variety of depths. As you speed up and slow down on the trolling motor, they will rise and fall vertically in the water column.

My standard down rod weight is a 2 oz. egg sinker. There are some variations available in the weights you use, for example: egg sinkers with built swivels at both ends; long slender pencil weights with swivels on both ends; egg sinkers that are painted red or black (to reduce their visibility); or, “invisible” eggs sinkers made of glass.

I personally like a normal egg sinker, that has been “aged” in the boat for a while. Having the sinkers banging and rolling around in your tackle container will get the shine off of them. I don’t like a brand new shiny sinker. Other very successful Lake Lanier Striper Guides like the brightest, shiniest sinkers they can find and actually “buff” them to make them as bright as possible.

This difference in sinkers helps to point out a very important part of successfully fishing for stripers: confidence. When you have confidence in your equipment and methods of how you are fishing, you WILL be more successful.

Your leader size should be the same size or larger than your main line. Some people recommend a lighter leader, so that you lose less terminal tackle when you get your rig hung up in something. I would rather lose my terminal tackle than a good fish.

Since the leader is so much shorter than the main line, it has much less stretch and, therefore, will break before your main line. The leader material should be fluorocarbon. Fluorocarbon is typically available as both leader material and main line. For most brands you want the specific “leader” formulation. Leader length is typically 5 to 7 feet.

Your leader is one area where experimentation is very important. If you are marking fish and not getting bit, down-size your leader to a smaller size. Changing to a longer or shorter leader will often trigger a bite.

Hook size is determined solely on the size of bait you are using. Match the hook to your bait and do NOT overpower your bait with a hook that's too large.

If you are a "set it and forget" type of angler, circle hooks are great. The fish will hook themselves when they take the bait and make their run. If you are more of a hands-on angler who likes to hold the rod in your hands and set the hook, I recommend an octopus hook. As always, you want a sharp hook that is strong. Always remember to wet your knots when tightening them down, this is very important. I personally like a palomar knot.

Obtaining and caring for live bait is a whole subject of its own. I am just going to say you HAVE to have the LIVELIEST bait possible. Your bait is THE most important part of the puzzle when striper fishing. A bait that is alive is NOT the same as a lively bait. The better your bait, the better you will do. For smaller baits, check them fairly often. They will get bit and killed or taken while you're not looking. Larger baits will be making the rod tip bounce, so you should easily be able to tell if they're okay or not.

Your sonar and chart plotters are integral parts of being successful. Do NOT skimp on this part of your fishing gear. Always get the best unit that you can afford. With a modern unit, you can "watch" your down rod, see fish coming up off the bottom or out of the trees, etc.

Time of the year can help determine the depth to start searching for fishing. During the hot summer months, fish will be in the lower third of the lake and be 30' down or deeper. Between the end of November and mid-May, fish can be anywhere in the water column.

Here are some various down rod fishing tips:

- When fishing in the cooler months and in deeper water, when fish can spread throughout the water, column stagger your baits to determine what depth the fish are most active. For example, on Lake Lanier in the summer time the thermocline might be at 30' and you are marking fish from 40' to 80'.
- Place your rods at 35, 45, 55, 65 and 75 feet. Having the large spread along with longer 8' leaders allows you to cover as much water vertically as possible.
- The deeper you are fishing, the more you can tighten down your drag because you have plenty of stretch available in your main line. Tightening down your drag is especially helpful when fishing near timber. Just remember to back it off a bit when a hooked fish gets close to the boat.
- When fishing baits 12' to 25' below the boat, you want a looser drag, as you don't have as much stretch available.
- Always place your baits above the fish you are marking, stripers suspended in the water column look and feed upward.
- If you are marking fish and you're not getting bit, drop down the bait 15-20' below the fish and quickly reel your baits up through the fish. This will often trigger a bite. This technique is called power reeling.
- Sometimes banging on the bottom of the boat with 2x4 or broom handle will "call" the fish to the boat. Stripers are curious by nature and will come to investigate. I prefer to play loud ROCK &

ROLL to draw them in. Other variations on this technique are jumping in the water for a quick dip during the summer and leaving your outboard running.

- When fishing in shallower water, I keep the rod closest to me on the bottom, bouncing along, pulling it up quickly if I see a tree or other obstruction. Often, only the bait that is right on the bottom is the one getting bit.
- If the fish are hitting softly, it helps to have everyone hold a rod and set the hook on them manually, rather than letting them set the hook themselves using the rod holder. Just hold on tightly in case a big fish makes a strong hit.
- It never hurts to try different things when you are marking fish and NOT getting bit.



Designated Swim Area at Don Carter State Park, photograph by Robert Sutherland

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Swimming on Lake Lanier

A refreshing swim in the lake is a great way to complete your day on Lake Lanier. Many of the designated swim areas have inviting beaches. The parks that host them offer various amenities, including picnic pavilions, playgrounds, barbecues and bathrooms. You can easily pass a whole day swimming, picnicking and playing at Lake Lanier's parks.

