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to Christmas

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- ❑ 'Twas the Date Before Christmas
Friday 10/18
- ❑ Holiday Crashers
Saturday 10/19
- ❑ Scouting for Christmas
Sunday 10/20
- ❑ Operation Nutcracker
Friday 10/25
- ❑ The Christmas Charade
Saturday 10/26
- ❑ The 5-Year Christmas Party
Sunday 10/27

November

- ❑ A Carol for Two
Friday 11/1
- ❑ Our Holiday Story
Saturday 11/2
- ❑ Holiday Mismatch
Sunday 11/3
- ❑ Trivia at St. Nick's
Friday 11/8

- ❑ Santa Tell Me
Saturday 11/9
- ❑ 'Tis the Season to Be Irish
Sunday 11/10

- ❑ Christmas with the Singhs
Friday 11/15
- ❑ Jingle Bell Run
Saturday 11/16
- ❑ Confessions of a Christmas Letter
Sunday 11/17
- ❑ Christmas on Call
Friday 11/22
- ❑ Three Wiser Men and a Boy
Saturday 11/23

- ❑ To Have and To Holiday
Sunday 11/24
- ❑ Debbie Macomber's Joyful Mrs. Miracle
Thursday 11/28

- ❑ A '90s Christmas 6/5c
- ❑ Deck the Walls
Friday 11/29

- ❑ Believe in Christmas 6/5c
- ❑ Holiday Touchdown: A Chiefs Love Story
Saturday 11/30

December

- ❑ The Finnish Line 6/5c
- ❑ The Christmas Quest
Sunday 12/1
- ❑ Private Princess Christmas
Friday 12/6
- ❑ Sugarplummed
Saturday 12/7
- ❑ Leah's Perfect Gift
Sunday 12/8
- ❑ Hanukkah on the Rocks
Friday 12/13
- ❑ The Santa Class
Saturday 12/14
- ❑ Following Yonder Star
Sunday 12/15
- ❑ Happy Howlidays
Saturday 12/21

Holiday
MOVIES
24/7

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#CountdowntoChristmas



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Cheese Bundt
Cake (p. 77)

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Architect Brandon Ingram designs a storied new build on the outskirts of Atlanta.

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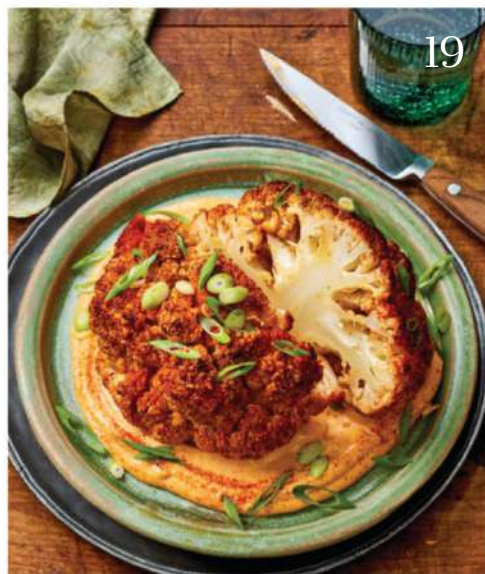
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Camila Alves
CAMILA ALVES McCONAUGHEY

Matthew McConaughey
MATTHEW McCONAUGHEY



THE OFFICIAL TEQUILA

OF THE HOLIDAYS

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A Thanksgiving Blessing

My Aunt Dorritte always knew how to rise to the occasion



N

O ONE in our family loved Thanksgiving more than my Aunt Dorritte. I’ve written about her husband, Goodloe, who was famous for his Bloody Marys, but she was the one who cooked for days, sweated every detail, and made you feel lucky to be there. My mother and Dorritte took turns hosting Thanksgiving and Christmas for more than 40 years, so I grew up celebrating at her house as much as my own. When you walked through her front door (usually adorned with a fall wreath), she greeted you with a big hug and a smile, and her house was filled with all sorts of wonderful smells. She often made homemade yeast rolls with melted butter on top, a particular weakness for my brother, Marshall. For appetizers, she’d put out marinated shrimp with decorative toothpicks and olives stuffed with blue cheese. Her dining room table looked like something out of the pages of this magazine—Dorritte was a lifelong reader—and each guest had a place card with their name in her careful script. It wasn’t overly fancy, but it felt special.

When it came to the main event, her turkey was “decorated out the wazoo,” as my mother likes to say, garnished with fresh cranberries and lots of parsley. She loved anything with a wow factor, like the year when she and Goodloe decided to serve a turducken—a turkey stuffed with a duck stuffed with a chicken. Remember those? They were all the rage at the time, but the family reviews must not have been great, because that didn’t appear again. The popular standbys were garlic-cheese grits from the Memphis Junior League’s *Party Potpourri* cookbook (made with those squeezable cheese tubes that Kraft has long since discontinued) and my mother’s spinach casserole. Dessert was crème brûlée, finished with a little propane torch that Dorritte had bought just for the occasion. After the meal, she would bring out her silver service for coffee with cream and sugar. She wanted everyone to stay, and we did.

On the last Thanksgiving we had with her, at my mom’s house in 2021, she had dementia, which had also overtaken my father, and the two of them sat together quietly while everybody talked. Her days of hosting gatherings were behind her, but her daughter-in-law, Karen, brought a shrimp appetizer in her honor, and Dorritte seemed happy just to be among family. As we were about to serve the meal, she tugged my sleeve and told me she wanted to say a blessing. Then she asked me for a spoon to clink her glass. There were more than 30 of us that year, including a host of new cousins and grandkids, and we all gathered around the dining room table and held hands. Dorritte probably hadn’t said five words all morning, but she suddenly launched into the most lucid, heartfelt prayer any of us had ever heard.

I can’t remember the specifics, but it reminded me of a few times when she asked everyone in the family to say something they were thankful for. That’s always a little awkward, especially when you’re a kid, but Dorritte somehow made it fun. We lost her a few days before Thanksgiving in 2023, just as we were coming back together for one of her favorite holidays. I hope she knows how grateful we were.

Sid Evans, Editor in Chief
sid@southernliving.com

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WHAT WE'RE LOVING,
SHARING, AND CELEBRATING

In Season

ARRANGEMENTS

Golden Hour Flowers

Brighten up your
Thanksgiving table with sunset-
inspired centerpieces

**WORK WITH
WHAT YOU HAVE**
Floral designer Brooke
McAfee shows how to
use a mix of materials
to create this display
on page 15.

STYLING: BROOKE MCAFEE



Great Heights

The star of this display is 'Princettia Dark Pink' poinsettia, which is surrounded by subtler shades of pink as well as golden yellows and browns. "I love them because they're super unique and branchier with smaller petals than traditional red poinsettias," says Brooke McAfee, the owner of Lilt Floral in Birmingham. After building the foundation with stems of sweet gum and dried beech plus sprigs of pepperberries and scented geraniums, she strategically placed dahlias, ranunculus, and poinsettias in florist frogs to hold each exactly where she wanted it. "Frogs are easy to use because you can stick the stems right into them and they're not going anywhere," says McAfee, who used vintage glass ones. "They're also a good way to keep blossoms happy and fresh in water."

Balancing Act

McAfee loves designing in sturdy, solid containers like this concrete tub. "When you have a vessel that is really stable structurally, it gives you the freedom to go wild and add as much filling as you want without worrying about it tipping over, especially if one side is more dense," she says. Anchoring it with a cluster of chicken wire, she created the centerpiece's framework with foraged branches and pepperberry sprigs, dried beech leaves, and scented geraniums, followed by dried 'Limelight' hydrangeas. Next, the stylist added zinnias, caramel antique roses, dahlias, and ranunculus throughout, building the arrangement more substantially on the right side and leaving empty space in the middle to keep the eye moving.



Small Statements

In lieu of a large arrangement, single blooms placed down a mantel or clustered on a side table pack an easy, memorable punch. "This is a less intimidating approach, but it's still so stunning and really impactful. All you have to do is trim the stems and put them in vases," says McAfee. It's also more affordable, as compact containers require fewer flowers. Here, she chose a combination of tulips, ranunculus, and dahlias to fill a hodgepodge of bud vases, from double-walled glass ones to tarnished silver and recycled bottles. "I like to either use just one type of vessel or mix it up for a more organic look," she notes.





from page 11

Breathing Room

Soft pinks and rich orange tones are the focus of this centerpiece composition. “I always like to start with branches, like the kangaroo paw and dried beech leaves used here, to build a base for how I want the shape to look,” says McAfee, who held them in place with a block of florist foam inside the footed vessel. She tucked some flowers (a combination of zinnias, dahlias, and caramel antique roses) deep down for dimension while positioning others to pop out. “I like working with negative space,” she says. “It feels more interesting and also allows you to showcase pretty flowers like these ranunculus.” Persimmons peek out at the bottom of the arrangement, delivering extra texture and nodding to the season.

Foraged Finds

Inspired by McAfee’s go-to method, this approachable concept leans heavily on outdoor treasures. “The idea is that you can just run to your backyard, clip off some pretty leaves, then throw in a few flowers, and you’re done,” says the florist, who suggests mixing in candles and some fruit, like the pomegranates seen here, for a simple and elegant look. With chicken wire in the bowl, she built the centerpiece’s structure using found branches (you can choose any type) and then added zinnias for cheerful color. “Chicken wire is my favorite way to design, because it allows for more movement,” she says. “And everything is in water, so it lasts longer.”



IVY'S KITCHEN

More Peas, Please

This tangy relish will transform everything on your plate

BY IVY ODOM

WHEN I WAS a kid growing up in Georgia, my family didn't serve our Thanksgiving meal on fancy china at a table set with a stunning centerpiece, nor did we take turns saying what we were grateful for. If you were invited to our holiday lunch, you'd walk into a room bursting at the seams with people. Everyone would line up, waiting impatiently to fill their Chinet paper plates from the buffet of precariously parked CorningWare and Pyrex dishes. Among the classics—dressing, potatoes, casseroles—there would be an occasional green vegetable, which would most definitely be slow-cooked and swimming in a savory lake of pork-jowl-laden potlikker.

It may have been a fuss-free potluck, but our cooking skills were over-the-top. There would be deep-fried turkey, lacy cornbread, and a sideboard full of layer cakes and pies. Each person's signature dish could rival the next, but for me, the crown jewel was

Nana's Marinated Pea Salad (recipe below). Perched unassumingly in the middle of a sea of rich, starchy sides, it was a welcome addition of texture, flavor, and color. Often served from a humble repurposed plastic Country Crock tub, the simple mixture of canned sweet peas and corn with fresh bell pepper, celery, and onion got its sweet, zesty kick from a vinegar-and-oil dressing.

Nana has always known a thing or two about how to properly eat a plate of Southern food. The way she fixes herself a bite is pure magic—she tops every forkful of creamy casserole or greens with a little bit of the salad before popping it into her mouth. She knows that when the peas are added to the other dishes, the whole meal comes to life. If we were a family who went around the room sharing what we were thankful for, I would claim Nana's marinated peas and how they've taught me to season everything with a little tang and a lot of love.



Nana's Marinated Pea Salad

ACTIVE 25 MIN. - TOTAL 1 HOUR, 25 MIN.

MAKES ABOUT 5 CUPS

Cook 1 cup **granulated sugar**, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup **apple cider vinegar**, and $\frac{1}{3}$ cup **vegetable oil** in a small saucepan over medium until sugar is dissolved, about 6 minutes. Transfer to a heatproof bowl to cool slightly, about 15 minutes. Combine 1 (15-oz.) can drained **small sweet peas** (such as Le Sueur), 1 (11-oz.) can drained **white shoepeg corn**, 1 (4-oz.) jar undrained **diced pimientos**, 1 cup each finely chopped **green bell pepper** and **sweet onion**, $\frac{1}{3}$ cup finely chopped **celery**, 1 tsp. **kosher salt**, and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. **black pepper** in a large bowl. Add vinegar mixture; toss to coat. Chill at least 1 hour or up to 3 days. Garnish with **fresh dill or parsley**.

