

GLOBAL ATLANTA SnapSHOTS

A LOOK AT ETHNIC COMMUNITIES IN THE ATLANTA REGION



C H I N E S E

The Global Atlanta Snapshots were created to foster understanding among all people of the Atlanta region. The Snapshots show the rich ethnic and cultural diversity that our region now enjoys. The residents of Atlanta's ethnic communities may have lived in the region for a long time or may have recently arrived. They may come from cultures and have customs significantly different from each other's, and from those of the general population of the Atlanta region. What they have in common with the rest of the region is that they make it their home, and they share in and contribute to its success. The Snapshots introduce and portray selected communities in terms of their backgrounds, their customs and cultures, their roles in the regional economy, and specific local resources available throughout the region.

Chinese in the Atlanta Economy



Atlanta's Chinese-American community has not merely adapted to their new home; they are making major contributions to the region's 21st century economy. The median household income for the region's Chinese households in 2000 was \$57,400, more than 10 percent above that for all households; the median income for Taiwanese households is notably higher at \$84,200. These relatively higher income levels reflect a concentration of the local Chinese-American workforce in management and professional occupations. Of the 6,300 employed Chinese men, 4,000, or 63 percent, worked in management or professional fields; 2,800 Chinese women, about 55 percent of the 5,100 female workers, were also in management or the professions. The Chinese workforce is particularly well-represented in computer and math-related jobs. Over 2,100 (men and women) were in computer

and mathematics positions, almost one out of every five Chinese workers. Almost 500 Chinese men reported jobs in architecture and engineering. The Chinese community is also making significant contributions in the field of education: almost 700 workers were recorded as holding teaching and related posts, including some 350 Chinese men in higher education.

Within the service occupations, food preparation is still a prominent occupation, with almost 1,200 recorded (761 men and 423 women). Other areas of concentration include sales/ office occupations (2,100) and production (700). One community member notes, "There are lots of engineers and technicians but not a lot of entrepreneurs, mostly small businesses." Still, it should be noted that there are now two Chinese-owned banks: Summit Bank, located on Buford Highway in Doraville, and Global Commerce Bank, headquartered on Chamblee-Dunwoody Road in Atlanta.

Chinese Life in Metro Atlanta

Atlanta's Chinese population sits at 13,500, according to the 2,000 Census. While the Chamblee and Doraville sections of the Buford Highway corridor are the most visible locations of the community, Chinese-Americans have now located in many sections of the Atlanta region. Four counties account for the majority of the Chinese

community: Fulton (3,500 residents), Gwinnett (3,900), DeKalb (3,000) and Cobb (2,400).

A Chinese cultural center (Taiwanese-owned) can be found off of North Peachtree Road in Chamblee. There is a wide choice of Chinese restaurants and other eating places along the Buford

Continued inside

A Treasured Symbol - The Chinese Dragon



Unlike the terrifying monster in Western lore, the Chinese dragon symbolizes wisdom, strength and goodness, as well as the life-giving force of water. In the Atlanta Region, the dragon (with its stag horns, fish scales, eagle claws and long cat whiskers) is seen in the Dragon Dance at New Years, the Dragon kites sold at local stores, and various paintings of dragons on porcelains and greeting cards. The 2004 Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival took place on September 11 at Lake Lanier's Clark's Bridge Road, venue of the 1996 Summer Olympics.

CONTENTS

Who are the Chinese-Americans? • Chinese in the Atlanta Economy • A Personal Story • Chinese Life in Metro Atlanta • Languages Spoken • A Treasured Symbol • What are Chinese Customs and Culture? • Holidays Celebrated • Resources



A PERSONAL STORY

Born in Hong Kong, Henry Yu had lived in the United States for over 25 years when he and his family moved to Atlanta in 2000. He brought to his new community a wealth of experience in banking and finance.