In addition to these designated swim areas, you certainly don't want to miss Margaritaville at Lanier Islands' beach and waterpark, in Buford on the southern end of the lake. Another option for swimming off the lake is Francis Meadows Aquatic Center. This large aquatic center is located in Gainesville.

DESIGNATED SWIM AREAS AROUND LAKE LANIER

The US Army Corps of Engineers operates 20 designated swim areas around the 38,000 acres of Lake Lanier. You'll find imported white-sand beaches at some and pavilions, barbecue grills and playgrounds at most.

In addition to the Corps swim areas, there's also a beautiful white-sand beach and designated swim area (with a stunning view) at Don Carter State Park.

All swim areas are "swim at your own risk." There are no lifeguards on duty. Swimmers are encouraged to swim at designated swim areas only.

Corps campgrounds with designated swim areas include:

- Old Federal Campground
- Duckett Mill Campground
- Bald Ridge Creek Campground
- Sawnee Campground

Corps day-use parks with designated swim areas include:

- Bolding Mill Park
- Buford Dam Park
- Burton Mill Park
- Duckett Mill Park
- Keith Bridge Park
- Lanier Park
- Little Hall Park
- Long Hollow Park
- Mary Alice Park
- Old Federal Park
- River Forks Park
- Shoal Creek Park
- Toto Creek Park
- Van Pugh Park
- Warhill Park
- West Bank Park
- Young Deer Park

Georgia state parks with designated swim areas include:

- Don Carter State Park

SWIMMING OPTIONS AT LANIER ISLANDS

Margaritaville at Lanier Islands Waterpark

A family favorite is Margaritaville at Lanier Islands in Buford. At the Waterpark visitors enjoy the South's largest wave pool, as well as the rapids of Raging River, and the drops of the Triple Threat & Intimidator.

Paradise Beach is the home of the 5-story spectacular screen, Bucky's Fun Zone (for the little ones), and CAT 4 is the only water slide in Georgia that ends in the Lake! The beach has a designated swim area and is always a popular spot during the summer.

Landshark Landing is THE spot on Lake Lanier for music, entertainment, dining & nightlife! Grab a cool drink from the License to Drink Bar, or grab a bite at LandShark Bar & Grill just steps away from the water.

- **Address:** 7650 Lanier Islands Parkway, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (470) 323-3440
- **Website:** <http://www.lanierislands.com/margaritaville>

Shoal Creek Campground

Margaritaville at Lanier Islands also now operates Shoal Creek Campground, with a designated swim area.

OTHER SWIMMING OPTIONS

Francis Meadows Aquatic Center

Francis Meadows has an outdoor public water park kids love. The amenities include: a splash pad, a zero-depth entry pool with water troughs, a kid pool with aquatic slide and water squirters, a swirl pool and current pool, as well as 3-story high water slides.

There's also an indoor 10-lane competition pool and an indoor 4-lane instructional pool. No outside food is allowed, but there is a snack bar onsite.

For a full listing of prices, hours and amenities, visit their website or give them a call.

- **Address:** 1545 Community Way, Gainesville, GA 30501
- **Phone:** (770) 533-5850
- **Website:** <http://www.gainesville.org/frances-meadows>



Hiking on Lake Lanier, photograph by Robert Sutherland

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Hiking on Lake Lanier

The Corps of Engineers owns the shoreline of Lake Lanier, and they maintain walking trails at several locations. Don Carter State Park and county parks on the lake also provide trails. Guests and locals can also enjoy nine trails at Lanier Islands.

BUFORD DAM HIKING TRAILS

If you are looking for a nice walk, there are two trails at the south end of the lake where you'll have wonderful views of the Buford Dam.

- **Buford Dam Trail:** 1 mile trail through Lower Pool Park and beneath the Buford Dam. Access the trailhead from Lower Pool Park.
- **Laurel Ridge Trail:** 3.8 mile trail loop that takes you past the Buford Dam, along a part of the Chestatee River and through Buford Dam Park, Lower Overlook Park and Upper Overlook Park.
Note: Sorry, dogs are not permitted on this trail.

If you're planning to visit Buford Dam:

- An easy place to access Laurel Ridge Trail is Lower Overlook Park, which doesn't charge for parking.

- **Address:** 1060 Buford Dam Road, Buford, GA 30515
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

DON CARTER STATE PARK HIKING TRAILS

Don Carter State Park at the northern end of the lake has 4-miles of hiking trails:

- **Woodland Loop:** 1 mile, paved
- **Terrapin Cove Trail:** 1 mile, natural
- **Overlook Trail:** 1/8 mile, paved
- **Lakeview Loop Trail:** 1/2 mile, paved
- **Huckleberry Trail:** 3/4 mile, natural

Don Carter State Park:

- **Address:** 5000 N. Browning Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA, 30506
- **Phone:** (678) 450-7726
- **Operated by:** Georgia State Parks and Recreation

LANIER ISLANDS HIKING TRAILS

Lanier Islands has multiple hiking and walking trails on their Buford property. Follow the links below to find out more information about the trails at Lanier Islands.

