THE CORRIDOR

The Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor was designated by an Act of Congress and authorized as part of the National Heritage Areas Act in October 2006. The Gullah Geechee Corridor celebrates, preserves, and shares the important contributions made to American culture and history by African Americans known as Gullah Geechee people who settled in the coastal counties of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.

MISSION

- To nurture pride and facilitate an understanding of the significance of Gullah Geechee history and culture within Gullah Geechee communities.
- To sustain and preserve land, language, and cultural assets within the coastal communities of NC, SC, GA, and FL.
- To promote economic development among Gullah Geechee people.
- To educate the public on the value and importance of Gullah Geechee culture.

GOALS

- Foster public awareness of and appreciation for the history of Gullah Geechee people, their contributions to the development of the United States, and their connections to the African diaspora and other international cultures.
- Enhance the quality of life for current and future generations of Gullah Geechee people within the Corridor.
- Protect, preserve, and restore tangible and intangible natural and cultural resources in communities and other areas that are of cultural and historical significance to Gullah Geechee people.

AREAS OF FOCUS

- Education
- Economic development
- Documentation and preservation

WE MUST PRESERVE AND PROTECT GULLAH GEECHEE CULTURE

A Message from Congressman James E. Clyburn

One of my proudest achievements in the Congress was authoring the legislation that established the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor and created a commission to help federal, state, and local authorities manage the Corridor and its assets. Today the Commission is working hard to promote the nearly 400 year history of the Gullah Geechee culture that is the core purpose of my initiative. The sites, sounds and tastes of the Gullah Geechee culture have been slowly vanishing along the coasts of North and South Carolina, Georgia nd Florida. As a former history teacher and a vocal advocate of historic preservation, I believe the work of the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission is imperative to saving this rich culture. The Gullah Geechee way of life is an integral part of the Southern heritage, and I am committed to ensuring we protect and preserve it for future generations.

CONTACT US

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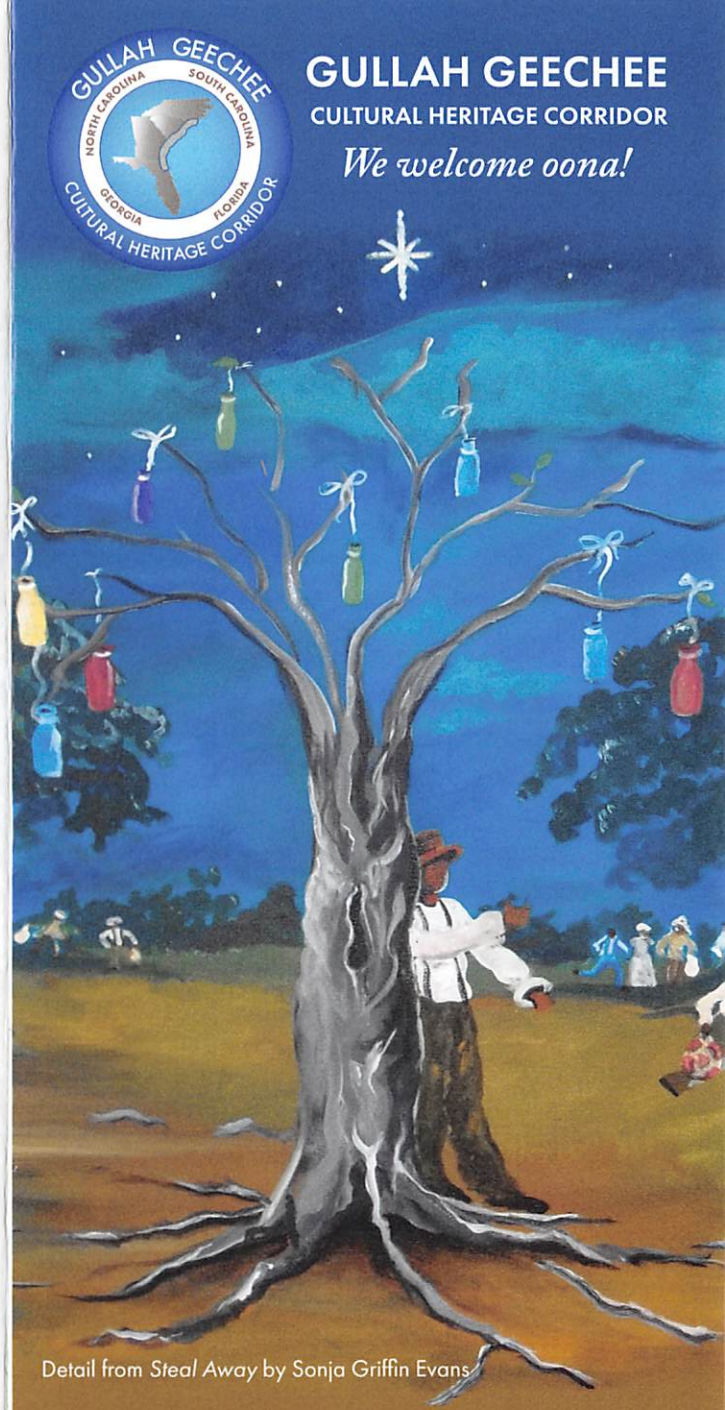
GULLAH GEECHEE
CULTURAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR

We welcome oona!



Detail from *Steal Away* by Sonja Griffin Evans

Come experience Gullah Geechee heritage. Explore our historic sites, local tours, traditional foods and crafts, cultural events, and art.

WWW.GULLAHGEECHEECORRIDOR.ORG

However far the stream flows it never forgets its source.

–African Proverb

Tellin We Story

Gullah Geechee people are direct descendants of Africans brought to the United States and enslaved for generations. Their diverse African roots and enslavement on isolated islands created a unique culture that is embodied and displayed through cuisine, music and performing arts, language and oral traditions, crafts, and religion and spirituality.

CULTURE

Family, faith, and education are the cornerstones of Gullah Geechee values and traditions.

"I think that is what Gullah Geechee is; African people being together where they are and creating a new culture that is rooted in their African experience."

–Ernestine Keaton, Riegelwood, NC

LEGACY

The traditions and customs forged by enslaved people have been passed down through many generations of Gullah Geechee people.

"Everything here is important to our existence, our culture, it's important to the country and the world… it's important to preserve the way we built our houses…the way we cook, the way we raise our children, our religious practices."

–Benjamin Hall, Sapelo Island, GA

CELEBRATIONS

Gullah Geechee culture can be experienced at many annual festivals, art shows, musical events, places of worship and holidays.

"There is a spirituality about our culture that you cannot place in a museum. And the only way people can get a feel for that is to actually meet Gullah Geechee people."

–Liz Santigati, St. Helena Island, SC

CRAFTS

Gullah Geechee people express themselves through many traditional crafts including basket making, quilting, net making, and iron work.

"I can say I thank God for what my grandparents taught me and the way they raised me to have my home and to make my own money. I was tying nets ever since I was a child and I still can tie them…"

–Sister Betty, Fernandina Beach, FL

RICE HERITAGE

Gullah Geechee people are the descendants of people brought from Africa for their skills as rice farmers. This knowledge and their labor shaped the natural and cultural landscape we see today.

"It speaks to the greatness of our ancestors who came with this knowledge—to grow rice in a place they didn't know. Unfortunately it made someone else rich. It's more than food—it's culture, technology, math, astronomy—that brings this full circle."

–Benjamin Dennis, Charleston, SC

GET INVOLVED

The Corridor has many volunteer and engagement opportunities!
Please contact us for more information:
info@gullahgeecheecorridor.org
or 843.818.4587.