Henry first came to the United States and settled in Chicago in 1974. He was not at all familiar with the snow and bitter cold he would experience during Midwestern winters. The new foods also required getting used to, and he did not have good command of the English language. Still, he was able to pursue his education, earning his BA in Economics from the University of Michigan and later his MBA from the University of Detroit.

Mr. Yu moved to Atlanta with his wife and two daughters, having been recruited by SunTrust Bank. Henry started his banking career with the Hong Kong branch of Bank of America in 1981. He is currently Managing Director of SunTrust Securities Inc., an affiliate of SunTrust

Bank. His 23 years of banking experience covers domestic & international lending, foreign bank relationship management, structured trade finance and securities investment.

Since coming to Atlanta five years ago, the Yu family has been very active in community affairs with countless hours of volunteer work. Henry believes that the volunteer work helps him release corporate stress. Henry's community associations include: President of the National Association of Chinese-Americans, Atlanta Chapter; Membership Chair of the Asian American Chamber of Commerce of Georgia, Inc; Board member of the Chinese Community Center; Board member of the Kwong Tung Association of Atlanta; Board member-Elect of the Japan America Society of Georgia; Member of the Chinese American Lions Club; Foundation Board Trustee of the Georgia Perimeter College; and International Advisory Board member of the Kennesaw State University.

Who are the Chinese-Americans?



China, the world's most populous nation with an estimated 1.3 billion inhabitants as of 2003, is the homeland of millions of ethnic Chinese now living in countries around the globe. According to a report published in 2000, some 55 million ethnic Chinese live outside of

mainland China, with significant Chinese populations throughout Southeast Asia, the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, as well as the West Indies, the United States, Canada and other parts of the western hemisphere.

While dispersed across many lands and taking on some of the local characteristics of their adopted homes, these "overseas" Chinese are tied by bonds of culture and language. Regarded as the world's oldest living civilization, China's history extends back over 3,500 years. The Chinese are proud of their history, their many inventions and the flow of ideas from China to the West, including papermaking, silk fabric, the compass, gunpowder and advances in medicine, mathematics and science.

The turbulent history of China during the 20th century has some faint echoes in 21st century Atlanta. After many centuries of dynastic rule by succession of emperors, a major turning point in Chinese history occurred in 1911. A revolution led by the Kuomintang (Nationalist movement) of Dr. Sun Yet-sen overthrew the emperor and established a new republic in southern China. In 1926, upon Sun's death, the Nationalist cause was taken over by Chiang Kai-Shek. During the ensuing decades, China experienced internal political tur-

moil, war with Japan, and civil conflict between Chiang's Nationalist forces and those of the Chinese Communist Party led by Mao Zedong. In 1949, Mao declared the People's Republic of China in Beijing. The Nationalist movement and Chiang's government fled to the island of Taiwan, newly named the Republic of China, with its capital city of Taipei. To this day, the Beijing government considers Taiwan a province of mainland China, and the issue remains a source of tension in U.S.-China relations and between Beijing and Taipei.

The great majority of the Atlanta Region's 14,000 Chinese-Americans are from mainland China. About 3,000 of that total are immigrants from Taiwan, who may prefer to be called "Taiwanese-Americans". For some in the local community, political developments in their homeland are more compelling than those in the U.S. or Georgia. Some Taiwanese returned to their former homes to participate in the last national election. In addition to divisions between those from the People's Republic and Taiwan, among the latter are those who support the movement to openly declare independence from the mainland and others who prefer to accept the status quo. There are also those in the Chinese-American community who have migrated from Hong Kong, a movement that accelerated after 1997 when, by previous agreement between Britain and China, the former British colony became an administrative region of the People's Republic.