- Visit <http://www.lanierislands.com/activities/lake-lanier-hiking-trails> for trails at Lanier Islands

If you're planning to visit Lanier Islands, these details will help:

- **Address:** 7000 Lanier Islands Parkway, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (770) 945-8787
- **Website:** <http://www.lanierislands.com/>

OTHER TRAILS AROUND THE LAKE

Many of the parks around the lake have walking trails that border the lake. Two of these include Little Ridge Park and Laurel Park.

Little Ridge Park has a one-mile trail around the park, offering views of the water and a number of different opportunities to observe the wildlife.

- **Address:** 3295 Lanier Beach South Road, Cumming, GA, 30041
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

There is also a 1-mile paved, concrete path loop at Laurel Park in Gainesville, where on a nice day you'll find many locals walking and jogging the loop.

- **Address:** 3100 Old Cleveland Highway, Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 535-8280
- **Operated by:** Hall County, Georgia



Legacy Golf Course Lake Lanier, photograph LanierIslands.com

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Golfing on Lake Lanier

Enjoy a round of 18 holes in the beautiful setting of Lake Lanier. In this section, we list the public courses in the Lake Lanier vicinity.

Lanier Islands Legacy Golf Course, Lanier Golf Club and Chicopee Woods Golf Course are public courses. Follow the links below for more information or to book a tee time. Though only members can book a tee time for Chestatee Golf Club in Dawsonville, it has a practice range open to non-members.



Legacy Golf Course Lake Lanier, photograph LanierIslands.com

LANIER ISLANDS LEGACY GOLF COURSE

This is a public club located within Lanier Islands in Buford.

- **Address:** Lanier Islands, 7000 Lanier Islands Parkway, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (770) 945-8787
- **Website:** <http://www.lanierislands.com/activities/golf>

LANIER GOLF CLUB

This club in Cumming is open to the public and offers semi-private memberships. They have a driving range open to the public as well.

- **Address:** 2080 Buford Dam Rd, Cumming, GA 30041
- **Phone:** (770) 887-6114
- **Website:** <http://www.laniergolfclub.com/>

CHICOPEE WOODS GOLF COURSE

This course is a public pay course in the foothills of the North Georgia Mountains in Gainesville. There are 27 holes, which are divided into 3 nines.

- **Address:** 2515 Atlanta Highway, Gainesville, GA. 30504
- **Phone:** (770) 534-7322
- **Website:** <http://www.chicopeewoodsgolfcourse.com/>

CHESTATEE GOLF CLUB

This club in Dawsonville is semi-private, with a practice range open to non-members.

- **Address:** 777 Dogwood Way, Dawsonville, GA 30534

- **Phone:** (706) 216-7336
- **Website:** <http://www.chestateegolfclub.com/>



Zipline OVER Lake Lanier at Margaritaville at Lanier Islands Water Park

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Exciting Other Activities on Lake Lanier

We've detailed many of the most popular Lake Lanier activities in preceding chapters. In this chapter, we'll provide a listing of some of the other thrilling activities you might like to try during your visit to Lake Lanier. How does heading up in the sky for a bird's eye view of the lake sound? Or, what about ziplining OVER Lake Lanier?

AQUACYCLE RENTALS

Don Carter State Park has aquacycles seasonally available. Make your reservation at the Visitor's Center inside the park. Aquacycles are kept at the park's beach. Rentals are for 30 minutes or for 1 hour.

- **Address:** 5000 N. Browning Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA, 30506
- **Phone:** (678) 450-7726
- **Operated by:** Georgia State Parks and Recreation

BIPLANE RIDES

Biplane Rides Over Atlanta offers a one-hour Lake Lanier tour. Prices, which are subject to change, are \$375 for one person and \$435 for two people.

- **Address:** 2000 Airport Road Suite 106, Atlanta, Georgia 30341
- **Phone:** (770) 457-5757
- **Website:** <https://biplaneridesoveratlanta.com/flights.html>

HOT AIR BALLOON RIDES

Balloons Over Georgia offers scenic Hot Air Balloon Rides in the Lake Lanier area. Prices start at \$250, subject to change.

- **Phone:** (770) 380-3951
- **Website:** <http://balloonsovergeorgia.com>

HUNTING ON LAKE LANIER

Hunting is very restricted around Lake Lanier. However, here is what's permitted:

Canada goose and teal hunting is allowed on Lake Lanier:

- The season for Lake Lanier is generally in September
- If you have the correct permit, the hunting of these waterfowl is allowed on the lake. There are restricted areas though. You may not hunt these waterfowl:
 - Within 1000 feet of any dock, house, bridge, road, boat ramp, marina etc.
 - In Bald Ridge Creek, Shoal Creek and any area south of Lake Lanier Islands.

During November and December some hunting of deer and feral hogs is allowed on islands in the lake.

