

*Ballet to bluegrass...jazz ensembles to jug bands...
There's always something happening on the Sumter
arts scene!*

Whatever your taste in live entertainment, Sumter, South Carolina abounds in opportunities to delight your eyes and ears! Splendid venues, a wealth of dance and theatre talent, lively community music groups and an exploding visual arts scene make Sumter the place to explore "art in the heart"...of South Carolina.

Welcome to Sumter, South Carolina's Gamecock City and County. Two hours from the beach, three hours from the mountains, and an easy day trip to some of the South's major metropolitan centers, we are truly in the middle of everything! This unique community combines a "down home" ambience with some of the most exciting happenings on today's art scene:

The **Sumter Gallery of Art**, a state-of-the-art facility showcasing the best in local, national and international talent;

The **Sumter Little Theatre**, a quality community theatre organization offering a wide variety of live productions in an intimate theatre setting;

The **Sumter Opera House**, an historic landmark featuring a variety of entertainment from classic movies to today's music;

Patriot Hall, an elegant 1,000-seat auditorium that anchors the Sumter County Cultural Center, which offers a plethora of music, dance, visual arts and theatre in one beautiful setting;

The **Accessibility Project**, one of South Carolina's most innovative arts events;

The **Sumter County Museum**, headquartered in a mansion dating from the early years of the 20th century and featuring the Heritage

Education Center, historic exhibits, period rooms and the "living history" of the annual Carolina Backcountry Days.

The Sumter community is fast emerging as a statewide center for the arts, and has hosted acts ranging from pop music with the Lettermen, country music star Lee Brice and Grammy-winning performer Linda Davis, to the SC Philharmonic Orchestra and the Columbia Classic Ballet Company, as well as hosting the 2011 SC Humanities Festival. Modern dance, world music, classic and experimental theatre for youth and adults...if it's happening with the arts, it's happening in Sumter!



Entertaining...Experimental...Educational...Enjoyable!

Sumter's arts community hosts a wide variety of exhibits, events and learning opportunities in an array of impressive facilities. From the beautifully restored century-old Sumter Opera House (listed in the National Register of Historic Places) to the modern Sumter County Gallery of Art, opened in 2003, our cultural venues encompass a range of places to entertain, educate and enlighten patrons of the arts.

The **Sumter County Cultural Center**, conveniently located in the heart of Sumter's historic district, is home to Patriot Hall, the Sumter County Gallery of Art and the Sumter Little Theatre. **Patriot Hall**, a 1,017-seat auditorium, showcases the finest in music and dance, including performances by the Sumter Community Concert Band, the Sumter Civic Chorale, and concert series sponsored by the Sumter-Shaw Community Concert Association. The hall is also home to annual recitals by Sumter's local dance companies and others, and includes an ever more exciting lineup of spectacular events featuring contemporary dance, world music, literary festivals and more. Patriot Hall features a beautifully appointed reception room and the Patriot Hall Gallery, a showcase for local talent.

Adjoining Patriot Hall is the **Sumter County Gallery of Art**, housing a permanent collection including touchable works for the visually impaired and changing exhibits featuring locally, nationally and internationally-renowned artists. Also located at the Gallery are a gift shop featuring unusual original artworks for sale, and classroom space where budding artists of all ages explore self-expression through a variety of media. Established in 1969, the Sumter County Gallery of Art completed a move to its new quarters in 2003, after outgrowing its former location at the historic Elizabeth White house. Elizabeth White, a prominent artist of the mid-20th century, was renowned for her etchings of Southern landscapes and architecture. Her art was displayed at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC and at the 1939 World's Fair in New York, and a sampling of her work is displayed in the Sumter gallery's permanent collection.

Completing the Cultural Center is the **Sumter Little Theatre**, an exceptionally vibrant community theatre group dedicated to providing "quality entertainment in a friendly atmosphere." The "black-box" theatre seats 125, a setting that creates intimacy between

audience and actors. All aspects of dramatic arts are happening here, with a full annual season featuring favorites from the classics, to side-splitting comedy, to powerful drama to youth theatre. The youth program is designed to channel creative energy in a positive direction, with classes offered in acting, improvisation, lighting, sound and design. Many of SLT's students have gone on to study at the SC Governor's School for the Arts, and some have found careers in arts-related fields.

Downtown Sumter's landmark is the **Sumter Opera House**, a 520-seat venue featuring a breathtaking authentic Art Deco interior behind a beautifully restored Richardson-Romanesque facade dating from 1894. The building's fascinating history includes past use as a town hall, opera house and movie theatre, and upstairs from the performance hall is the location for the City of Sumter's administrative offices. The Opera House offers a comfortable venue for concerts and stage performances, where every seat is truly "the best seat in the house." Guided tours are available.

Blending the best of the old and new is the **Sumter County Museum**, an early 20th-century mansion that is home to permanent and changing exhibits highlighting Sumter's role in local and world events, from business to military service. The growing museum complex features an array of educational information on textiles, transportation and the unique Carolina Backcountry, a recreated 18th-century homestead that harkens back to the earliest days of Sumter County. The Museum also houses an archive of local records and history and the Heritage Education Center, a 10,000-square-foot complex featuring classrooms, meeting and reception space and an auditorium.

Art is in the heart of South Carolina... Sumter has it all, and we're adding more all the time! For more information about places or events, please contact the

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