



# Bumper Crop

How STUMP found a new home — and so much more — in Savannah

Written by SYLVIE BAGGETT

**THERE'S A FUNNY** thing that happens in Savannah. For those of us who have lived here awhile, we're familiar with the way the city seems to ask its guests to stay a little longer. It's no surprise when the freshly graduated college student decides to stay another year or vacationers transplant themselves here on a whim. The city possesses a magnetism that makes it easy for people to put down roots. For Emily and Brian Kellett of STUMP, what drew them here was something a little less expected.

"Last November, we had gone down to Florida from Ohio to hand-pick some plants from our grower to bring back to the shop," Emily says. "As we were driving back north with a van full of plants, we realized that it was too cold out to leave them in the

car overnight. We'd never been before, but Savannah was kind of our last chance." The pair booked a place for the night and tucked their plants in. In the morning, they watched the crowds wander beneath sun-speckled oak trees. "We just joked about it, but we were like, yeah, we could live here."

Three months later, they did. A fated lunch at Bull Street Taco led them to the empty corner shop on Bull and East 33rd streets, the future home of STUMP Savannah. While they were at it, they figured they might as well purchase a house, too. "It's just crazy," Emily says. "Everything worked out so perfectly." In two weeks, the Kelletts had not only a new storefront but also a new city to call home. »



“We’re kind of shocked by how nice everyone is,” Brian says. “The fact that people wave and are friendly and want to know our story — it feels very supportive.” The Kelleths have done their part in supporting the Savannah community, too, by partnering with local artisans such as Pragmatic Pottery, Sea Salt Ceramics, Tate Ellington Illustrations and ElonWick Candle Co., whose wares are all available at STUMP.

STUMP stores build a strong connection with their cities — other locations are in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Cleveland and Columbus, Ohio — by emphasizing the importance of continued plant education. “We don’t want people to feel like they’re on their own after buying a plant from us,” Brian says. By hiring employees who know everything there is to know about house plants, STUMP makes sure every question gets answered. “People really care about their plants. Some even bring them in for a diagnosis,” he says, laughing.

Camille Ridgley, the store manager of STUMP Savannah, had a role to play before the Kelleths had ever set foot in the Hostess City. “[Camille] had reached out to us on Instagram after visiting our store in Philadelphia, saying how well a STUMP would do in her hometown of Savannah,” Emily recalls. “I totally forgot about it until she happened to message us again on the day we were in Savannah checking out the retail space. Somehow, she knew.” The three met for coffee that day and the rest is history. “Camille has been so great at helping us connect to other horticulturalists in Savannah,” Emily says. “It’s sort of amazing how perfectly everything fell into place.

For the Kelleths, it was Savannah’s warm winter nights that drew them to the city in the first place. Now, it’s the people who make them happy they stayed. 🍷

STUMP Savannah, 1612 Bull St., [stumpplants.com/savannah](http://stumpplants.com/savannah)