You need a license to hunt on Lake Lanier. In order to get a hunting license, those ages 16 and older will need to complete a hunting education course. Residents may sign up for online or classroom courses at gohuntgeorgia.com or by calling 1-800-366-2661.

Once you have taken the hunting education course, you can get a license one of three ways:

- In person at a license dealer (don't forget your proof of residence)
- By telephone: (800) 366-2661
- Online at <http://georgiawildlife.dnr.state.ga.us/>

Visit the <http://georgiawildlife.com/licenses-permits-passes> for more information and a detailed listing of the various licenses and fees. You can also contact the DNR Wildlife Resources Division office in Gainesville at (770) 535-5498 or visit <http://georgiawildlife.com/>.

ZIPLINING

While visiting the Water Park at Margaritaville at Lanier Islands, enjoy flying across the lake on the Thunderbolt Triple Zip!

- **Address:** 7650 Lanier Islands Parkway, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (470) 323-3440
- **Website:** <https://www.lanierislands.com/margaritaville>



LandShark Bar and Grill, photograph from LanierIslands.com

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Restaurants on Lake Lanier

Taking a break to dine and enjoy a lakeside restaurant will surely be worth the time spent. You'll love our dining establishments on Lake Lanier.

Some of the restaurants on the lake are open year-round, others are seasonal. Some are open on weekends only during the off season. All are accessible by car, but many are located at marinas and are accessible via boat as well.

Many of these places have live entertainment during the summer season. Read on to find out more about your dining options for your stay at Lake Lanier.

LAKE LANIER RESTAURANTS IN BUFORD, GEORGIA

Big Creek Tavern is accessible via boat or car and is open year-round. Their specialties include Prime Angus Beef and fresh seafood. The menu also includes sandwiches, salads, and various other American favorites. Beer and wine are available, as well as billiards and video games.

- **Address:** 3050 Big Creek Road, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (678) 482-1662
- **Website:** <http://places.singleplatform.com/big-creek-tavern/menu>

Lanier Islands has three restaurants and a lobby bar open year-round, **Sidney's Restaurant, BullFrog's Bar & Grille** and **Landshark Bar & Grill at Margaritaville at Lanier Islands**.

Sidney's Restaurant offers a fine-dining experience with a view overlooking Lake Sidney Lanier, open for breakfast and dinner. For more information about Sidney's Restaurant, <http://www.lanierislands.com/dining/sidneys>.

BullFrog's Bar & Grille is a southern gastropub with classic comfort food and a full bar. Diners have the choice of sitting inside under flickering candlelight and flat-screen TVs or poolside under the stars by the fire pit. For more information about BullFrog's Bar and Grille, <https://www.lanierislands.com/dining/bullfrogs>.

Landshark Bar & Grill at Margaritaville at Lanier Islands is a great place to relax and have fun. It's open to the lake and covered to provide shelter from the sun and rain. The menu includes burgers, street tacos, crispy fried shrimp, crisp salads, and your favorite brews and boat drinks. For more information about Landshark Bar & Grill at Margaritaville at Lanier Islands, <https://www.lanierislands.landsharkbarandgrill.com>.

Legacy Lodge Lobby Bar is a full service walk-up bar located on the main level of the hotel. They boast a menu of seasonal cocktails, fine wine selections, and even beer options. Take your hand-poured cocktail to sit by the lobby fireplace or choose to sit inside the bar with television view seating. See more at www.lanierislands.com/dining.

Seasonal options at Margaritaville at Lanier Islands include **Paradise Cantina, Frank and Lola's Pizza to Go, License to Chill Bar, L2C Grill**, and **Feeding Frenzy and Tiki Hut**. For more information about these Chill Zone restaurants and bars, <https://www.lanierislands.com/margaritaville/dining>.

- **Address:** **Lanier Islands**, 7000 Lanier Islands Parkway, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (770) 945-8787
- **Website:** <http://lanierislands.com>

- **Address:** **Margaritaville at Lanier Islands** 7650 Lanier Islands Parkway, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (470) 323-3440

- **Website:** <http://www.lanierislands.com/margaritaville>

Twisted Oar Restaurant at Holiday Marina is open year-round. The menu features fresh seafood, savory chicken and steak. They've got inside and outside dining, 10 flat-screen TVs and a full-bar with over 20 beers on draft.

- **Address:** 6900 Lanier Islands Parkway, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (678) 714-7572

LAKE LANIER RESTAURANTS IN FLOWERY BRANCH, GEORGIA

Fish Tales Lakeside Grill at Hideaway Marina offers lakeside dining and is open daily March through October. Enjoy classic seafood items, steak and salads. Favorite menu items are the grouper sandwich, fish tacos and fried grouper fingers. It's a family-friendly restaurant, with a sandbox for the kids, full bar for the adults and live music for all.

- **Address:** 6330 Mitchell Street, Flowery Branch, GA 30542
- **Phone:** (770) 967-3775
- **Website:** <http://fishtaleslakelanier.com>

Pig Tales on Lake Lanier at Aqualand Marina is open daily in the spring, summer and fall. Menu favorites include the Pig Tales burger, pork nachos and their ultimate grilled cheese sandwich. It's family-friendly and has a full bar.