FOOD STYLING: CHELSEA ZIMMER; PROP STYLING: CHRISTINA DALEY

BOUNTY

Flower Power

More than just a side, cauliflower shines as a main dish



IN BLOOM

“Cauliflower” comes from the Latin words “caulis” (cabbage) and “floris” (flower).

RECIPES: AMANDA STANFIELD; FOOD STYLING: CHELSEA ZIMMER; PROP STYLING: CHRISTINE KEELY



FORGET FAST FOOD
These sandwiches rival those from a popular Southern chain.

Nashville Hot Fried Cauliflower Sandwiches

ACTIVE 55 MIN. - TOTAL 55 MIN. - SERVES 6

Whisk together 1 ½ cups **buttermilk**, ¼ cup **hot sauce**, 1 **large egg**, and ½ tsp. **kosher salt** in a large bowl. Cut 1 **head cauliflower** into 12 (2-inch) florets; add to buttermilk mixture, and stir to coat. Combine 2 ½ Tbsp. **light brown sugar**, 1 ½ Tbsp. **Cajun seasoning**, and ½ tsp. each **cayenne pepper** and **kosher salt** in a small heatproof bowl. Whisk together 1 ½ cups **all-purpose flour** and 2 Tbsp. of the brown sugar mixture in a separate shallow dish. Fill a Dutch oven with **canola oil** to a depth of 2 inches; heat over medium-high to 350°F. Stir ⅓ cup of the hot oil into the remaining 3 Tbsp. brown sugar mixture. Working in 3 batches, dredge florets in flour mixture, and fry, turning occasionally, until golden brown, about 5 minutes per batch. Transfer to a wire rack set over a baking sheet. Immediately brush florets with oil mixture, and sprinkle lightly with **kosher salt**. Place 2 fried florets on each of 6 split, toasted **potato hamburger buns** dressed with **prepared coleslaw** and **bread-and-butter pickles**.

Roasted Whole Cauliflower with Smoky Mayo

ACTIVE 15 MIN. - TOTAL 55 MIN. - SERVES 4

Whisk together $\frac{1}{4}$ cup each **canola oil** and **water**, 3 Tbsp. **Creole seasoning**, 2 Tbsp. **honey**, 2 Tbsp. **Creole mustard**, and 1 tsp. **smoked paprika** in a small bowl. Remove leaves and trim stems from 2 (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -lb.) **cauliflower heads**. Turn each head upside down; drizzle 3 Tbsp. oil mixture into each, rotating to coat the interiors. Flip heads right side up; brush exteriors with remaining oil mixture. Place both heads in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet. Fill a small baking dish halfway full with **water**. Place baking dish on rack in lower third of oven; place skillet on center rack. This creates steam, which helps cook the cauliflower evenly and thoroughly, not just around the outside. Bake at 450°F until each cauliflower core is tender when pierced with a knife, 50 minutes to 1 hour. Meanwhile, whisk together 1 cup **mayonnaise**; 1 Tbsp. each **canola oil** and **water**; $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. each **Creole seasoning**, **smoked paprika**, and **fresh lemon juice**; and 1 grated **garlic clove** until mostly smooth. Spread mayonnaise mixture on a serving platter. Transfer roasted cauliflower to platter, and garnish with thinly sliced **scallions**. Serve warm.



HEADS UP
Carve this vegetarian main dish at the table just like a roast.



Cauliflower Personal "Pizzas"

ACTIVE 15 MIN. - TOTAL 45 MIN.
SERVES 4

Cut 2 (2-lb.) **cauliflower heads** in half; slice to create 2 ($\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-thick) "steaks" from each head. Arrange cauliflower steaks on a foil-lined baking sheet. Whisk together $\frac{1}{4}$ cup **extra-virgin olive oil**, 2 Tbsp. each grated **Parmesan cheese** and minced **garlic**, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. **dried Italian seasoning**, and $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. **kosher salt**. Spoon mixture over cauliflower steaks. Bake at 425°F on oven rack in upper third position until golden brown and tender, 25 to 30 minutes. Remove from oven, and top steaks with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup **jarred pizza sauce**. Sprinkle with $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. **kosher salt**, and top with 1 cup shredded **mozzarella cheese**, 2 Tbsp. each finely chopped **bell pepper** and **red onion**, and 2 Tbsp. quartered **pepperoni slices**. Increase oven temperature to 450°F. Return baking sheet to oven, and bake until mozzarella is melted, 5 to 6 minutes. Transfer steaks to a platter, and sprinkle with $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. **dried Italian seasoning**. Serve warm with additional **Parmesan** and **pizza sauce**.



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If you're planning on adding a furry friend to your family this season, consider opening your heart and home to a shelter pet. Below are some tips to make welcoming your new family member as seamless as possible.

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shelter

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love

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THE GRAPEVINE

WHAT SOUTHERNERS ARE BUZZING ABOUT

SPOTLIGHT

Bourbon Country's Welcome Wagon Wild Turkey's updated visitors center goes beyond tours and tastings



Kentucky bourbon just wouldn't be what it is without the influence of Jimmy Russell, the master distiller who's been working at Wild Turkey for 70 years. In May, the brand honored the legend, who turns 90 this month, by unveiling a transformed visitors center named the Jimmy Russell Wild Turkey Experience in his honor. The facility in Lawrenceburg is a 12,000-square-foot whiskey wonderland.

Learn how production has evolved in the History Walk video hallway, head to Generations Lounge for cocktails and small bites, purchase bottles in the retail center, try signature blends in two tasting rooms, and grab a drink at one of three indoor and out-



door bars. The best seat in the house is on the sprawling open-air pavilion, where you can sip from a snifter while taking in panoramic views of rolling hills, verdant fields, and two majestic bridges crossing the Kentucky River.

You might even get a chance to chat with the icon himself. Jimmy's grandson, associate blender Bruce Russell, says his grandfather is known to make weekly appearances. Can't swing a trip this year? Celebrate with their limited edition bottle release to mark his seventh decade with the distillery. Available in select local markets this fall, the 8-year-old, 101-proof bourbon incorporates whiskeys from Jimmy's favorite rickhouses.



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At Home

Indulge a Bit of Camp
A love of the outdoors guided this boy's room, where Fornasetti's Nuvolette wallpaper covers the ceiling and a tentlike wool plaid canopy hangs above the bed.

HISTORIC REFRESH

Color Theory

Designer Stephanie Sabbe douses a hundred-year-old Nashville house in her go-to mix of hot and cold hues

BY BETSY CRIBB WATSON

STYLING: CHRISTINA WRESSELL

W

HEN Erica and Dave Garrison tapped Stephanie Sabbe to liven up their new-to-them Nashville house in 2017, it felt some-

thing like destiny for the designer. For years, Sabbe had lived a block over from the couple's historic Neoclassical revival home, and she'd always wanted to know the exterior paint color. "I chickened out and never asked," she recalls. (It's PPG Paints' Delicate White, PPG1001-1.) These days, after a two-phase decorating project—with a renovation by architect Van Pond Jr. in between—she can tell you nearly every shade in the house, along with fabric and wallpaper selections. "I'm not adventurous with design in a way that I'm making up something new. I love traditional sofa lines and architecture," admits Sabbe, whose book, *Interiors of a Storyteller*, arrives next spring. "But color is my fun thing." It's also the glue that binds the home together, unifying the original 1920 structure with the updates that came a century later. Here's how Sabbe put her palette to work.



Roll Out the Red Carpet

"They were maybe the first clients I've ever had who liked red, which I loved," says Sabbe. While the fiery tint isn't always a crowd-pleaser ("Red got really villainized after the nineties," she quips), it's easy enough to find combinations that make it sing. For the designer, a vintage Turkish rug in the entry, with ribbons of navy and French blue woven through, offered a striking scheme to follow. "We had that palette and knew it worked," says Sabbe, who fully committed to the combination by wrapping the walls in Les Indiennes' Veronique pattern in Indigo.



Shake It Up

“I think when people pick one palette and pour it through the whole house, it’s just kind of boring,” says Sabbe, who dipped the home’s formal living area (above and at right) in Sherwin-Williams’ Niebla Azul (SW 9137). “I believe every room should be used, so what’s the point of two that feel the exact same?” Window treatments in a Sister Parish fabric punctuate the blustery backdrop with a burst of chile red.



Unlock New Neutrals

Sabbe says the existing chocolate brown grass cloth wallpaper directed the “dark and cozy” atmosphere in the corner study (above). She underscored its moodiness by including an olive green performance-velvet sectional. Throw pillows in Jasper’s Grace print in Willow temper the handsome elements with a dose of sweetness.





Make Every Corner Count

“It is an exclamation sort of space, yet windowless, so we chose this punchy green (Sherwin-Williams’ Edamame, SW 7729) to help add some life,” says Sabbe of the laundry room (above), which is visible from the powder bath and the office. The antique-style cast-iron sink by Rejuvenation underlines the home’s historic character and perfectly suits the scale of this niche.



Warm Up a White Kitchen

“I love going from hot to cold, kind of like you move from a hot tub to a cool pool,” says Sabbe of her approach to color. “That’s the way most of our interiors flow.” The kitchen called for something bright and airy, given the enveloping green hue of the adjacent great room (not shown). She plucked its shades from the Moroccan tile backsplash, coating the trim and cabinetry in Sherwin-Williams’ Shiitake (SW 9173). A good glow helps, Sabbe says: “It’s hardly ever the wall color; it’s the lighting.” (She prefers 2700K soft white bulbs.) Wider aisles around the island allow Dave’s brother, who uses a wheelchair, to maneuver easily during family gatherings.



Protect the Good Stuff

Oly's resin bubble chandelier—a piece the couple had originally spotted on their honeymoon—served as the jumping-off point for the dining room. “It’s a very traditional home, so I love the juxtaposition with something more modern,” says Sabbe. She covered the ceiling in Colefax and Fowler’s Atwood floral in Navy to further accentuate the focal point fixture—and for a more practical reason. “Their kids were toddlers at the time, so this way, they couldn’t touch it.” The designer repeated her commonsense approach with the dining chairs, upholstering their fronts in vinyl and their backs in Quadrille’s Volpi print.





Try a Tone-on-Tone Approach

“We went with matchy drapery, trim, and walls,” says Sabbe of the primary bedroom’s monochromatic elements (blue-gray linen curtains; Benjamin Moore’s Brewster Gray, HC-12, on the walls; and Sherwin-Williams’ Needlepoint Navy, SW 0032, on the trim). “I think that allows a cohesive feel without having to spend a ton of money.” Another savvy idea was introducing the room’s hero pattern (Jasper’s Jammu in Taupe/Teal) through a trio of Euro shams rather than via window treatments, which would have needed far more yardage.

Find Respite With Calming Shades

The designer went with white walls in the adjoining bath, layering in serene color with Sherwin-Williams’ Niebla Azul on the trim and built-ins. “This, to me, is the perfect primary bath. It’s just a feeling of ‘Ah, exhale,’” says Sabbe. Black-and-white checkerboard marble floors and a vintage tapestry that was found on Etsy ground the breezy spot. “I always feel like choosing old or antique art is the way to go,” she adds.



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PET FRIENDLY

It's a Dog's World

Designer Margaret Kirkland helped an Atlanta family renovate their home with a four-legged friend in mind

AFTER RESIDING in their Georgian-style house for 10 years, the homeowners called on the late architect Frank Neely and interiors expert

Margaret Kirkland for renovations to meet their evolving needs. “They had figured out how their family lived in the home and had a full, detailed wish list for the updates,” says Kirkland. Included in those must-haves were scratch-resistant brick pavers to combat muddy paws and boots plus a space dedicated to their yellow Lab, Belle (shown above). The result was this dog den, which also

functions as a casual entry and scullery. “Belle is very much a family member, so they wanted her to have a place that was totally her own,” she says.

While a cozy under-counter niche for Belle’s bed is the main feature of the room, not an inch goes unused. The cabinetry (painted Sherwin-Williams’ Pearly White, SW 7009) that stores all the pup’s food, toys, and other supplies is also outfitted with secondary kitchen appliances, including stacked ovens, a dishwasher, and a sink to keep the primary areas tidy when entertaining. “Although it’s a utilitarian space that serves a lot of purposes, it’s truly Belle’s room,” says Kirkland.

