

Soldiers at
Atlanta's USO
by BILL WARHOP

NASCAR's
Bill Lester
by JONATHAN INGRAM

Emily Giffin's
smart chick lit
by DEBRA HUNTER

Atlanta

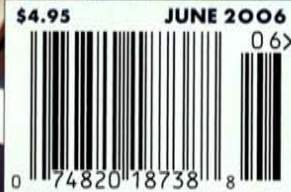
Second Homes

> How to find
your dream
weekend retreat

SUMMER
STYLE
white-hot looks
+ cool finds
PAGE 116

18

beach
lake &
mountain
escapes
close to
Atlanta





Currahee Club

Toccoa, Georgia
888-560-2582
curraheecub.com

✱ On the shores of Lake Hartwell, one of the Southeast's largest lakes, Currahee Club appeals to all ages. A general store will have the fittings of a 100-year-old pharmacy, complete with free ice cream. There will even be an official "director of fun." A community grill between the front and back nine holes of the Jim Fazio golf course offers a place for families and golfers to mingle.

PRICE POINTS: Homesites from \$120,000 to \$500,000. Homes start at \$550,000.

FIRST SALES: 2004

WHAT'S NEARBY: The town of Toccoa, about five miles away, has a revitalized Main Street with



antique shops, dining and an active railway station, plus chain and grocery stores. Scenic Toccoa Falls and Panther Creek Falls are also nearby.

DISTANCE FROM ATLANTA:

About 75 miles

RENTAL POLICY: Short-term rentals are prohibited.

WHY I BOUGHT HERE: "[My wife and I] both grew up on the lake in Minnesota. It's kind of nice to have a lake near Atlanta. We're on the golf course, on top of one of the mountains, with really good views of the lake and mountains."

—Vince Connolly, 48, Alpharetta



The Reserve at Lake Keowee

Sunset, South Carolina
888-217-8884
reserveatlakekeowee.com

✱ This community in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains has a golf course that welcomes families, pools with waterfalls and a Great Lawn that invites impromptu fun. A water taxi will ferry residents across the lake to a water park, which is under construction. Live/work units will host resident artists. More than 400 acres have been set aside as a conservation easement, and money reserved from each sale funds cultural and conservation activities.

PRICE POINTS: Homesites range from \$200,000 to \$1.5 million, with lot sizes from less than an acre to 10 acres.

FIRST SALES: 2000

WHAT'S NEARBY: The Reserve is nine miles from the town of Pickens, where you can find full-service grocery stores. Clemson University is 17 miles away. Furman University offers free summer concerts.

DISTANCE FROM ATLANTA: About 100 miles

RENTAL POLICY: Short-term rentals are allowed, but amenities are restricted to club members.

WHY I BOUGHT HERE: "I'd been looking for a place to create family memories. This is one place that has it all, not just for today, but for the years to come. I can't think of a place that has better amenities."

—Randall Tolbert, 35, Buckhead

The Ridge on Lake Martin

Alexander City, Alabama
866-329-0835
theridgeonlakemartin.com

✱ Lake Martin is a rare find—a lake big enough for boating with water clean enough to drink—surrounded by acres of untouched land. The development has been so carefully controlled that, from a boat, it looks scarcely inhabited. The Ridge maintains parks and trails, a lakefront beach and marina. The Ridge Club, currently under construction, will have a swim/tennis facility and fishing pier. Club membership comes with your property purchase.

PRICE POINTS: Waterfront homesites range from \$350,000 to about \$1 million. Homes range from \$500,000 to more than \$800,000. The Ledges, waterfront townhomes designed by Marietta architect Barry Coyle, start at \$650,000.

FIRST SALES: 2005

WHAT'S NEARBY: Jazz Fest, beach concerts and other events are held at a nearby lakefront amphitheater. Homeowners have access to Willow Point, a neighboring golf course. Birmingham and Montgomery are about an hour's drive away.



DISTANCE FROM ATLANTA:

About 140 miles

RENTAL POLICY: Short-term rentals are prohibited.

WHY I BOUGHT HERE: "A big decision [at Lake Martin] is whose dock you're going to go swimming from or where you're going to have a cocktail at five. It's just a hospitable, laid-back lifestyle."

—Stan Benecki, mid-40s, Atlanta

Bear Lake Reserve

Tuckasegee, North Carolina
877-232-7553
bearlakereserve.com

✱ The 2,100 acres of Bear Lake Reserve wrap around Bear Creek Lake and are bordered on two sides by national forests. Set in the Blue Ridge Mountains, the elevation rises to 3,500 feet. Waterfalls and trout-filled mountain streams run through the property. Amenities include a Nicklaus-designed nine-hole golf course, an outdoor amphitheater and swimming pools.

PRICE POINTS: Homesites range from \$155,000 to \$675,000. Craftsman-style cottages start in the low \$500,000s.

FIRST SALES: 2003

WHAT'S NEARBY: Panthertown Valley—with its granite cliffs, Appalachian bogs and waterfalls—offers excellent hiking and mountain biking about 25 miles away. The development is about 15 miles from Cullowhee, home of Western Carolina University, and about 20 miles from Cashiers.

DISTANCE FROM ATLANTA:

About 165 miles

RENTAL POLICY: Short-term rentals are allowed through onsite or other management companies.

WHY I BOUGHT HERE: "The landscape up there is so breathtaking and peaceful. When we have kids, we'll take them there to catch their first fish or climb in a treehouse. It was a place we could grow into."

—Shannon Reynolds, 26, Atlanta

COMING SOON ✱ Long the lakefront address of Atlanta's elite, Lake Burton is now more affordable via fractional ownership at **The Seasons of Lake Burton** (seasonsof lakeburton.com). For as little as \$250,000, own one quarter of a lakefront cottage and a triple pontoon boat—with no maintenance!