- **Address:** 6800 Lights Ferry Road, Flowery Branch, GA 30542
- **Phone:** (678) 828-7676
- **Website:** <http://pigtalislakelanier.com>

LAKE LANIER RESTAURANTS IN GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA

Pelican Pete's Bar and Grill is located at Port Royale Marina in Gainesville and is open in-season only. They offer a load of American pub fare options and a full bar. There's loads of fun to be had at Pelican Pete's Bar and Grill.

- **Address:** 8800 Port Royale Drive, Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone:** (770) 887-5715
- **Website:** <http://www.bestinboating.com/>

Skogies at Gainesville Marina is open seasonally and offers casual dining with live music on some weekends. Their delicious specialties include grouper sandwiches, slow-smoked pork BBQ, crab cakes and southern fried green tomatoes. Call ahead and they will pick you up at the dock or deliver food to your slip.

- **Address:** 2151 Dawsonville Hwy, Gainesville, GA 30501

- **Phone:** (678) 450-1310
- **Website:** <http://skogies.net>



Wave Pool at Margaritaville at Lanier Islands, photograph from LanierIslands.com

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Lake Lanier Attractions

One thing is certain: you cannot run out of fun things to do to keep everyone happy on your vacation to Lake Lanier.

In this chapter, we will introduce Lake Lanier's most popular attractions. We'll cover the amenities of Margaritaville at Lanier Islands, which is by far the best waterpark in Georgia — maybe even the best in the South.

There is no better way to get a feel for the inception of Lake Lanier than by visiting the Buford Dam. We'll include information about the walking trails near Buford Dam and where you can go to get the best views.

Or, perhaps when visiting Lake Lanier, you might like to launch a kayak from Lake Lanier Olympic Park and paddle around where the rowing events for the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games took place.

Lake Lanier's two newest attractions in Gainesville, Don Carter State Park and the Atlanta Botanical



*Margaritaville at Lanier Islands, photograph from
LanierIslands.com*

Garden – Gainesville offer numerous points of interest, as well as many great educational events and programs.

After checking out Don Carter State Park and the Atlanta Botanical Garden – Gainesville, an evening meal at one of Main Street Gainesville’s fantastic restaurants will make any Lake Lanier day complete.

Read on to find out more about each of these great Lake Lanier attractions.

MARGARITAVILLE AT LANIER ISLANDS

Margaritaville at Lanier Islands is the ultimate lakeside paradise where you can escape the everyday. Here, a diverse, entertainment complex awaits you – refreshed with the atmosphere of Margaritaville. You’ll find your favorite thrills and chills at the Water Park, on its beaches, on the water or while enjoying our lakefront recreation.

Margaritaville at Lanier Islands has restaurants, tiki bars, and walk-up food and drink concessions – all re-imagined putting you in that Margaritaville state of mind. The marina, docks, boat rentals, sunset cruises, yacht charters and watersports are all now part of the Margaritaville at Lanier Islands experience.

Bands and entertainment are provided all summer long. Check the events calendar at <https://www.lanierislands.com/margaritaville/events/event-calendar> for details.

The Shoal Creek campgrounds, as well as a luxury RV Resort, are part of Margaritaville at Lanier Islands. A Margaritaville Tram will transport you within this lakefront paradise, as you move between the campgrounds, lakefront attractions and the Legacy Lodge at Lanier Islands. Golf and spa services are also available.

Water Park Attractions

Whether you are a thrill-seeking, water-sliding, zip-lining adventurer or just visiting for a day of sun, swimming and relaxation, Margaritaville at Lanier Islands has something for everyone. Hold on tight to your tube for the twists and turns of Typhoon & Twister, or dare to be different with the steep drops of Triple Threat and Intimidator. Catch a wave on the rapids of Raging River or float on the

wake in Wild Waves wave pool. Blackout & Splash Down are sure to thrill, or race a friend down the Double Down side-by-side slides.

The Water Park has numerous attractions for kids and adults, including:

- Family Fun Zone, featuring Wiggle Waves — the junior version of their Wild Waves wave pool — mini water slides that bring big-kid thrills, fun sprinkler features, and a sandy beach perfect for building sandcastles in paradise.
- Thrilling water slides, consisting of Blackout, Twister, Double Down, Splash Down, CAT 4, Intimidator, Triple Threat, Typhoon
- Wild Waves Wave Pool, Georgia's largest wave pool
- Raging River, replicating a ride down the rapids
- Thunderbolt Triple Zip, taking you soaring over Paradise Beach suspended 50' in the air

Paradise Beach

In the center of the Family Fun Park, thrilling slides and rides and the Chill Zone, Paradise Beach is the ultimate place for families to relax and enjoy life at the lake. You'll enjoy good fun, delicious beach food, ice cream treats for the kids, frozen concoctions for Mom, ice-cold beer for Dad and music videos on a five-story outdoor screen. Rent an umbrella for shade or a cabana for added protection. Arrive by boat or car and stay the weekend!