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THE GRUMPY GARDENER



“He told me I have the prettiest eyes. Yeah, like I haven’t heard that one before.”

BY STEVE BENDER

DEAR GRUMPY

This may seem like a weird question... but here goes. Why are those little bumps on the outsides of potatoes called eyes? I don’t believe spuds can see. Am I mistaken?

—HAROLD

Well, there are visionary artists and thinkers, but I’ve yet to encounter a visionary potato. That doesn’t mean they’re not out there. As to why people refer to the growths as eyes, the answer is obvious—corn already claimed ears, browallia staked out brows, tulips called dibs on lips, and no plant

wanted noses. These “eyes” represent root buds that eventually make lots more potatoes. They’re safe to eat as long as they’re small and the tubers aren’t soft or green, but cut them off if you’re squeamish.

Gathering Moss

I just moved from Colorado to the South Carolina Lowcountry, so Spanish moss is foreign to me. Whenever I see it hanging from live oaks, it looks like the branches died. What would you recommend to decrease the amount of it on my trees?

—JESSIE

Taking this plant out of the Lowcountry is like absconding with Colorado’s Rocky Mountain high. A majestic

live oak draped with Spanish moss is a Southern icon. Both are native and evolved together. Spanish moss uses the limbs for support and does not harm the tree. If you think there’s too much of it, you can hire landscapers to remove it, but it will just grow back. I think you’re gonna have to learn to love it like we Southerners do.

Another Dead Rosemary

I live in southern New Hampshire. Each year, I buy a rosemary plant in the spring and then bring it indoors in the fall. Every December, I throw the poor, dead thing out. It’s terribly embarrassing.

My great-grandmother brought hers inside every fall, parked it in a cold attic, and watered it occasionally. Hers always survived. Any advice?

—ROSE

Nice to hear from a reader in the Granite State! A rosemary plant needs two things when it’s growing indoors: a sunny window and well-drained soil. Water only after the top inch of dirt goes dry. I don’t know how your granny kept hers alive in the attic. Perhaps she practiced the “dark arts.”

Blueberry Blues

For years, I’ve tried to grow blueberries here in Tennessee. They used to produce a good crop, but then the branches started dying back. I moved them to a different location,

Ask the Grump! No question goes unanswered on his Facebook page: [facebook.com/slgrumpygardener](https://www.facebook.com/slgrumpygardener).

but the same thing keeps happening. Can you please help, Grumpy?

—PAT

In addition to acid soil with a pH of about 5, blueberry bushes need to have excellent drainage. If the ground stays too wet, that leads to root rot and dieback. Try planting yours a little bit high in the hole so that the top of the root ball is a half inch above the surrounding soil. Then add a layer of mulch over the ground.

Apples for Verity

How do you grow apples in Northern Virginia?

—VERITY, AGE 8

Verity, I am truly touched to receive your email. Apples are easy to grow where you live. Did you know that Virginia ranks sixth in apple

production in the U.S.? The state has lots of beautiful orchards where you can pick fresh ones too. In order for most of these plants to bear fruit, they have to exchange pollen with another apple selection. Bees will carry pollen from one tree to the next. So you'll need two different kinds placed no farther than 100 feet apart. I suggest going with a 'Golden Delicious' (yellow) and a 'Red Delicious' (red). Choose a sunny spot where water doesn't puddle up long after it rains. For each plant, dig a hole that's three times as wide as the root ball but no deeper, place the tree in the middle of the hole, fill in around it with soil, use your foot to firm it up, and water well. Finally, spread a 1-inch-deep layer of mulch over the top of the dirt you just firmed, but don't let it touch the trunk. Good luck!



GRUMPY'S GRIPE of the month

CERTAIN PLANT NERDS say you should always grow natives because they're easy—sometimes actually too easy. Case in point: Years ago, in a confounded act of neighborliness, I planted a native yaupon holly in the yard across the street. It is female, so in fall and winter it smothers itself with small, translucent red berries that birds eat and poop everywhere. Now I have yaupon seedlings coming up all over—in my lawn, on my porch, and in my hair. Native Americans made a tea from its leaves in order to purge, which may have inspired its botanical name, *Ilex vomitoria*. This is fitting, because every time I have to pull up another seedling, I want to hurl.



KNOW
YOUR
PLANTS



'Crimson Queen' Japanese Maple

Throw away your pruners. This all-season beauty always knows its place

Looking for a tree to grow in a confined spot or a container? Here you go: 'Crimson Queen' Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum* 'Crimson Queen'). I have this tree and love it. A slow grower, it has reached 4 feet tall and 6 feet wide in 20 years, forming a mushroom-shaped mound of layered, cascading branches. Its finely cut leaves emerge wine red in the spring, turn bronze red in the summer, and then brighten to blazing scarlet in the fall. Give it moist, well-drained soil in USDA Zones 5 to 9. It takes a good deal of sun, but provide light afternoon shade in Zones 8 and 9.

—Steve Bender

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ADVENTURES IN
TRAVEL AND CULTURE

The South



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SPECIAL REPORT

The Best Places To Retire—Affordably!

Stretch your savings and live your golden years to the fullest in these budget-friendly cities and towns

BY ASHLEY CUSICK





The decision about where we want to spend our retirement involves complex variables that include our families, health, interests, aspirations, and finances. As the cost of living continues to rise, finding the right city or town to make your money last as long as possible is paramount.

For more and more people nearing or entering retirement, the South continues to be a draw, from Hot Springs, Arkansas, to Vero Beach, Florida, and plenty of zip codes in between. More American families have moved to this region than any other part of the country for the past decade, and that trend is expected to continue.

To identify the South's best places to retire for 2024, Investopedia, a financial news and education

website where I serve as Editor-in-Chief, partnered with *Southern Living* for the second year. We evaluated economic and livability metrics using data on housing prices, median income levels, and proximity to recreation and cultural activities, among other criteria. We interviewed locals, depended on the experience of *Southern Living* editors, and looked for spots where the quality of life is high.

Although our list contains just 10 locations, we know that there are many others in the region that warrant a mention. But when it comes to affordability and getting your money's worth in retirement, this group gives you a great place to start.

—Caleb Silver, Editor-in-Chief, Investopedia



CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA

West Virginia's capital gives culture lovers a rich experience at a price that won't break the bank

From watching boat races at the annual Charleston Sternwheel Regatta to soaking in the changing seasons along area trails, there are plenty of reasons to consider making West Virginia's most populous city your retirement home. Charlestonians can stroll around downtown galleries during First Friday ArtWalk; attend live tapings of *Mountain Stage*, a beloved local show that broadcasts musical performances to NPR stations across the country; or visit the Clay Center for the Arts & Sciences of West Virginia, which has a cinema, a performance hall, an art

museum, and a planetarium under a single roof. This is a well-educated place (43.2% of residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher), and more than 20% of the 48,864 people who live here are 65 or older. Grab a bite at the year-round farmers' market, savor free summertime concerts on the Kanawha River, or cheer at a minor-league Dirty Birds game. This city makes financial sense too: With estimated median monthly housing costs of just \$857, retirees can spend 26% less than the median across the South. (Investopedia estimates the median monthly housing costs in the South to be \$1,163.) In addition, West Virginia is phasing out taxation on Social Security income, offers property tax homestead exemptions to eligible residents 65 or older, and has low effective property tax rates.

On the Waterfront
The Elk and Kanawha Rivers flow through Charleston, West Virginia.

▶ **ESTIMATED MEDIAN MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS: \$857**



Texas Treasure
 (From top) Fredericksburg is proud of its well-preserved historic district, which includes businesses and homes. Take in the area's beautiful wine country at places like Becker Vineyards.



Fredericksburg, Texas

With its proximity to both San Antonio and Austin, this Hill Country gem has unparalleled stargazing, unique German traditions, and fine wines

TOURISTS STREAM to this town of 10,875, but with almost a third of its residential population 65 or older, it is also a great place to consider retiring. The natural beauty of the Texas Hill Country and Fredericksburg's quaint feel are among its main appeals, says Mayor Jeryl Hoover. An International Dark Sky Community, the city presents exceptional stargazing at its beautiful local parks, and in the spring, it explodes with the

colors of blooming bluebonnets and other wildflowers. Sitting in the heart of Texas' wine country, downtown is lined with multiple wineries plus restaurants and locally owned shops. The area's German heritage is reflected in its architecture, cuisine, and beer selections. Oktoberfest is the largest of more than 400 annual events and celebrations, which also include a bluegrass festival, a craft beer-and-polka

gathering, and Christmas traditions. This area's estimated median monthly housing costs of \$1,254 are 8% higher than the Southern median, but few places could offer this much to do at a lower price. In addition, Texas does not tax income, and eligible senior homeowners may receive large homestead exemptions on their property taxes.

▶ **ESTIMATED MEDIAN MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS: \$1,254**

NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA

The quieter side of this coastal hot spot has 9 miles of Atlantic shoreline, world-class golf, and lower housing costs than the rest of the region

North Myrtle Beach provides easy access to the Grand Strand's more famous locale—Myrtle Beach is just 20 miles southwest—but retirees here can expect to find a slower tempo and greater affordability. That does not mean life gets boring, though. Practice your swing at more than 80 regional golf courses, go to a free concert on Main Street, or see evidence of loggerhead sea turtles nesting at the less-packed beaches. The area has state-of-the-art medical facilities nearby, an abundance of delicious local seafood, and 7 acres of walking trails at Heritage Shores Nature Preserve. North Myrtle Beach's population of 18,790 has a median age of 60.2, and almost 8% of the residents polled in the 2022 American Community Survey moved here from a different state in the past year alone. Estimated median monthly housing costs are \$1,075, which is 8% lower than across the region. South Carolina does not tax Social Security benefits and has lower effective property tax rates than much of the country. It also provides income tax deductions and property tax homestead exemptions to eligible resident seniors.

▶ **ESTIMATED MEDIAN MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS: \$1,075**

Valdosta, Georgia

A football town with fun festivals, delicious produce, plenty to do, and great benefits

LOCATED NEAR the Florida-Georgia border, this city of 55,378 is less than two hours northeast of Tallahassee and northwest of Jacksonville. Life here is more affordable than in those major metro areas, with estimated median monthly housing costs of \$893, about 23% lower than those across the South. When you aren't rooting for Valdosta's celebrated high school football team, you can pick your own seasonal pecans, peaches, and strawberries; go to the springtime Valdosta-Lowndes Azalea Festival; or play pickleball at new outdoor courts at McKey Park. Shop at the area's many proudly Black-owned businesses, or escape the noise by bird-watching at Drexel Park or exploring wetlands at the Grand Bay Wildlife Management Area. The Theatre Guild Valdosta, Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, and the Valdosta Symphony

Orchestra all entertain area arts lovers. Although the population's median age is only 29.2, the city has not forgotten its older residents. For locals 50 and over, the Senior Citizen Center has square and line dancing, crocheting, billiards, and a heated indoor pool. Valdosta State University's Learning in Retirement group organizes lectures and educational tours. For eligible state residents who are 62 or older, there is a policy providing free (or nearly free) college classes within the University System of Georgia. There are also additional income- and-property tax exemptions, plus appraisal inflation protections for homestead residences of people in this age range. On top of that, Social Security benefits are not taxed.

▶ **ESTIMATED MEDIAN MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS: \$893**



Scenic Spots
(From top) The Lighthouse Grill and Tiki Bar is a popular meeting place in Englewood. Fans of Victorian-style homes will find many in Valdosta.