These latest migration streams continue a long history of Chinese relocating to the United States in response to changing economic or political conditions. Beginning in the 1840s, tens of thousands of Chinese laborers came, first to Hawaii and later to the West Coast. Many were recruited to work on Hawaii's sugar plantations, while others were drawn by opportunities presented by the 1849 California gold rush and the build-

Continued inside



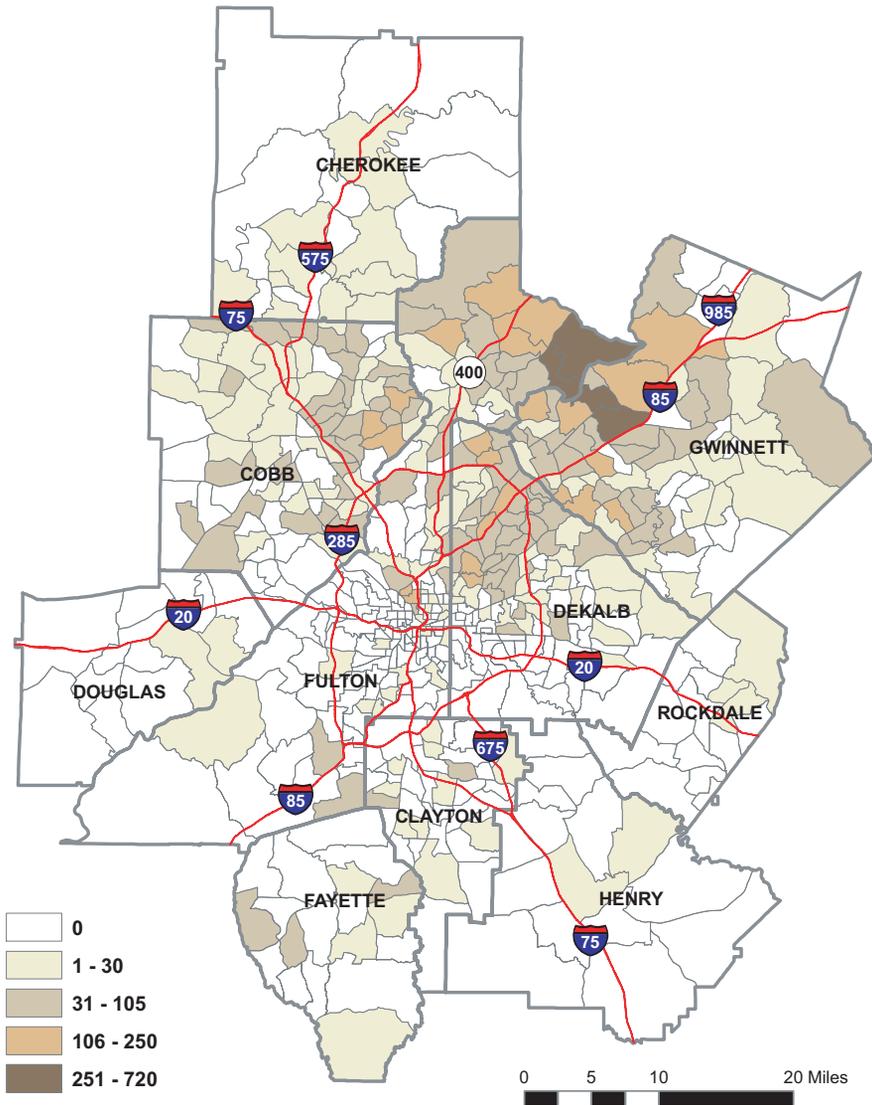
Chinese in the Atlanta Region: By the Numbers

Cherokee: 178	Clayton: 245
Cobb: 2,440	DeKalb: 2,958
Douglas: 26	Fayette: 192
Fulton: 3,503	Gwinnett: 3,868
Henry: 36	Rockdale: 54

Total 10-county Region: 13,500

- **Gwinnett County** is home to the largest population of Chinese with 3,868. **Fulton** ranks a close second with 3,503, followed by DeKalb (2,958) and Cobb (2,440).
- **Almost half (49 percent)** of the region's Chinese population lives in **DeKalb or Gwinnett counties**.
- The 10-county Atlanta region is home to approximately **42 percent of Georgia's total population**, but represents **77 percent of the state's Chinese population**.
- The **overwhelming majority** of the Chinese population lives in the **northern parts of the region**, northwest of I-85 in Gwinnett and northern Fulton. There are, however, concentrations of Chinese along I-85 in DeKalb County as well.
- There are **110,789 Asians** living in the region. **Only 12 percent** of Asians living in the region are Chinese. In fact, the **Chinese are the least populous ethnic community** hailing from Asia, with Asian-Indians, Vietnamese and Koreans each having greater numbers.