LandShark Landing

With the new signature LandShark Bar & Grill, open year-round, the beach at the landing, live entertainment stage, new beachfront tiki bar, boat docks, beach volleyball, and fire pits – this is THE spot to live the Margaritaville lifestyle! Ideally set at the opposite end of the lake shore from Paradise Beach and the Family Fun Park, with easy access to the Chill Zone restaurants, LandShark Landing is Lake Lanier's new adult playground!

- **Address:** 7650 Lanier Islands Pkwy, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (470) 323-3440
- **Email:** margaritaville@islandsentertainment.com
- **Website:** <https://www.lanierislands.com/margaritaville/>

BUFORD DAM

The Buford Dam is the reason Lake Lanier exists. It was completed in 1956 to channel the water of the Chattahoochee and Chestatee Rivers into a great reservoir, which was named Lake Lanier. If you'd like to see Buford Dam, head to Buford Dam Park, Lower Overlook Park, or West Bank Park for a great view of the dam.

Lower Pool Park is located directly behind Buford Dam and is a popular park with canoe enthusiasts and kayakers who launch on the Chattahoochee. It's also a popular spot for fishermen.

We provide the address and phone numbers for these parks below. For more information about park user fees, visit <http://www.sam.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Recreation/Lake-Sidney-Lanier/Recreation/Day-Use/>.

Buford Dam Park

- **Address:** 1050 Buford Dam Road, Buford, GA 30518
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Lower Overlook Park

- **Address:** 1060 Buford Dam Road, Buford, GA 30515
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

Lower Pool Park

- **Address:** Little Mill Road, Cumming, GA 30041
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

West Bank Park

- **Address:** West Bank Park, Cumming, GA 30041
- **Phone:** (770) 945-9531
- **Operated by:** US Army Corps of Engineers

You'll be able to view the Dam from Laurel Ridge Trail and Buford Dam Trail. Laurel Ridge Trail is a loop with great views of Buford Dam.

- **Buford Dam Trail:** 1 mile trail through Lower Pool Park and below the Dam. Find the trailhead from Lower Pool Park.
- **Laurel Ridge Trail:** 3.8 mile trail loop that takes you past the Buford Dam and a part of the Chestatee River and through Buford Dam Park, Lower Overlook Park and Upper Overlook Park.
Note: Unfortunately dogs are not permitted on this trail.

An easy place to access this trail is Lower Overlook Park, which doesn't charge for parking.

DON CARTER STATE PARK

Don Carter State Park in Gainesville officially opened in 2013 and is Lanier's only state park. If you don't have a Georgia State Park Annual Pass, there is a \$5 parking fee.

This state park is situated on 1,316 acres and offers the following amenities:

- 8 cottages
- 44 RV camp sites
- 12 primitive walk-in tent camp sites
- 4 picnic shelters
- 10.4 miles of shoreline
- hiking trails
- white-sanded beach
- playgrounds
- boat ramps
- seasonal kayak, Stand Up Paddle-board and Aquacycle rentals
- educational hikes and events throughout the year

Hiking Trails at Don Carter State Park

- Woodland Loop: 1 mile, paved
- Terrapin Cove Trail: 1 mile, natural
- Overlook Trail: 1/8 mile, paved
- Lakeview Loop Trail: 1/2 mile, paved
- Huckleberry Trail: 3/4 mile, natural

Don Carter State Park has kayaks available to rent year-round and SUP (Stand Up Paddle-Boards) and Aquacycles available seasonally. Make your reservation at the park's Visitors Center. Kayaks and SUPs are kept at the beach for easy launching.

- Kayaks rent for 4 hours or 8 hours.
- SUPs rent by the hour, or for 4 or 8 hour durations.
- Aquacycles rent for 30 minutes or for 1 hour.

Contact Information for Don Carter State Park

- **Address:** 5000 N. Browning Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30506
- **Phone:** 678-450-7726
- **Website:** <http://www.gastateparks.org/DonCarter>

LAKE LANIER OLYMPIC PARK

Lake Lanier Olympic Park in Gainesville sits on the site where the rowing events for the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games took place.

The park was rebranded in 2016 and includes a beach and picnic area, the Olympic Tower, the Boat

House and Clarks Bridge Park. Lake Lanier Olympic Park continues to host visitors from all over the world for races, regattas and training.

It is also home to the Lanier Canoe and Kayak Club and the Lake Lanier Rowing Club.

- **Address:** 3105 Clarks Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30506

ATLANTA BOTANICAL GARDEN, GAINESVILLE

Atlanta Botanical Garden, Gainesville opened in 2015. It's a satellite garden to the 30-acre Atlanta Botanical Garden, which is located adjacent to Piedmont Park in midtown Atlanta.