ENGLEWOOD, FLORIDA

Nestled between Tampa and Fort Myers on Florida's Gulf Coast, it has a small-town feel with enough bustle to keep retirees active

With low-rise buildings and mom-and-pop shops, this sunny beach town is slightly off the beaten path, making it quieter—and more affordable—than many larger and better-known coastal alternatives. Englewood's estimated median monthly housing costs of just \$779 are 33% less than those across the South. Plus, Florida does not have state income tax and gives supplementary homestead exemptions to eligible seniors. Retirees have clearly taken note of these benefits. More than half of

Englewood's 20,800 residents are 65 or older, with an estimated median age of 67.8. "People from all over the United States come here, and they find their people," says Erin Halstead, president of the Englewood Chamber of Commerce and a real estate agent. "There is a huge sense of community." At the town's six tranquil beaches, locals like to meet up for daily yoga, weekly sunset drum circles, kayaking, and hunting for shark teeth. Those who prefer to stay dry can look for manatees; dine at waterfront spots along Englewood's coast, bay, and creeks; or catch a car show or festival downtown. Inland nature preserves showcase mangrove swamps and pine flatwoods, and Major League Baseball fans can enjoy watching the Atlanta Braves and the Tampa Bay Rays do their annual spring training nearby.

▶ **ESTIMATED MEDIAN MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS: \$779**

Taste of the Tropics

(From top) Vero Beach has a robust dining scene with many locally owned restaurants like El Sid Taqueria. Nearby, the lush McKee Botanical Garden has glorious tropical foliage and exhibits.



Vero Beach, Florida

Find warm winters, great public amenities, and housing options for a range of budgets on the Treasure Coast

IF YOUR DREAM is to spend your retirement years in The Sunshine State, you could choose this Atlantic Coast community that boasts Florida living at its finest. Vero Beach has dining options for every taste, an art museum and botanical gardens, a public heated lap pool and racquetball courts, and quality medical facilities. As with any seaside destination, housing gets more expensive the closer you are to

the water. But just outside the city limits, in unincorporated Indian River County, home prices are markedly lower and you can have all the same perks. The county provides several parks with Atlantic beach access, a rich events calendar with exercise classes aimed at seniors, a golf club with resident discounts, and multiple public pools. Watch pelicans take flight or view dolphin pods swimming from

the 26 miles of white-sand beaches. Or take nature walks or play aquatic sports in the local saltwater lagoons. With more than 35% of county residents being 65 or older, it is clear that many have chosen Vero Beach as their retirement home. And with good reason: Estimated median monthly housing costs of \$1,099 put prices in this community of 137,421 on par with those in the rest of the South. Plus, coming here means you get all the additional retirement tax benefits Florida gives.

▶ **ESTIMATED MEDIAN MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS: \$1,099**

HICKORY, NORTH CAROLINA

Nature enthusiasts and Main Street shoppers are happy here at the base of the Blue Ridge Mountains

Just over an hour from Charlotte, Winston-Salem, and Asheville, Hickory is regularly listed as one of America's most desirable and affordable places to live and retire. Mayor Hank Guess touts its "delectable farm-to-table restaurants, outdoor adventures on Lake Hickory, eclectic downtown shops, and vibrant arts and cultural opportunities to rival that of cities over twice its size." The estimated median housing costs are 17% lower than those across the South, coming in at \$960 per month. Outdoorsy retirees in this city of 43,490 can bike under the oak trees at Bakers Mountain Park or hop on the interconnected greenways and blueways that compose the massive Carolina Thread Trail. When you aren't spending time in nature, walk around savoring a local beer in the Downtown Social District, listen to a free concert at The Hum amphitheater, or applaud the Hickory Crawdads during Minor League Baseball season. The area features accessible medical care and has sizable Black, Latino, and Asian populations.

▶ **ESTIMATED MEDIAN MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS: \$960**

The Great Outdoors

(Clockwise from left) Maryville is situated in the Smoky Mountains. This college town is full of ways to be active in nature, such as biking and hiking. Admire the views at Hot Springs' Garvan Woodland Gardens.



Maryville, Tennessee

This Knoxville suburb is a retirement sweet spot with easy city access, the nearby Great Smoky Mountains, and a relaxed pace

MARYVILLE, an East Tennessee city of 31,907, sits less than half an hour from the fly-fishing and incredible views of Great Smoky Mountains National Park and just 18 miles south of Knoxville. But there is plenty to do right here in town: Retirees can take in a performance of the Appalachian Ballet Company; hear live music at The Shed Smokehouse & Juke Joint; or stroll the Maryville-Alcoa Greenway, which connects several parks. Living near

Maryville College means NCAA Division III games; regular lectures, concerts, and theater; a wooded campus with more hiking trails; and even a weekend Japanese school. Nearby Knoxville supplies bigger-city options such as The University of Tennessee football, a zoo, and the opera, but being based in Maryville provides retirees a calmer day-to-day life. More than 18% of residents are 65 or older, and the town has a local hospital, is close to

Knoxville's medical care, and has an active senior center for those over 50. The estimated median monthly housing costs are 3% lower than the South's number at \$1,125. Tennessee does not have income tax, and eligible homeowners can have the value of their homestead property "frozen" for tax assessment purposes after they turn 65.

▶ **ESTIMATED MEDIAN MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS: \$1,125**

HOT SPRINGS, ARKANSAS

The Spa City provides opportunities for national park exploration and urban adventure at a lower cost

Just an hour southwest of Little Rock, this small city of 37,930 in the Ouachita Mountains is practically inseparable from Hot Springs National Park. This area has four real seasons, and its hot sum-

mers and mild winters mean tons of time to take advantage of the park's free admission. When you aren't traversing the miles of trails, soak in the thermal spring waters or drink craft beer at Superior Bathhouse Brewery, the only brewery in a U.S. national park. Downtown, admire the Art Deco buildings and catch live music—or The World's Shortest St. Patrick's Day Parade—over on Bridge Street. Whether you are interested in botanical gardens or horse races, gallery walks or arts and crafts, mountain biking or leaf-peeping, Hot Springs has something for everyone. And it delivers all of this at a surprisingly affordable price: Estimated median monthly housing costs are just \$810, about 30% less than those across the South. Additionally, Arkansas does not tax Social Security benefits, and, like Tennessee, provides a homestead property tax “freeze” program for eligible residents aged 65 and older.

▶ **ESTIMATED MEDIAN MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS: \$810**



Natural Wonder
Nearby Gulf State Park features more than 6,000 acres and has nine ecosystems.

Orange Beach, Alabama

Proud of its family-friendly vibe, Orange Beach has a lot to do beyond its beautiful shores, plus lower taxes

JUST WEST of Pensacola, Florida, Orange Beach shares the same dolphin-filled, clear blue waters but at a more affordable price than its better-known Gulf Coast neighbors. “Our slogan is

‘Life is better here,’ and it truly is,” says Orange Beach City Council member Annette Mitchell. Retirees can take a break from relaxing on the gorgeous beaches to visit the Wharf, home to shopping,

movies, dining, and regular outdoor music performances. Enjoy access to some of the state's best hiking across pine forests, swamps, and sand. Or for a wilder time, head down the road to the legendary Flora-Bama lounge, which sits right across the Florida border and stages live music and a host of annual events. Residents have an estimated median age of 51.6, and 28.5% of the city's 8,095 residents are 65 or older. While the estimated median monthly housing costs here are a touch higher than those across the South, at \$1,279, Alabama has some of the lowest effective property tax rates in the country and doesn't tax Social Security benefits.

▶ **ESTIMATED MEDIAN MONTHLY HOUSING COSTS: \$1,279**



A Note on Methodology

How we chose this year's list

These cities and towns were selected from all the Census Designated Places in Southern states. Median household income and monthly housing cost estimates were collected from the 2022 American Community Survey (five-year) for each of the places. Locations for which estimates included large margins of error were removed from the initial list. Then the final choices were determined by a variety of economic and lifestyle criteria, including housing costs relative to the rest of the South; taxes; and the prevalence of restaurants, hospitals, and colleges.

LONG WEEKEND

Little Big Town

About 15 miles from Asheville, North Carolina, smaller but equally energetic Black Mountain is ready for its day in the sun

BY TARA MASSOULEH MCCAY

A Seasonal Palette
See Black Mountain blanketed in autumn hues from mid-October through early November.

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Farm Fresh

(From left) The burgers at Foothills Grange feature meat from its butcher shop. Open Oven is known for its waffles and eggs Benedict options.



STROLLABLE SHOPPING

Black Mountain was designed for walking. You can get just about anywhere in 10 minutes or less, and most businesses reside in a densely populated polygon bound by Broadway Street, State Street, and Sutton Avenue. Fuel up for a day of wandering with a coffee at Dripolator. Then go where the wind takes you. There's no need to chart a course; even at an easy pace, you'll be able to see it all.

Art is a significant part of Black Mountain's identity, which is in turn a reflection of western North Carolina's thriving creative community. Peruse shelves of handmade treasures at places like Seven Sisters Craft Gallery and Mountain Nest Gallery. Both businesses bring together pieces from hundreds of regional artists who produce

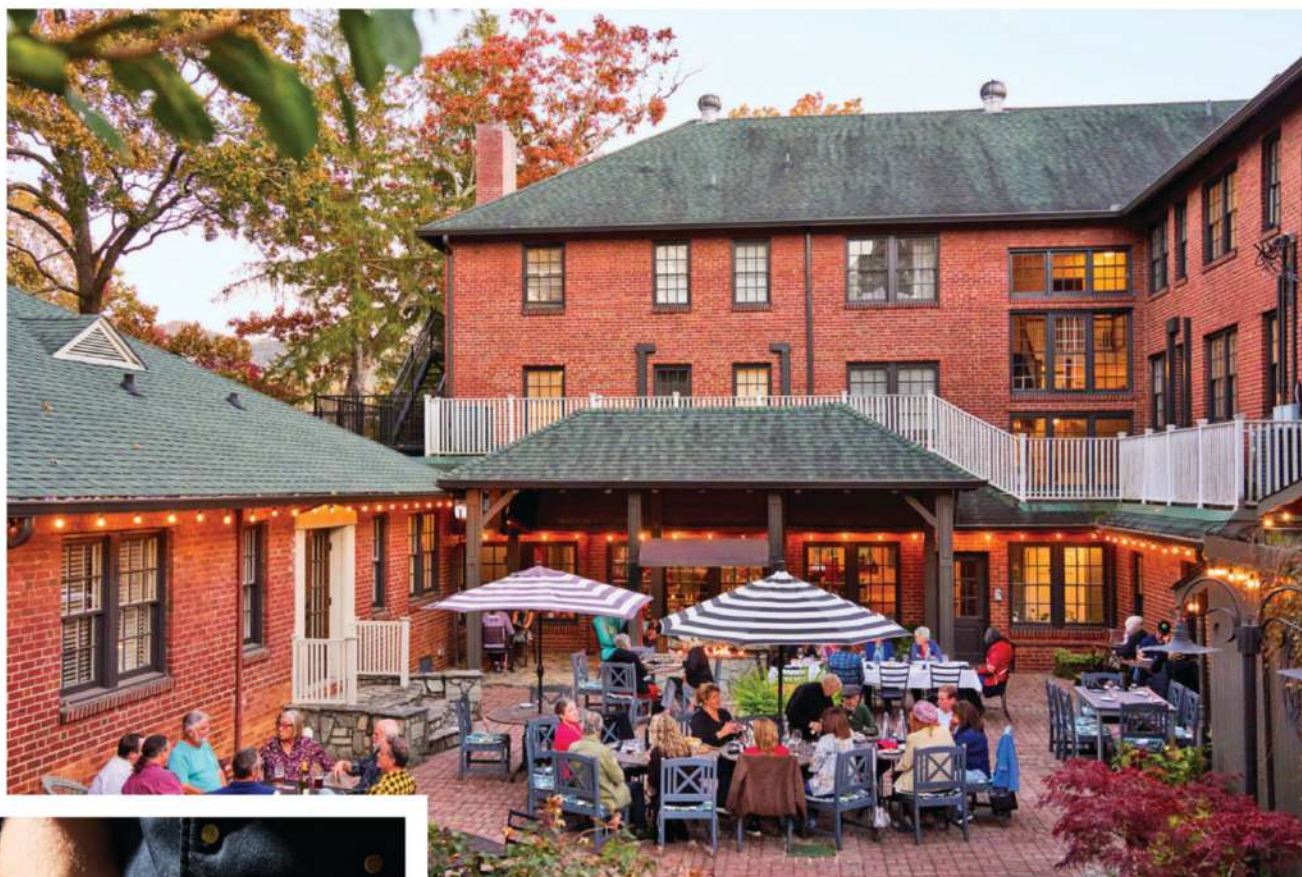
THE DEEP thrum of an upright bass and the steady buzz of chatter drifts our way as we reach the outskirts of Black Mountain's Tailgate Market. Before I've even made it to the inner circle of tightly packed tents, I'm offered homemade baked goods and a tote bag to carry soon-to-be-purchased wares. Having just come from breakfast (a hearty potato-veggie hash laced with lemon-tahini sauce from Open Oven Brunch and Bakery), I politely decline the cookies and go about surveying the setup.