CHINESE-BORN POPULATION IN ATLANTA Atlanta Region, 2000



Source: 2000 Census Data on Foreign-Born Population by Region, Country or Area of Birth



Who are the Chinese-Americans? (cont'd)

ing of the intercontinental railroads. An estimated 46,000 Chinese migrated to Hawaii in the second half of the 19th century; another 380,000 came to the U.S. mainland between 1849 and 1930. Today, the Chinese-American community numbers over 2.4 million.

As in other places in the South, Chinese workers came to Georgia before 1900. One project they worked on was the

construction of a canal to improve the waterway between Augusta and Savannah. This enabled Georgia cotton growers to ship their wares around the world. Although there was a Chinese community in the Atlanta area more than 100 years ago, it has been over the last 25 years that the major economic and cultural impact of this region's Chinese-American community has become evident.

Chinese Life in Metro Atlanta (cont'd)



Highway corridor. Community members often congregate at these locations for meetings, though there may be some reluctance by owners to “host” these meetings. Many of the new businesses in the area, which also include many grocery stores, are attributed to relatively new immigrants from mainland China and Taiwan.

Some of the new immigrants are those who have come as students. After graduation they usually would like to find a job here first instead of going back to their homeland so that they can apply for permanent

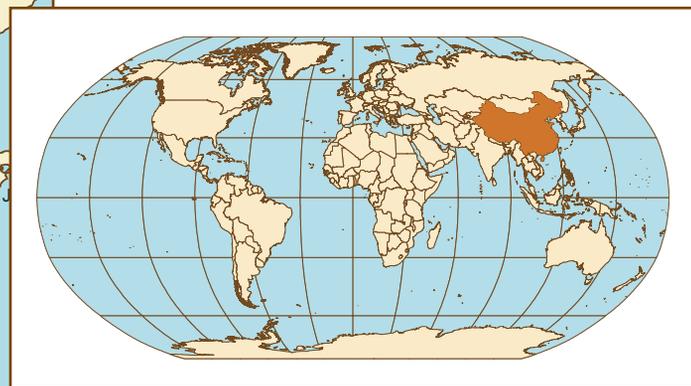
residency (green card) through employment. One of the main reasons is that the green card and the later American citizenship provide a great freedom for them to come back to the US if they travel to China or other places in the world (for the Chinese only 10 to 20 percent of visa applications to the US are granted). It also gives them the benefits of Medicare and Social Security when they retire since they pay taxes just like all American citizens. On the other hand, those who have obtained green card or American citizenship often look for opportunities to go back to China for better positions, lower living costs and favorable taxation.

...THE CHAMBLEE AND DORAVILLE SECTIONS OF THE BUFORD HIGHWAY CORRIDOR ARE THE MOST VISIBLE LOCATIONS OF THE COMMUNITY...

Holidays Celebrated

In addition to other Western holidays, Chinese-Americans may celebrate the following festivals and holidays (some based on the lunar calendar):

- | | |
|---|---|
| Chinese New Year
January/February | Dragon Boat Festival
June |
| Chin Ming (Chinese Easter)
April | Mid-Autumn Festival
September |
| Asian/Pacific-American Heritage Month
May | Confucius' Birthday and Teacher's Day
September |



Languages Spoken

There are many Chinese dialects. Most Chinese individuals in the Atlanta region speak Mandarin. Other dialects spoken include Cantonese and Taiwanese. Written characters for each of these dialects are essentially the same. Linguistic differences become apparent in the pronunciation. A Chinese sound may have four different meanings depending on the inflection or tone used. For example, people from Beijing speaking Mandarin may not be able to understand someone from Canton or Taiwan.

