

The Most Popular Real Haunted Houses In The United States, According To Instagram

Each fall brings corn mazes, all-pumpkin-everything, and of course, a new crop of [terrifying haunted houses](#) that send some people into fits of giggles while others run for the hills. No matter which brand of horror is in vogue that season – werewolves, vampires, the Slenderman – haunted houses will never go out of style. Unlike [monsters and the villains](#) found in slasher movies, you can't outrun a haunted house, and that's the scariest part. As the *New York Times* pointed out in 2012, haunted houses are terrifying because they represent a violation of a seemingly safe space. "[That's your sanctuary](#). When that barrier is breached, you've had it," Dr. John Tibbetts told the *Times*.

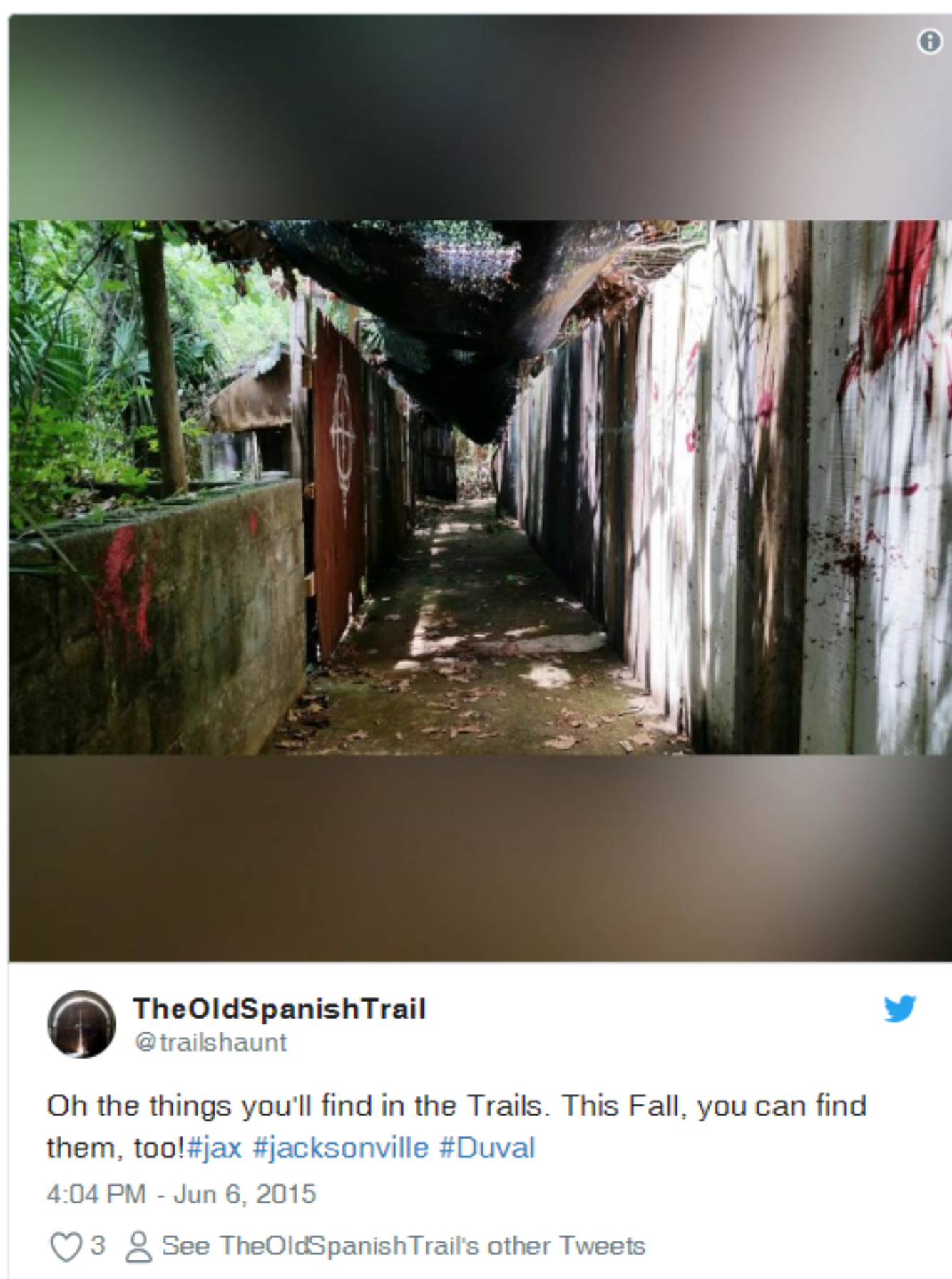
That explains why audiences devour the *Paranormal Activity* franchise and Shirley Jackson novels alike, but some people prefer to experience their hauntings up close. This is where the modern haunted house comes in – elaborate spectacles in which (inexplicably) willing victims pay to have actors terrorize them in inventive ways. Whether the idea makes you shiver with delight or dread, the fact remains that haunted houses are incredibly popular each fall; last year, the "extreme" San Diego haunted house McKamey Manor reportedly [had a waiting list](#) of thousands.

So what are the scariest haunted houses out there? Halloween Express recently analyzed [Instagram posts tagged with #HauntedHouse](#) across the United States, and the results are useful reading for [anyone who loves Halloween](#) (i.e., everyone). According to their analysis, people in the Northeast tend to post the most often about haunted houses on Instagram; New York was the state with the most haunting-related posts year-round, followed by New Hampshire and Utah. When October was excluded, New York still took the top spot, but the other two states switched places: Utah came in second, and New Hampshire in third.

The most popular haunted house attraction – as opposed to real hauntings, but more on that later – was [Netherworld Haunted House](#) in Atlanta, Ga. Second place went to [Terror Behind the Walls](#), which takes place in Philadelphia's famous [Eastern State Penitentiary](#), followed by [Halloween Horror Nights](#) at Universal Studios in Orlando, Fla.

But man-made horror certainly isn't the only kind out there. If you're the type to prefer your hauntings a little more historical, the study also looked at the most popular "real" haunted houses on Instagram – locations that have a history of ghost sightings, visions, and things generally going bump in the night. A close look at the top five is below. To read more from the Halloween Express study, including the full list of haunted houses, head over [here](#).

4. The Old Spanish Trail – Jacksonville, Fla.



[The Old Spanish Trail](#) runs through many old Spanish colonial towns in the Southeast, but according to local folklore, one of the houses along the trail in Jacksonville, Fla., has seen a fair amount of [paranormal activity](#) – first as a stagecoach stop, then as a possible bordello and finally a grocery store until it became the haunted attraction it is today.