Patrons crisscross between rows of vendors, who are peddling everything from locally foraged mushrooms to handmade pottery to almond croissants. Children situated around pint-size tables are hard at work on a construction paper craft, and a band is passionately strumming a folk version of Jefferson Airplane's "Somebody to Love." Thirty minutes later, we leave

with a bag of pears, a watercolor landscape painting, and an invitation to a comedy show happening later that night.

It's a typical fall Saturday in the western North Carolina hamlet of Black Mountain, which means a large percentage of the 8,400 residents will mosey their way to the market then spend the rest of the day hiking in the surrounding mountains or hanging around downtown. Other activities on the to-do list may include shopping and sitting down to a nice dinner before seeking out live music. The best part? You can do all that—and more—without leaving the town's 7 square miles.

Venture a little farther, and you'd reach Asheville in about 20 minutes. But Black Mountain is picking up steam as a great vacation alternative, offering many of the same draws, plus lower prices and far fewer crowds. The chamber of commerce estimates that the town hosts around 2 million visitors per year, and that number is projected to grow.



Eat, Play, Stay

(From top) The Monte Vista Hotel has 45 rooms and an inviting courtyard. Seasonal local produce is the star of the Vegan Charred Beet and Leek Wellington at Beradu. Several trails near downtown Black Mountain offer spectacular views of the stunning Blue Ridge scenery.



everything from jewelry to oil paintings, blown glass, wood carvings, ceramics, watercolors, and handicrafts. At The Old Depot Gallery, located in the town's historic train station, you'll find even more. Black Mountain Center for the Arts has a gallery exhibit plus concerts, theater performances, and classes.

Other shops you should pop into include Chifferobe Home & Garden for antiques, gifts, and decor; Sassafras on Sutton for books; and Town Hardware & General Store, a beacon of the community that has been open since 1928. Vintage toys, tools, and grocery items share space with a second-floor book nook heralded by a cardboard cut-out of Dolly Parton. When you need a break from retail adventures, follow the sweet smell of confections to Hey Hey Cupcake. Then walk your Boston Cream or Bonita Margarita dessert around the corner to the town square, where you can enjoy it in the

company of flowering gardens, a gurgling fountain, and giant rocking chairs. The unofficial symbols of Black Mountain, rockers of all shapes and sizes are sprinkled throughout town. Sit for a second, appreciate the beautiful autumn color that paints the surrounding landscape, and see exactly how Black Mountain got its nickname: the Front Porch of Western North Carolina.

DIVERSE DINING

If you're downtown and see a line of patrons spilling out of a door, it's not a small-town version of a big-city sneaker drop but rather the lunch rush at Cousins Cuban Cafe. People don't mind waiting for owner Betty Martinez-Sperry's ham croquetas, ropa vieja (shredded steak sautéed in tomato criollo sauce), and Cubano sandwiches. The popular daytime restaurant opened just a few years ago but became an instant classic thanks to her warm hospitality and flavorful menu.

Cousins Cuban Cafe is a family affair for the Miami native, who relocated about a decade ago after spending years vacationing in the area with her relatives. Her cousin owns The Dancing Dragonfly, a gift shop connected to the restaurant, and family members (including her husband, sister, brother-in-law, and cousins) clock a few shifts per week at the cafe. "At this point in my life, at 61, I just want it to be fun, and it really is," says Martinez-Sperry.

Black Mountain might be small, she says, but its range when it comes to culture and cuisine is anything but. At The

Pure & Proper, an all-day New American eatery housed in a renovated 1940s gas station, chef Jake Whitman seeks international inspiration for dishes ranging from poached pear-and-roasted beet gnudi to a savory Japanese pancake called an okonomiyaki to flat-iron steak with chimichurri and black garlic aioli. These days, Brussels sprouts appetizers are a dime a dozen, but Whitman's version with

whipped ricotta, tomato jam, and spiced cashews is celebration worthy. The Pure & Proper's menu is creative and sophisticated but at half the price you might expect to pay. Shareable starters hover around \$14, while many entrées, including dishes as impressive as duck confit, cost around \$25.

Heidi and Richard King opened the restaurant in December 2022, a few years

after they'd relocated their family to Belize and then traveled through Central America in an RV. When they moved back to the States, they couldn't think of anywhere better to live with their two children than their hometown. "We started brainstorming about what Black Mountain needed the most, and we kept coming back to date night," Richard says. "We're trying to capture

something where you could walk in and immediately feel like you could be in Italy or in Manhattan."

Exposed brick walls, sheepskin seat coverings, and warm pendant lighting channel Old World Europe. Heidi, a self-taught interior designer, even transformed a caved-in basement into a cozy wine cellar outfitted with black-and-white bistro chairs and marble cafe tables.

Two minutes away on a dead-end street is Bush Farmhouse. Dinner here is like attending a backyard soiree thrown by your coolest friend. A band plays from a stage in the corner of the yard. If you want to stretch your legs between courses, go say hello to the donkeys and goats. And from your table, you can even see the small garden where the greens for your salad were grown. When the giant disco ball hanging



Global Gourmet
 (From left) The Pure & Proper's design was inspired by timeless European cafes. The Cubano sandwich and Coconut Flan are two of the top sellers at Cousins Cuban Cafe.



Fall's Bounty

(From left) Point Lookout Trail is a popular route for leaf-peeping. Pumpkin seeds, pea puree, and beets accompany the Burrata appetizer at Bush Farmhouse.



from the soaring overhead barn structure catches the sun just right, it sends a twinkling cascade of light across your fellow diners. Everything glows gold.

Owner and executive chef Mark Henegan is the consummate host. He learned to cook from his parents and grandmother growing up in South Africa. When he moved to New York to pursue a career as a pianist, he supplemented his pay by working in kitchens, over time falling in love with the idea of owning a restaurant. His first foray served the likes of Desmond Tutu, Jay-Z, Beyoncé, Richard Branson, and Paul Simon during its 20-year residency in Brooklyn.

At Bush Farmhouse, Henegan continues his mission to introduce Americans to South African cuisine with dishes such as Umngqusho (white

hominy and pinto beans), Pap & Boerewors (a version of bangers and mash that substitutes maize meal for the potatoes), and Bunny Chow (a traditional street food of curry stuffed into a bread bowl).

With his shoulder-length hair tucked under his signature trucker hat and a glass of wine in hand, Henegan works the room, stopping at every other table to give a hug or tell a story about his days rubbing elbows with celebrities or splitting martinis and oysters at the bar with his pet pig. Locals joke that he's the unofficial mayor of town. His work with local nonprofits like the Black Mountain Home for Children, Youth & Families and LEAF Global Arts further makes the case. Like Cousins and The Pure & Proper, Bush Farmhouse is more passion project than business venture. "Restaurants are boring, and

they're a lot of work. So if I just had a burger place, where's the soul?" he says.

SIT AND SIP

Nearby Asheville is famous for its craft beer scene. Black Mountain's collection isn't quite as prolific, but there are

still plenty of places to grab a cold drink. Enjoy a flight on a second-floor deck overlooking the beautiful scenery at Black Mountain Brewing. Sister venue The Railyard Black Mountain serves up the brewery's beer, plus cocktails, whole-hog barbecue, and live music from a sprawling outdoor space.

This area's climate is

Hike to New Heights

Spot brilliant fall color on these scenic trails

Lookout Mountain Trail

A short but steep 1.4-mile round-trip route in the nearby town of Montreat, this path provides panoramic views of the Seven Sisters mountains.

Graybeard Trail

The 9.5-mile out-and-back journey begins with an ascent of Graybeard Mountain and then takes hikers to a small waterfall and through a hardwood forest.

Lake Tomahawk Park

Featuring an 8.9-acre lake surrounded by a paved walking trail, this park has a pavilion, picnic tables, tennis courts, a playground, and fishing piers.



surprisingly temperate, and everyone takes advantage of that. Foothills Grange brings folks together for burgers and hot dogs, cold ales, and yard games at an outdoor venue located in the center of downtown. Foothills is the sixth venture from the McKissicks, a local family whose business

pursuits have evolved for the past two decades—from a farm to a butcher shop to this fresh iteration. “This place is the culmination of all the things we’ve learned over the years,” says owner Casey McKissick. “We really wanted to create a space for everyone.”

Natural Wonders

(From top) The community sits in a valley surrounded by the Seven Sisters mountain range. Handmade ceramics are sold at several galleries and boutiques in town.



One of Black Mountain’s newest gathering spots, Beradu, opened just last fall but already has quite the following. Owners Maggie and Patrick Beraduce are committed to selling and serving regional food. You can pick up a pressed sandwich for lunch, enjoy dinner prepared using local wild game and produce, or shop for specialty groceries and vinyl in the market. Regular events and a bottle club help build community.

Oak and Grist Distilling Company, one of the state’s few 100% grain-to-glass distilleries, uses locally grown barley to make small-batch whiskey and gin. Try their spirits in cocktails served at their tasting room, and book a tour to learn the process.

If your night ends at White Horse Black Mountain, you’ve

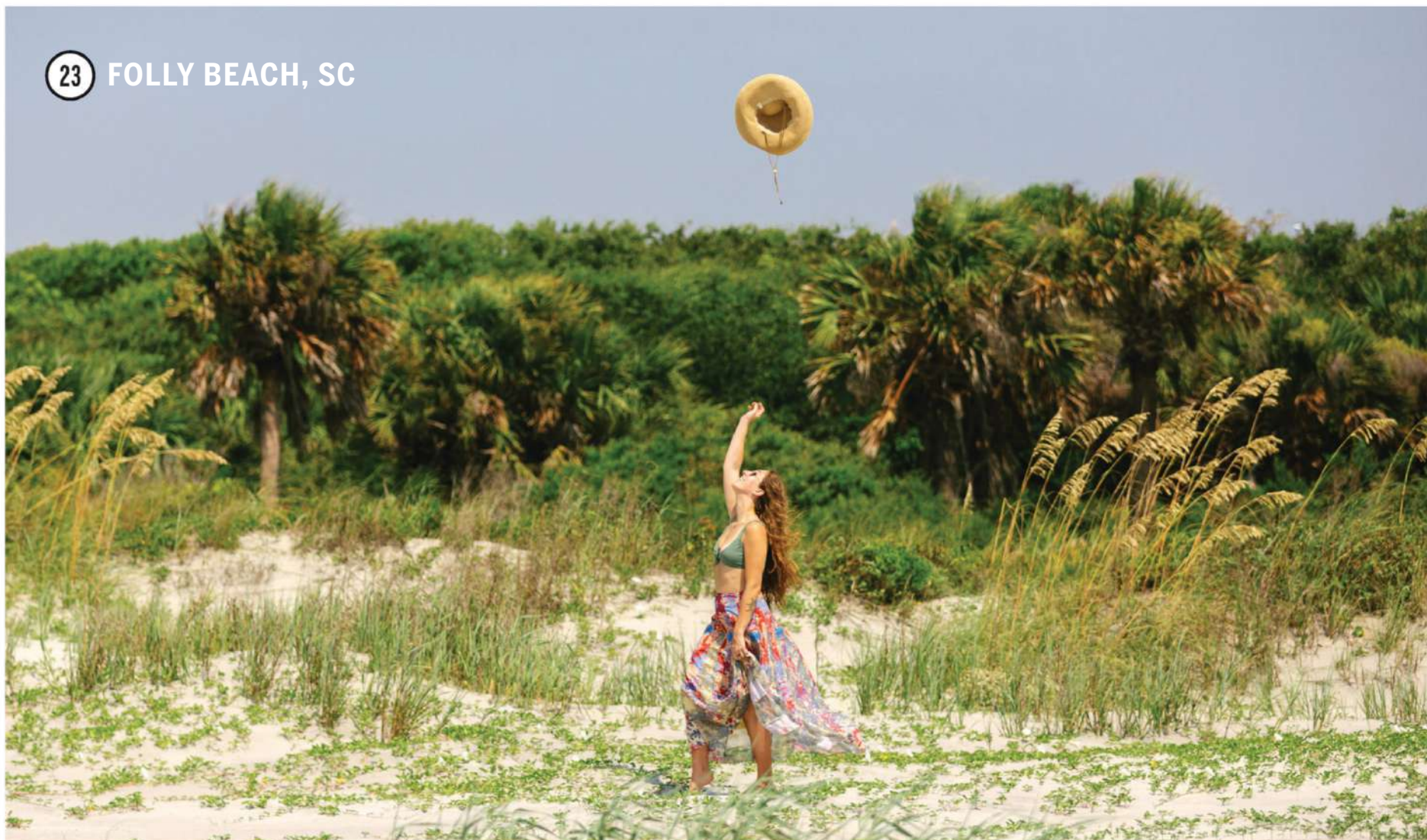
done something right. The longtime venue specializes in intimate listening room-style performances where audience members crowd around cabaret tables to hear bluegrass, Americana, classical, blues, and jazz music. Certain nights feature vaudeville or comedy shows, songwriters’ circles, and movie screenings.