The Gainesville garden property sits on 168 acres that were donated by Charles and Lessie Smithgall. This second location of the Atlanta Botanical Garden features beautiful outdoor gardens, walking trails, a visitor center, a model train garden and an amphitheater.

Check out their website for upcoming exhibitions, programs (family and adult) and events. Note: They are closed on Mondays.

- **Address:** 1911 Sweetbay Drive, Gainesville, GA 30501
- **Phone:** (404) 888-4760
- **Website:** <http://atlantabg.org/visit/gainesville>

MAIN STREET GAINESVILLE

Main Street Gainesville is a vibrant downtown situated very close to the shores of northern Lake Lanier. If you are looking for a break from the lake, Main Street Gainesville is an excellent choice for grabbing a cup of coffee or a bite to eat. The unusual restaurants and shopping make this a delightful location to while away your time off the lake.

Visit <http://www.gainesville.org/main-street-gainesville> for more information about Main Street Gainesville, Downtown Shopping and Downtown Dining.

Lake Lanier Realtors

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN LAKE LANIER PROPERTY?

If so, we have the answer for you: Bev Knight and The Good Life Group, Keller Williams Lanier Partners, has been #1 on Lake Lanier in cumulative sales since 2012. In addition, for eight years they have been the top group in the KWLP Franchise and have been recognized with the KW International Millionaire Real Estate Agent award the past three years. They are lake specialists, luxury certified, and staffed with top-notch professionals who care about their clients. As experts in their field, they keep up with trends, pricing, and regulations regarding the lake. Having built extensive relationships with many lake property owners, they have inside knowledge about potential properties not officially on the market. This private information offers more options to consider as they find the perfect piece of paradise for their clients. Finally, they understand it takes a unique skill set and a tremendous amount of commitment to help buyers and sellers. Their team of specialists appreciates the unique needs of each client and dedicates their full attention and exclusive resources to making “the good life” attainable.



BEV KNIGHT AND THE GOOD LIFE GROUP CONTACT INFORMATION

- Bev – Lead Agent, KW International Millionaire Real Estate Agent (678) 860-0990, Bev@HousesOnLanier.net

- Darlene – Senior Agent, Certified Stager, Luxury Specialist (678) 300-1275
- Angie – Senior Agent, Luxury Specialist, Senior Real Estate Specialist (404) 368-8880
- Cynthia – Operations Manager, Real Estate Agent (865) 973-8832
- Taylor – Assistant Marketing Coordinator (770) 712-5587
- **Websites:** HousesOnLanier.net, GoodLifeGroupRE.com, LakeHomesGA.com



...when you're ready for *the good life!*

Keller Williams Lanier Partners

631 Dawsonville Hwy, Gainesville, GA 30501

KW Office (770) 503-7070

Bev's Office (770) 536-4416

ARE YOU SEARCHING FOR LAKE LANIER PROPERTY?

Many people use sites like Zillow and Realtor.com to search for lake homes. The problem is that they don't let you search for lake-only homes.



The Good Life Group is with Keller Williams Lanier Partners.

Bev's site is set up not only to showcase her lake listings, but also to allow users to utilize a general lake home search. This feature pulls in all of the listings that are designated in the FMLS listing service as a Lake Lanier property, regardless of the agent.

You do not have to sign up to use this search. No one will harass you. It is a free service.

To utilize the lake-only search, visit <http://HousesOnLanier.net>. Click the Search option to perform your lake search, or click "Properties" to see The Good Life Group listings.

There are also several articles and links that are quite useful to Lake Lanier enthusiasts.

TESTIMONIALS

Dear Bev: Isa and I can't thank you enough for finding the perfect lake house for our family – and for shepherding the process so professionally. You were a pleasure to work with, and we appreciate the problem-solving skills you brought to the table without ever compromising your integrity. Thanks, too, for referring us to other honest folks who are helping us get situated. We hope this will be our slice of paradise for years to come, but if we ever need to sell, you will be our first call!

~ All the best, Russ Spencer (Fox 5 News Anchor)



The Crimson Moon in Dahlonega, photograph by Robert Sutherland

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Day Trips Around Lake Lanier

Lake Lanier is conveniently located. It's a short drive south to Atlanta and a short drive north to the charming North Georgia towns of Dahlonega and Helen.

There's so much to see and do in the surrounding areas of Lake Lanier. The only problem you'll have if you choose to explore beyond Lake Lanier is that you'll find there's not enough time to enjoy all there is to offer.

During your visit, you could get out for a day to explore some of the sites of Atlanta. You could head Downtown and visit the Georgia Aquarium, CNN and the Coca-Cola Museum. Art enthusiasts might want to check out The High Museum of Art in Midtown, and science lovers may want to visit The Fernbank Science Center in the Druid Hills neighborhood.

If you are more inclined to spend your day in nature, there are a number of great parks, hikes and waterfalls to explore within an hour's drive north of the lake.

A trip to the Georgia Blue Ridge Mountains would not be complete without a stop in the unique Bavarian town of Helen or the charming downtown of Dahlonega.