你貴姓?

“Knee gway shing?”
What is your name?

你好嗎?

“Knee how mä?”
How do you do?

謝謝你。

“Shay shay knee.”
Thank you.

What are Chinese Customs and Culture?



The importance of family is paramount. Parents provide for their children, and children respond by caring for their parents in their later years. Strong emphasis is placed on children to perform well in their studies. This demonstrates respect for their families and helps to maintain competitiveness in today's world.

Chinese names have three parts: a family name, a generation name, and a given name, Wang Da Wei, for example. Generation names and given names can be written separately, together, or with a dash (i.e. the above example could also be written Wang Da-Wei or Wang Dawei). One method of getting along in the American world is the habit of adopting “American” first names, such as “James” instead of “Zhu”. This is done because Chinese individuals perceive that their first names are often difficult for others to pronounce and spell. The use of an “American” name facilitates ease of communication with the mainstream American community.

There are several Chinese festivals celebrated in the Atlanta region. The most well known is the Chinese New Year which

is observed according to the lunar calendar. Honoring one's ancestors, paying off debts, and gifts of money to children in red envelopes are accompanied by lavish New Year's feasts, dances, and fireworks. Another event is the Mid-Autumn Festival. This is held when the moon is full in the eighth month of the lunar year (typically in the fall). It is an ancient festival when people eat “mooncakes” and other special foods, exchange gifts, and tell stories. This celebration, observed in private homes, emphasizes family unity.

Many different types of Chinese food are served in the Atlanta region. Cantonese or Hong Kong style, is from the southeast region of China. Seasoned subtly, it incorporates stir frying, using soy sauce and ginger. The Hunan style originated in the central region of China and is richly seasoned, hot and spicy, as well as sweet and sour. The Peking style, from the northern region of China, is characterized by mildly seasoned dishes containing garlic, scallions, leeks or chives. Mandarin style cooking varies and is sometimes identical to Peking style. Szechwan style is from Southwestern China and is richly flavored, somewhat oily, and highly spiced with red pepper.

In many area Chinese restaurants, Dim Sum is served for brunch. Meaning “little heart”, Dim Sum consists of small portions or plates of food offered from many different food carts that are pushed continuously around the restaurant by servers. Diners pick their individual servings from any cart they choose and the server will add that selection to the standing bill left at the table. This is designed to provide a light and inexpensive meal and a good opportunity to sample a variety of dishes. Judging by the Chinese-American community's response to Dim Sum, it is also a leisurely time for family and friends to share, especially on the weekends.

Chinese Organizations, Associations and Resources

Below is a listing of selected organizations who work with the Chinese Community. Additional resources are available at www.atlantaregional.com

GENERAL INFORMATION

Center for Pan-Asian Community Services

3760 Park Avenue
Doraville, GA 30340
(770) 936-0969
www.cpacs.org
e-mail: cpacs@cpacs.org

Chinese Cultural Center

5377 New Peachtree Road
Chamblee, Ga 30341
(770) 451-4456
www.ocac.gov.tw/atlanta

Hong Kong Information Center – Atlanta

3340 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 1800
Atlanta, GA 30326
(404) 238-0875
www.hongkongatlanta.com

ARTS

Atlanta Chinese Dance Company (ACDC)

5595 Coverna Court
Norcross, GA 30092
(770) 449-9953
e-mail: chinesedance@mindspring.com
www.atlantachinesedance.org

Atlanta Center for Zen and the Arts/ Aikido Association Atlanta

292 South Atlanta St., Suite F
Roswell, GA 30075
(770) 649-8383
www.acza.net

ASSOCIATIONS

Association for Chinese from Korea

4300 Hwy. 20
Buford, GA 30518
(770) 945-1308

Association of Chinese Professionals – Atlanta Chapter

P.O. Box 922436
Norcross, GA 30010
e-mail: info@acp-atlanta.org
www.acp-atlanta.org