After 15 years, the place became a nonprofit in 2023. The music will play on, and opportunities to entwine itself with the community will multiply. “It’s the town’s living room,” says founder Bob Hinkle. “Natural beauty and the warmth of people characterize Black Mountain. This valley is a catch basin for the best of what life has to offer, and White Horse Black Mountain is happily in the middle of it.”

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The Caregiver's Guide: Nurturing Our Aging Loved Ones

Becoming a caregiver is a deeply rewarding yet often challenging journey which involves navigating care tasks and providing round-the-clock emotional support for your loved one. Whether you're taking on these responsibilities for the first time or seeking to level-up your caregiving skills, we've rounded up these essential solutions and strategies to equip you with the caregiving confidence you need.



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Set
in

Set home

Architect
Brandon Ingram
designs a storied
new build on the
outskirts of Atlanta

BY CAMERON BEALL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
ANTONIS ACHILLEOS
STYLING BY
MATTHEW GLEASON



NEUTRAL PALETTE

Sherwin-Williams' Dover White (SW 6385) on the siding and trim and Urbane Bronze (SW 7048) on the shutters balance the white oak door, bluestone pavers, and Tennessee limestone elements.



When

Michelle Mentzer and her husband, Charlie, first approached Atlanta-based architect Brandon Ingram, they knew exactly what they

wanted: a new house inspired by the historic stone homes of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. “I’ve always loved that part of the country myself,” says Ingram. And the couple’s wooded lot in Alpharetta, Georgia, where they chose to settle for its laid-back community and rural feel, presented a fitting location to build something that appeared to have evolved over time. “The thought of a home that feels so specific to a site seemed just right in this bucolic setting that lends itself to a farmhouse and equestrian vibe,” he continues. “We took inspiration not only from the architecture of Bucks County but the real sense of place those houses have.”

As the architect always does, he kicked off the design process using a marker on vellum. “Everything we were saying, he was putting down on paper to create what we had always envisioned but didn’t know how to get,” says Mentzer. “I truly felt like our home was born that first time we sat down together.”

On the exterior, a calculated mix of stone, clapboard siding, and board-and-batten gives the impression of a structure that has existed for generations. “The idea wasn’t just to randomly throw in a bunch of materials because we liked them but to use them to create a narrative about a house that’s been there, that was loved, and that grew as the family’s needs changed,” explains Ingram.

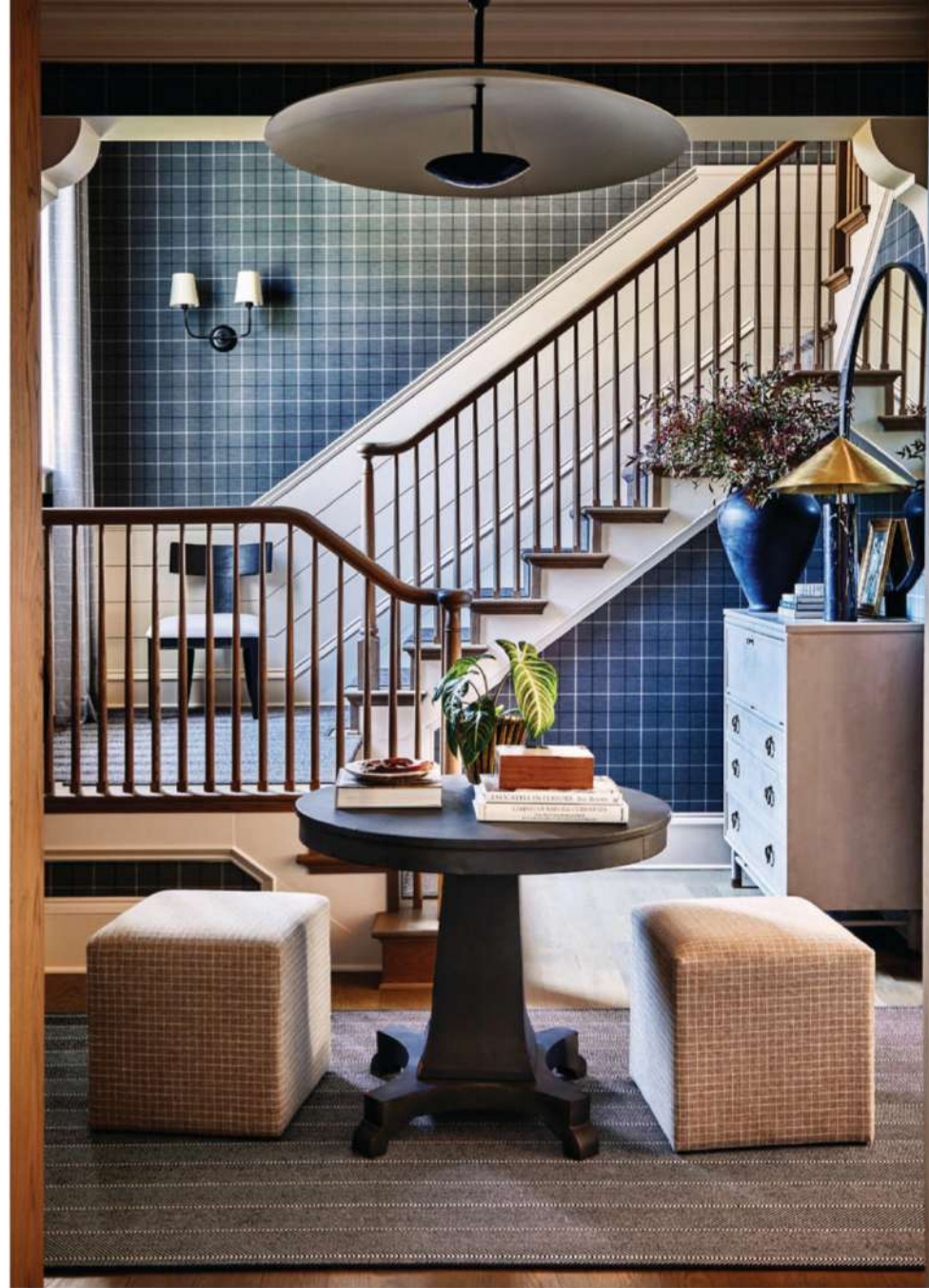
Inside, Mentzer’s eye for decorating came into play. “I’ve had a love for design since I was a little girl,” says the homeowner, who studied at The Art Institute of Atlanta and runs an eponymous interiors firm. “My mom would tell me stories about how she’d walk in and I’d be rearranging my room at 5 years old.” When it came to tackling her current home, she leaned on earthy tones and textures for a look that’s elevated but appears cozy and relaxed. “We wanted it to seem lived-in and comfortable so that everyone felt welcome to come in, kick off their shoes, and stay all day,” she says. See how Ingram’s studied approach to architecture and Mentzer’s refined style came together for a traditional home that’s handsomely current.

MAKE A BOLD STATEMENT

“I love the entry because it sets the mood for the rest of the house. I wanted it to be warm and inviting,” says the designer, who paired a Phillip Jeffries wallpaper with a more modern Visual Comfort & Co. light fixture above the catchall center table that holds everything from keys to plants to seasonal decor.

DESIGN A SPACE THAT DOES IT ALL

Adjacent to the entryway, what the family calls the “tavern” is not short on considered details, from white oak wood paneling and trim to windows that flood the room with light. A hidden door opens up to a small office that’s outfitted with a desk and chair. “It’s comfy for lounging but also a place where Charlie can work,” says Mentzer.



Use It, or Lose It

The couple skipped the formal dining room in favor of more seating in the kitchen. "We wanted each room to have a purpose and function so it could be used every day," says Mentzer. "We always hang out in the kitchen, so we built a big U-shaped banquette and have additional stools at the island. It's where everyone ends up anyway." The dining alcove is perfect for the family of four (they have two sons, Jackson and Griffin), but there's room for up to 12 people, thanks to a pair of handmade Lamon Luther tables that can be pushed together as needed.





Find a Good Thing, and Stick To It

To give the kitchen more character, they opted for Venetian plaster for the walls and Calacatta Macchia for the countertops and backsplash. "It feels seamless because everything is similar in color, but we wanted to be intentional about adding plenty of texture and interest to every room so that each one seems different," says Mentzer of their choice to incorporate plaster, shiplap, wallpaper, and stone throughout the interiors. Ingram extended this approach to the architecture with the unique millwork.



STRIKE A MOODY TONE
To juxtapose with the stained-wood "tavern" area and creamy white kitchen, she coated the pantry and bar (connected behind the two rooms) in Farrow & Ball's Off-Black (No. 57) to echo the dark cabinetry, black soapstone countertops, and vinyl Phillip Jeffries wallcovering. Brass hardware and light fixtures complete the polished look.



Make a Place To Take a Load Off

Open to the kitchen and dining nook on one side and to the back porch on the other, the sunny family room gets a lot of love. "It's my favorite part of the house because it's where we meet after busy days to spend time together," says Mentzer, who pulled the color scheme from the shades of the Tennessee limestone fireplace.



SECRET MESSAGES

"Before the Sheetrock went up, we had all of our family over to bless the house, and everyone wrote little notes or blessings on the studs in all the rooms," Mentzer says. "They're special hidden treasures in the walls that will last for generations."



A photograph of a bedroom with a vaulted ceiling featuring exposed wooden beams and white shiplap. A stone fireplace is on the left wall. A bed with a beige headboard and white bedding is in the center, with a tufted brown leather ottoman at its foot. A window with a white frame and curtains is on the left. A dark wood nightstand with gold handles is on the right. A large abstract painting hangs on the wall above the bed. A ceiling fan with white blades and a brass finish is mounted on the ceiling.

Bend the Rules To Fit Your Needs

A slight descent from the family room leads into the primary suite with a vaulted ceiling. "Stepping down into the bedroom tells the story of responding to the land but also of something that came later," says Ingram. In the adjoining bath (not shown), Mentzer focused on warmth-evoking details with vinyl wallpaper, fluted and stained cabinetry, and unlacquered brass fixtures. "We like the idea that over time they'll have a patina and look a little different, rather than always being fresh and shiny," she says of the finish selection.



REINVENT THE GUEST QUARTERS

Plush lounge chairs, deep ottomans, and a pair of beds make this upstairs nook a homey retreat for visitors of all ages. “We wanted it to have sleeping and sitting areas because it’s our guest room but also where the kids have sleepovers,” says Mentzer. “We call it the ‘bunk room’ even though there aren’t bunk beds.” Above the wainscot (painted Benjamin Moore’s Amherst Gray, HC-167), padded upholstered panels create a wraparound headboard for the twin mattresses while the angled trim and beam help separate the niche.

