

bonaventure cemetery map self guided tour

Bonaventure Cemetery map self guided tour is a unique way to explore one of Savannah, Georgia's most iconic landmarks. Nestled along the marshes of the Wilmington River, Bonaventure Cemetery is not just a resting place for the deceased; it is a beautiful park filled with history, art, and nature. This article will guide you through the process of planning your self-guided tour, highlight key points of interest, and provide tips for making the most of your visit.

Understanding Bonaventure Cemetery

Bonaventure Cemetery was established in 1846 and spans over 100 acres. It is renowned for its stunning oak trees draped with Spanish moss, intricate sculptures, and historic graves. As you wander through the cemetery, you'll encounter the final resting places of notable figures, including artists, musicians, and soldiers.

History of Bonaventure Cemetery

- **Founded:** Originally a plantation, the site was transformed into a cemetery after being purchased by the Catholic Diocese of Savannah.
- **Landscape:** Designed in the Victorian style, it features winding paths that meander through lush greenery and beautiful monuments.
- **Famous Residents:** The cemetery is home to several famous graves, including those of the poet Conrad Aiken and the actress Butterfly McQueen.

Preparing for Your Self-Guided Tour

Before you set off on your self-guided tour, it's essential to prepare adequately. A little planning can enhance your experience significantly.

Getting Your Bonaventure Cemetery Map

- **Official Map:** Obtain a map from the cemetery office or download it online. The map will help you navigate the grounds and locate key features.
- **Mobile Apps:** There are several apps available that offer guided tours and GPS features to help you find specific locations.

Best Time to Visit

- Seasons: Spring and fall are the best times to visit due to pleasant weather and blooming flowers.
- Time of Day: Early morning or late afternoon offers the best lighting for photography and a quieter atmosphere for reflection.

Key Points of Interest on the Tour

As you explore Bonaventure Cemetery, several key points of interest should be on your radar. Here are some must-see locations:

1. The Bird Girl Statue

- Description: This iconic statue gained fame through the book "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil."
- Location: Found at the base of the Troupe family plot, the statue is a symbol of the cemetery and often attracts visitors for photographs.

2. The graves of notable historic figures

- Conrad Aiken: A Pulitzer Prize-winning poet whose tombstone features a unique sculpture.
- Butterfly McQueen: Best known for her role in "Gone with the Wind," her grave is marked by a simple but touching headstone.

3. The Historic Section

- Architecture: Marvel at the ornate Victorian and Gothic-style tombs.
- Family Plots: Many wealthy families have elaborate plots that tell stories of their lineage.

4. The Confederate Memorial

- Significance: This memorial honors the soldiers who fought in the Civil War.
- Design: Featuring a striking obelisk, it stands as a testament to the cemetery's rich history.

5. The Oglethorpe Oak

- Nature's Beauty: This ancient oak tree is estimated to be over 300 years old and provides a picturesque backdrop.
- Photography: The oak tree's sprawling branches create a beautiful setting for photos.

Guided Tours vs. Self-Guided Tours

While many visitors choose to explore Bonaventure Cemetery on their own, guided tours are also available. Here's a comparison to help you decide which option might be best for you:

Self-Guided Tours

- Flexibility: Explore at your own pace without the constraints of a scheduled tour.
- Personalized Experience: Focus on the areas that interest you the most.
- Quiet Reflection: Enjoy a more peaceful experience without a large group.

Guided Tours

- Expert Insights: Learn about the history and significance of the cemetery from knowledgeable guides.
- Structured Experience: Ideal for those who prefer a more organized visit.
- Social Interaction: Meet other visitors and share the experience with fellow history enthusiasts.

Tips for Your Self-Guided Tour

To make the most of your self-guided tour at Bonaventure Cemetery, consider the following tips:

1. Wear Comfortable Shoes

The cemetery covers a large area with uneven terrain, so comfortable footwear is essential.

2. Bring Water and Snacks

Pack a small backpack with water and snacks, as there are limited facilities within the cemetery.

3. Respect the Space

Remember that Bonaventure is a cemetery; maintain a respectful demeanor as you explore. Avoid loud conversations and stay on designated paths.

4. Take Your Time

Don't rush through your visit. Take the time to absorb the beauty and history around you.

5. Capture the Moment

Bring a camera or smartphone to capture the stunning scenery and unique monuments.

Conclusion

A **Bonaventure Cemetery map self guided tour** offers an enriching experience filled with history, art, and natural beauty. By preparing adequately and knowing what to look for, you can create a memorable visit that honors the past while enjoying the present. Whether you are a history buff, a nature lover, or just seeking a peaceful place to reflect, Bonaventure Cemetery is a destination that will not disappoint. With its picturesque surroundings and profound history, it promises an unforgettable journey through time.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Bonaventure Cemetery self-guided tour?

The Bonaventure Cemetery self-guided tour is an experience that allows visitors to explore the historic cemetery at their own pace, using maps and guides to locate significant graves, monuments, and points of interest.

How can I obtain a map for the Bonaventure Cemetery self-guided tour?

Maps for the Bonaventure Cemetery self-guided tour can be obtained at the cemetery entrance, or you can download a digital version from the official Bonaventure Cemetery website.

What are some notable graves to visit on the Bonaventure Cemetery self-guided tour?

Some notable graves include those of poet Conrad Aiken, the famous 'Bird Girl' statue, and the graves of several notable Savannah families, providing insight into the area's rich history.

Is there an entrance fee for Bonaventure Cemetery?

No, Bonaventure Cemetery is free to enter, allowing everyone to enjoy its beauty and history without any cost.

How long does it typically take to complete the Bonaventure Cemetery self-guided tour?

The time to complete the Bonaventure Cemetery self-guided tour varies by individual, but it generally takes about 1.5 to 3 hours depending on how many sites you choose to visit and how long you spend at each.

Are there any restrictions or guidelines for visitors during the self-guided tour?

Visitors are encouraged to respect the solemnity of the cemetery by staying on paths, not disturbing graves, and following any posted rules to ensure a respectful experience for all.

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