Organization of Chinese- Americans – Georgia Chapter

(678) 585-1524
e-mail: phillip_wu@yahoo.com

National Association of Chinese- Americans – Atlanta

5483 Red Bark Way
Dunwoody, GA 30338
(770) 394-6542
www.naca-atlanta.org

Tai Chi Association

3079 Midway Road
Decatur, GA 30032
(404) 289-5652
www.tai-chi-association.com

Taiwanese Association of America – Atlanta Chapter

3189 Bolero Pass
Atlanta, GA 30341
(770) 939-5753

BUSINESS

Atlanta Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce

www.aaccga.org

China Business Alliance

303 Peachtree Street, N.E.
Lower Lobby, Suite 100
Atlanta, GA 30308-3252
e-mail: dexshi@measy-communication.com
(770) 552-6037

Chinese Business Association of Atlanta

4920 Roswell Road, Suite 49
Atlanta, GA 30342
(404) 705-8079
www.cbaaweb.org

Taipei Economic and Cultural Office – Atlanta

1180 West Peachtree Street NE
Atlantic Center Plaza, Suite 800
Atlanta, GA 30309
(404) 870-9375
www.teco.org

EDUCATION

Chinese School of Atlanta

5377 New Peachtree Road, 2nd floor
Chamblee, GA 30341
(404) 542-9866 Mon.-Sat.
(404) 542-9865 Sunday
www.atlantachineseschool.org

Taiwanese School of Atlanta

3644 Chamblee-Tucker Road, Suite F
Chamblee, GA 30341
www.taiwaneseschoolofatlanta.com

MEDIA

Chinese Community News

208 Willow Cobe Ct.
Lawrenceville, GA 30044
(770) 717-5248
e-mail: atlccnews@yahoo.com

Chinese News

5725 Buford Highway Suite 221
Doraville, GA 30340
(770) 455-0880
e-mail: info@atlantachinesenews.com
www.atlantachinesenews.com

RELIGIOUS

North Atlanta Chinese Baptist Church

955 Johnson Ferry Road
Marietta, GA 30068
(770) 565-2573
www.nacbcga.org

Atlanta Chinese Christian Church

4434 Britt Road
Tucker, GA 30084
(770) 908-1972
e-mail: info@acc.org
www.acc.org

Contact:

E-mail: globalsnapshots@atlantaregional.com

Order printed copies from the ARC Information Center at 404-463-3102 or
download free from the ARC website at www.atlantaregional.com

Atlanta Regional Commission • 40 Courtland Street, NE, Atlanta, Georgia 30303 • 404.463.3100 • www.atlantaregional.com

Charles Krautler, Executive Director Darlene Daly, Project Coordinator

The Atlanta Regional Commission is the official planning agency for the ten-county Atlanta Region including Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, and Rockdale, as well as the City of Atlanta and 63 other cities. ARC provides a forum where leaders come together to discuss and act on issues of regionwide consequence.

The Community Foundation • 50 Hurt Plaza, Suite 449, Atlanta, Georgia 30303 • 404.688.5525 • www.atlcf.org

Global Atlanta Snapshots are the result of past and ongoing collaborative partnerships of the Atlanta Regional Commission and many other agencies. We extend our sincere appreciation Georgia State University's Department of Anthropology and Geography and to every organization, agency and individual that participated in the research and development of this publication. This series of 10 Global Atlanta Snapshots was financed in part by a grant from the William Glenn Family Fund of The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta. Recognized as one of the largest and fastest growing community foundations in the country, with more than \$400 millions in assets, The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta manages and administers the charitable funds of 650 donors and their families. It serves 22 metro area counties and awards approximately \$29 million a year to more than 1,300 nonprofit organizations. The Foundation educates donors and their families about critical issues facing the Atlanta region and connects them with nonprofit organizations and their interests.