HISTORIC PLAN

Ingram designed the house to be just one room deep in most areas as a nod to old homes, where such layouts allowed for easier heating and cooling.

Let the View Take Center Stage

“We love the porch and spend a lot of time out here,” notes Mentzer, who selected similar-toned furnishings and the same masonry elements used throughout the home for the flooring and fireplace to maintain a consistent flow from the inside out. To prioritize the view, Ingram kept things balanced. “When you open the front door, everything is symmetrical,” Mentzer says. “You can see through the foyer, straight into the living room, and out the windows over the porch to the centered pool.”

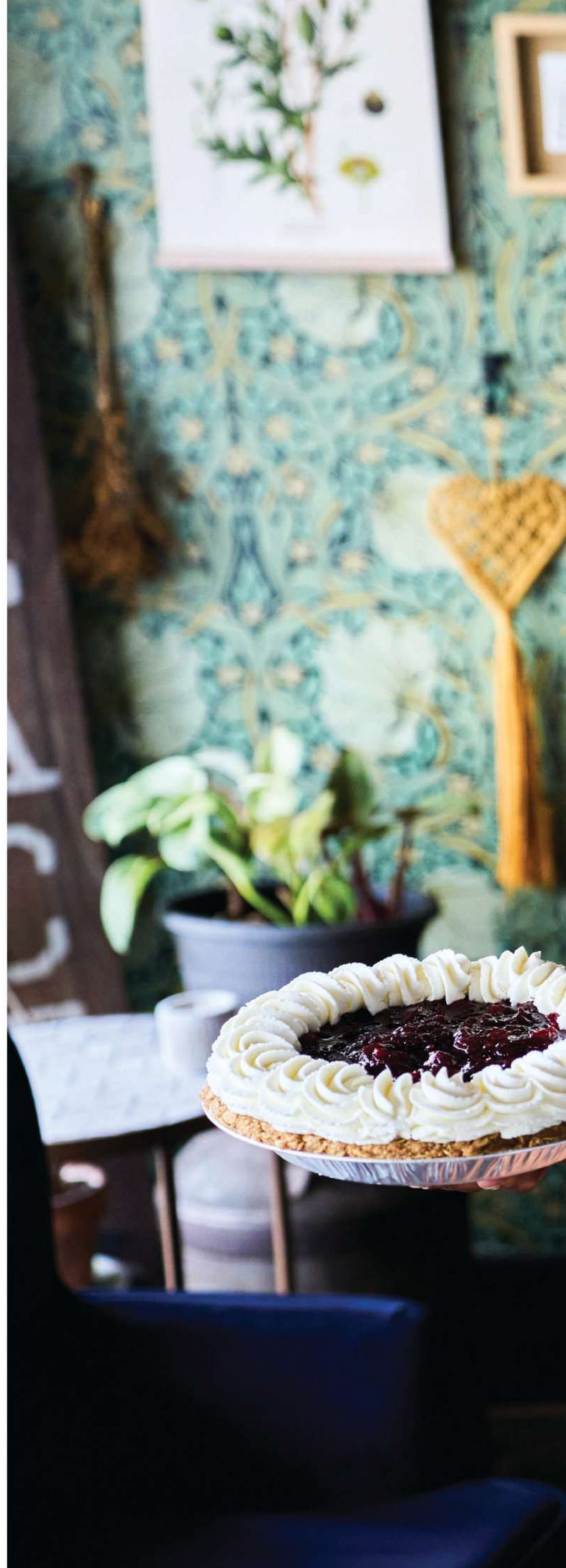


GOOD GOOD

INSIDE

THROUGH
HER HAND-
CRAFTED PIES,
**NATASHA
BURTON**
AIMS TO
BRING
PEOPLE
TOGETHER
ONE SLICE
AT A TIME

TEXT BY ALANA AL-HATLANI
PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER FRANK EDWARDS
RECIPES BY NATASHA BURTON





Follow the bakery
on Instagram
(@mixedfillings
pieshop) for
details on its
new location.

“I started with an Easy-Bake Oven [and used it] until the light bulb burned out,” says pastry chef Natasha Burton, the owner of Mixed Fillings Pie Shop in Jacksonville, Florida. It’s fitting that her love of food began when she was a kid; Burton has a childlike playfulness that permeates her baking to this day.

You won’t find simple pumpkin, apple, or pecan pies among her offerings. The flavors are as creative as their names: Cookies and Dreams (cream cheese, brown butter, Oreo crust, and whipped cream) or Peanut Butter and Jealous (peanut butter mousse, ganache, Oreo crust, and Butterfinger-flavored whipped cream), to name just two.

The bakery was a pandemic pivot that was born from her desire to build something for herself, by herself. A trained chef, Burton fell into the pastry world. She graduated from Le Cordon Bleu culinary school in Dallas and came up in the kitchen of renowned Texas chef Stephan Pyles before transitioning to the sweet side.

She was relegated to pie making at one of her first baking jobs. As with many professional kitchens, it was a trial by fire, and since she was an inexperienced cake decorator, she was assigned to churn out rustic—yet delicious—desserts. “I was banished to the pie department but turned it into my superpower,” she jokes.

In 2019, Burton relocated to Jacksonville, where she had family, with the intention of opening a cake shop before realizing that the city didn’t have a good place to get a slice of pie. She launched Mixed Fillings in June 2020. Now a self-proclaimed “piefessional,” she teaches classes online to help other people overcome their

anxiety and stress about working with pie dough. “It’s therapeutic once you get the hang of it,” she says.

In March 2023, she brought Mixed Fillings to the Five Points neighborhood. It quickly became a gathering place with a menu that regularly sold out. Unfortunately, building issues led Burton to close the location and move the bakery to a historic cottage in Jacksonville that she hopes to open late this year. In the meantime, you can order her creations online.

For those who can’t make it to Florida for a slice, Burton shared the recipe for her Harvest Sunrise Pie (below) that was inspired by her favorite part of Thanksgiving: cranberry sauce. “When you have the turkey and a little bit of cranberry on top, there’s just something about the sweet with the savory that is a masterpiece to me,” she says. The combination of this easy press-in oat crust, pumpkin filling, and cranberry-compote topping results in gorgeous contrasting autumnal hues of brown, orange, and red.

Aside from unforgettable desserts, Mixed Fillings also provides a sense of community that extends beyond the kitchen. The website includes a special section titled “Random Acts of Pi(e)ness” that we’d venture to say no other bakery has. The top of the page reads: “Small gestures can really brighten a person’s day. These ‘Random Acts of Pi(e)ness’ are some of our favorite ways to make the world a better place.” Burton lists some ideas, such as giving a friend a book you think they’ll like or writing a thank-you note to someone who has helped you in your career. Our suggestion? Show your gratitude for friends and family by baking them Burton’s fantastic, fall-flavored recipe.

Harvest Sunrise Pie

ACTIVE 30 MIN. - TOTAL 3 HOURS, 20 MIN.

SERVES 8

OAT CRUMBLE CRUST

- 1½ cups old-fashioned regular rolled oats
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup packed light brown sugar
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt
- 6 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract

PUMPKIN FILLING

- 1 (15-oz.) can pumpkin puree
- 4 large eggs
- 1 cup packed light brown sugar
- 3 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 1 Tbsp. cornstarch
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1½ tsp. ground ginger
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- ½ tsp. kosher salt

ADDITIONAL INGREDIENTS

- Spiced Cranberry Compote (recipe follows)
- Sweetened whipped cream

1. Prepare the Oat Crumble Crust: Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat a 9-inch pie plate with cooking spray; set aside. Stir together oats, flour, brown sugar, cinnamon, and salt in a large bowl. Pour melted butter and vanilla over oat mixture; stir together with a fork until mixture is crumbly. Transfer to prepared pie plate. Press firmly into bottom and up sides, using bottom of a measuring cup to help press mixture down and smooth out surface. Bake until it begins to brown slightly around edges, 10 to 12 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, prepare the Pumpkin Filling: Beat together pumpkin, eggs, brown sugar, butter, cornstarch, cinnamon, ginger, vanilla, and salt in a large bowl with a hand mixer on medium-low speed until well blended, about 1 minute. Remove crust from oven, and pour filling into crust.

3. Bake at 350°F until filling is set, about 45 minutes. Let cool completely on a wire rack, 2 to 3 hours. Spoon Spiced Cranberry Compote over cooled pie. Pipe or dollop with sweetened whipped cream.

Spiced Cranberry Compote

ACTIVE 25 MIN. - TOTAL 1 HOUR, 25 MIN.

MAKES 1 ¾ CUPS

- 1½ tsp. cornstarch
- ⅔ cup granulated sugar
- 3 Tbsp. honey
- 1½ tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 1 (12-oz.) pkg. fresh or frozen cranberries (3 cups)

Whisk together ¼ cup water and cornstarch in a heavy-bottomed large saucepan until cornstarch is dissolved, about 30 seconds. Whisk in granulated sugar, honey, and pumpkin pie spice until combined. Stir in cranberries. Cook over medium-high, gently stirring occasionally to avoid breaking berries too much, until thickened, about 15 minutes. Remove from heat, and transfer to a medium-size heatproof bowl. Let cool, uncovered, until room temperature, about 1 hour. Store in an airtight container in refrigerator up to 5 days.



While a ceramic or glass pie plate may look pretty, Burton prefers using an aluminum one for a golden, crisp crust.



Butternut
Squash Salad
with Collards
and Radicchio,
p. 70

Go Big With Butternut

Four fresh recipes for autumn's
sweetest squash

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRIAN WOODCOCK RECIPES BY RENU DHAR
FOOD STYLING BY JULIAN HENSARLING PROP STYLING BY CHRISTINA DALEY



Butternut
Squash-and-
Fennel Gratin,
p. 70



Whipped
Butternut
Squash with
Bacon Crumble,
p. 71



Rice- and
Poblano-
Stuffed
Butternut
Squash,
p. 71



Butternut Squash Salad with Collards and Radicchio



Butternut Squash-and-Fennel Gratin

Butternut Squash Salad with Collards and Radicchio

ACTIVE 25 MIN. - TOTAL 35 MIN.

SERVES 8

- 1 medium butternut squash, peeled, halved lengthwise, seeded, and cut crosswise into 1/2-inch-thick slices (about 6 cups)
 - 5 1/2 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
 - 1 tsp. kosher salt, divided
 - 10 cups stemmed and torn fresh collard greens (from 1 large bunch)
 - 2 tsp. granulated sugar
 - 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
 - 1 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
 - 1 garlic clove, minced (about 1 tsp.)
 - 2 tsp. pure maple syrup
 - 1 tsp. dried oregano
 - 1/2 tsp. black pepper
 - 1 cup torn radicchio (from 1 small head)
 - 1/4 cup thinly sliced red onion (from 1 small onion)
 - 1 1/2 cups plain or cornbread croutons
 - 1/2 oz. Parmesan cheese, shaved (about 1/4 cup)
1. Preheat oven to 425°F with racks in upper third and lower third positions. Line 2 large rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper. Toss butternut squash, 1 tablespoon of the oil, and 1/2 teaspoon of the salt in a large bowl until coated. Divide squash evenly among prepared baking sheets, spreading in an even layer. Bake until squash is tender and lightly browned, rotating baking sheets from front to back and top to bottom halfway through, 25 to 30 minutes total. Let cool on pan 5 minutes.
 2. While squash is roasting, place collard

greens and 2 tablespoons of the oil in the same large bowl. With clean hands, scrunch and crush collard greens thoroughly until leaves turn dark green and are slightly wilted, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in sugar and remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt. Let stand, covered, 20 minutes.

3. Whisk together red wine vinegar, mustard, and garlic in a medium bowl. Whisking constantly, gradually drizzle remaining 2 1/2 tablespoons oil into bowl. Whisk in maple syrup, oregano, and pepper until mixture is slightly creamy, about 1 minute. Add to collard greens along with radicchio, onion, and croutons; toss to combine. Add roasted squash; toss gently until coated with dressing. Transfer to a large bowl or platter; top with shaved Parmesan just before serving.