In this chapter, we'll go over some of these attractions in Lake Lanier's nearby areas. Read on to find out more about some of the great excursions you could have during your stay on Lake Lanier.

ATLANTA

The Lonely Planet named Atlanta in the 10 top US places to travel in 2017, and it's not difficult to see why. There are plenty of things to see and do in Atlanta. The many attributes of the colorful city include its rich history, fantastic arts and culture, and exquisite dining and shopping.

The city is divided into various neighborhoods, each with a distinct flare. The three most popular neighborhoods for tourists to visit are Buckhead, Midtown and Downtown. If you have the opportunity to make it to any of Atlanta's festivals, you won't be disappointed.

Some of the most popular Atlanta sites include:

- Stone Mountain Park
- High Museum of Art
- Children's Museum of Atlanta
- Fernbank Science Center
- Georgia Aquarium
- Margaret Mitchell House & Museum
- Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site
- Atlanta Botanical Garden
- World of Coca-Cola
- Zoo Atlanta
- Atlanta Braves, Falcons & Hawks
- Centennial Olympic Park & Piedmont Park
- Center for Puppetry Arts
- Downtown Shopping & Dining

For more information about Atlanta and its attractions, contact the Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau:

- **Address:** 233 Peachtree Street, NE Suite 1400, Atlanta, GA 30303
- **Phone:** (404) 521-6600
- **Website:** <http://atlanta.net>

DAHLONEGA

Within a short drive north from Dawsonville on the northwest portion of the lake and under an hour's drive from Gainesville, you'll hit the charming and historic town of Dahlonega. Dahlonega lies in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains and was the first site of the US Gold Rush.

Dahlonega has many points of interest and is a popular tourist destination in itself. Visitors flock to Dahlonega for the gorgeous waterfalls and hikes, beautiful mountain vineyards and wineries, and the historic gold mining tours and panning opportunities.

Strolling along Dahlonega's quaint downtown square, you'll find unique shops, great art, and many fabulous restaurants and coffee shops. Live music is easy to find here, and the delicious cuisine of the many restaurants will surely sate your appetite.

At certain times of the year, festivals bring locals and visitors together for some good ole mountain fun. It's certainly a delight to stumble upon a bluegrass music jam session on the historic downtown square during their Bear on the Square Mountain Festival held in April.

For more information about Dahlonega and its attractions, contact the Dahlonega – Lumpkin Chamber & Visitors Bureau.

- **Address:** 13 South Park Street, Dahlonega, GA 30533
- **Phone:** (706) 864-3711
- **Website:** <http://dahlonega.org>

HELEN

This Bavarian town in the northern foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains is a fascinating place to visit. It is situated along the Chattahoochee River and is five miles from Unicoi State Park.

You'll find genuine Bavarian food and lots of unique shops. If your visit falls between mid-September and the end of October, you won't want to miss the beers, brats, bands and Lederhosen of Helen's Oktoberfest.

You'll be surprised by what you find at Helen. With the surrounding mountains and river that runs through it, Helen is a lovely destination. Combined with its Bavarian charm, an excursion to Helen is sure to be a memorable one.

Some of the most popular Helen attractions include:

- Tubing Down the Chattahoochee River
- Habersham Winery
- Smithgall Woods State Park
- Unicoi State Park and Lodge
- Anna Ruby Falls
- Downtown Shopping
- Downtown Dining

For more information about Helen and its attractions, contact the Alpine Helen / White County Convention and Visitors Bureau:

- **Address:** 726 Bruckenstrasse, Helen, GA 30545
- **Phone:** (706) 878-2181
- **Website:** <http://helenga.org>

OTHER HIKES AND FALLS

The Appalachian Trail is one of the most famous hiking trails in the world. The trail runs from Maine in the north of the United States to Georgia in the south. It's 2,190 miles long and the longest hiking-only footpath in the world. Thru-hikers can go northbound, southbound or may choose an alternative path.

The official Georgia starting point is Springer Mountain, about an hour's drive northwest from Dawsonville. Park at the Springer Mountain Parking Area, and you'll see signs for the Trailhead. Follow the white rectangular blazes for the Appalachian Trail.

You can also access the Appalachian Trail from Amicalola Falls State Park, which is located in the Chattahoochee National Forest in Dawsonville. The falls are the tallest in Georgia and a breathtaking site. Amicalola Falls State Park is an easy drive from Lake Lanier.

The Appalachian Trail Approach Trail is 8.5 miles and will take you from Amicalola Falls to the Appalachian Trail at Springer Mountain. To find the Appalachian Trail Approach Trail, look for the trail's blue rectangular blazes behind the visitors center at Amicalola Falls. Be sure to bring your muscles for this strenuous trek.

Follow the links below for more information:

- Appalachian Trail, <http://appalachiantrail.com>
- Springer Mountain, <https://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/conf/recreation/hiking/recarea/?recid=10539&actid=51>
- Amicalola Falls State Park, <http://gastateparks.org/AmicalolaFalls>



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