Butternut Squash-and-Fennel Gratin

ACTIVE 25 MIN. - TOTAL 1 HOUR, 25 MIN.

SERVES 8

- 3 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 large fennel bulb, trimmed, cored, and thinly sliced (about 4 cups), fronds reserved
- 1/4 cup finely chopped yellow onion (from 1 small onion)
- 1 garlic clove, minced (about 1 Tbsp.)
- 1 1/4 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 3 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1 cup whole milk
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- 1/8 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1 large butternut squash, peeled and sliced

crosswise into 1/8-inch-thick rounds, seeds removed (about 12 cups)

- 4 oz. Parmesan cheese, grated (about 1 1/4 cups), divided
- 1/4 cup dry breadcrumbs

1. Preheat oven to 450°F. Melt butter in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet over medium; stir in fennel, onion, garlic, and 1/2 teaspoon of the salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until onion is translucent, 3 to 4 minutes.
2. Stir in flour; cook, stirring constantly, until flour coats vegetables, about 1 minute. Stir in cream, milk, mustard, pepper, nutmeg, and remaining 3/4 teaspoon salt. Bring to a simmer over medium; cook, stirring occasionally, until mixture thickens slightly, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat; transfer 2 cups of the cream mixture to a medium bowl. Set aside.
3. Layer half of butternut squash rounds over remaining cream mixture in skillet, overlapping slices slightly. Top with 1 cup of the reserved cream mixture and 1/4 cup of the Parmesan. Repeat with remaining cream mixture and squash and 1/4 cup of the Parmesan. Loosely cover skillet with aluminum foil; bake in preheated oven until squash is tender, 35 to 40 minutes.
4. Reduce oven temperature to 400°F. Remove and discard aluminum foil; top evenly with breadcrumbs and remaining 3/4 cup Parmesan. Bake until sauce is bubbling and cheese is golden brown around the edges, 20 to 25 minutes. Remove from oven, and let stand 15 minutes to allow the sauce to absorb and the gratin to settle. Garnish with reserved fennel fronds just before serving.



Whipped Butternut Squash with Bacon Crumble



Rice- and Poblano-Stuffed Butternut Squash

Whipped Butternut Squash with Bacon Crumble

ACTIVE 30 MIN. - TOTAL 1 HOUR

SERVES 8

- 2 (3-inch) rosemary sprigs, plus 1 tsp. chopped fresh rosemary, divided
- 2 medium unpeeled butternut squash, halved lengthwise and seeds removed
- 6 bacon slices
- 6 Tbsp. butter
- 1/2 cup whole smoked almonds, chopped
- 1/4 cup heavy whipping cream
- 2 Tbsp. dark brown sugar
- 1 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 3/4 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp. ground allspice

1. Preheat oven to 450°F with racks in upper third and lower third positions. Place rosemary sprigs on a large rimmed baking sheet; place squash over rosemary, cut sides down. Bake on upper rack until very tender, 40 to 45 minutes, rotating pan halfway through. Remove from oven; let stand until squash are cool enough to handle, 15 minutes.
2. While squash are cooking, arrange bacon in a single layer on an aluminum foil-lined baking sheet. Bake in preheated oven on lower rack until bacon is crisp, 12 to 15 minutes. Transfer bacon to a paper towel-lined plate, and set aside.
3. Heat butter in a medium saucepan over medium until melted, about 2 minutes. Cook over medium, stirring occasionally, until foamy, about 1 minute. Reduce heat to low, and cook until lightly browned, about 2 minutes. Transfer 1/4 cup butter to a large heatproof bowl; set aside. Stir almonds and

chopped rosemary into remaining butter in saucepan. Cook over medium-low, stirring often, until lightly toasted, about 1 minute. Remove from heat.

4. Scoop out squash flesh; discard skins and rosemary sprigs. Place squash in a food processor with reserved 1/4 cup butter, cream, brown sugar, pumpkin pie spice, salt, and allspice; blend until smooth, 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer to a large serving bowl.
5. Chop bacon into small pieces, and stir into almond mixture. Sprinkle squash mixture with 2 tablespoons of the bacon topping. Serve with remaining topping.

Rice- and Poblano-Stuffed Butternut Squash

ACTIVE 20 MIN. - TOTAL 1 HOUR, 20 MIN.

SERVES 8

- 2 medium unpeeled butternut squash with stems trimmed, cut lengthwise with seeds left intact
- 5 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 2 1/2 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 1 cup long-grain and wild rice mix
- 2 cups chopped fresh shiitake mushrooms (from 1 [8-oz.] pkg.)
- 1/2 cup finely chopped yellow onion (from 1 small onion)
- 1 medium poblano chile, chopped (about 3/4 cup)
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped (about 1 Tbsp.)
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1/4 cup raw unsalted pumpkin seed kernels (pepitas)
- Chopped fresh cilantro, for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 450°F. Brush cut sides of butternut squash with 1 tablespoon of the oil, and sprinkle cut sides evenly with 1 teaspoon of the salt. Arrange squash cut sides down on a large rimmed baking sheet. Bake until tender, 40 to 45 minutes, rotating pan from front to back halfway through.
2. Remove from oven. Carefully turn squash over, and let stand 15 minutes. Keeping squash halves on baking sheet, scoop out and discard seeds with a spoon. Leaving a 1/2-inch border, scoop flesh from neck portion of each squash; cut into 1/2-inch cubes. Transfer to a medium bowl.
3. While squash are cooking, rinse rice in a fine mesh strainer under running water. Place rice, 1 2/3 cups water, 1 tablespoon of the oil, and 1/2 teaspoon of the salt in a medium saucepan; bring to a boil over high. Reduce heat to low; cover and cook until rice is cooked through, about 45 minutes. Remove from heat; let stand, covered, 10 minutes. Fluff rice with a fork. Cover and set aside.
4. Heat remaining 3 tablespoons oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium. Add mushrooms, onion, and poblano; cook, stirring often, until softened and browned in spots, about 5 minutes. Stir in garlic, cumin, black pepper, and remaining 1 teaspoon salt. Cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in cooked rice and roasted squash cubes. Remove from heat; stir in cranberries and pumpkin seeds.
5. Spoon rice mixture into each squash half; cover loosely with aluminum foil, and bake in preheated oven until heated through, 5 to 7 minutes. Transfer to a platter, and garnish with cilantro.

Apple Cider-
Doughnut Bundt
Cake

P. 76

EASIER *than* PIE

Not in the mood to roll out dough?
Bake a Bundt cake bursting with fall flavors

PHOTOGRAPHS BY GREG DUPREE RECIPES BY ANNA THEOKTISTO AND MOLLY BOLTON
FOOD STYLING BY EMILY NABORS HALL PROP STYLING BY JULIA BAYLESS

Maple-
Glazed
Pumpkin
Bundt
Cake

P. 76



A chocolate bundt cake is the central focus, resting on a large, round, white marble platter with grey veining. The cake is dark brown and has a thick, glossy chocolate glaze poured over its top. The glaze is decorated with numerous small, light-colored pecan nut pieces. The platter is set on a dark surface, and several silver forks are visible in the lower right corner. In the upper left, a small glass bottle is partially visible. The overall lighting is warm and dramatic, highlighting the textures of the cake and the platter.

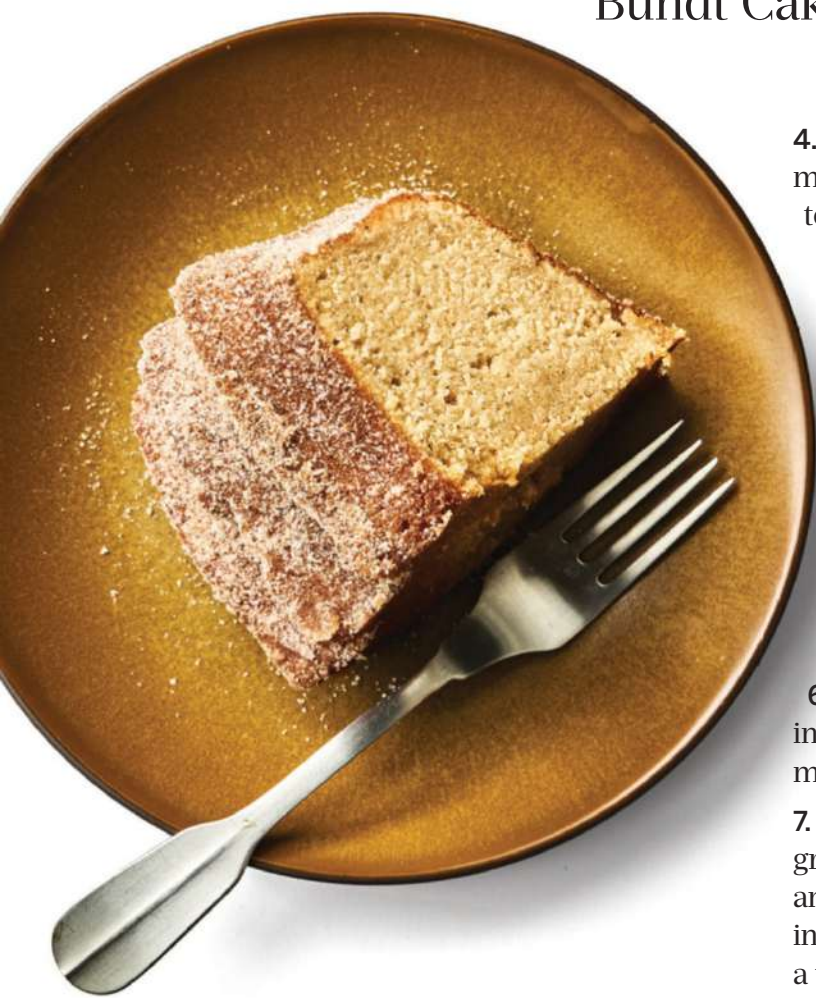
Chocolate Bundt
Cake with Pecans

P.77

Spiced
Cream
Cheese
Bundt
Cake
P. 77



Apple Cider-Doughnut Bundt Cake



Apple Cider-Doughnut Bundt Cake

ACTIVE 30 MIN. - TOTAL 3 HOURS, 30 MIN.

SERVES 12

Baking spray

- 1/2 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 1/4 cups granulated sugar, divided
- 1 cup unsalted butter, softened and divided
- 3 large eggs
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 2 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon, divided
- 1/4 tsp. ground ginger, divided
- 3/4 tsp. grated fresh nutmeg, divided
- 1 cup apple cider
- 1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat a 10- to 12-cup Bundt pan with baking spray, and set aside.
2. Beat brown sugar, 1 cup of the granulated sugar, and 3/4 cup of the butter in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment on medium-high speed until light and fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes. With mixer on low speed, add eggs, 1 at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla until just combined.
3. Whisk together flour, baking powder, salt, baking soda, 2 teaspoons of the cinnamon, 1 teaspoon of the ginger, and 1/2 teaspoon of the nutmeg in a large bowl until combined. Stir together apple cider and applesauce in a small bowl until just combined.

4. With mixer on low speed, add flour mixture and apple cider mixture alternately to butter mixture, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating until just combined after each addition and stopping to scrape down sides of bowl as needed. Transfer batter to prepared pan.

5. Bake in preheated oven until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 50 to 55 minutes. Let cool in pan on a wire rack 10 minutes. Invert cake onto wire rack, and remove pan.

6. Microwave remaining 1/4 cup butter in a small heatproof bowl on HIGH until melted, about 30 seconds.

7. Stir together the remaining 1/4 cup granulated sugar, 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon, and 1/4 teaspoon each ginger and nutmeg in a small bowl until combined. Set cake on a wire rack over a large, rimmed baking sheet. Brush warm cake with melted butter. Sprinkle evenly with cinnamon-sugar mixture; repeat with any excess from baking sheet until all cinnamon-sugar mixture is used, pressing gently to adhere to cake. Let cool completely on wire rack, about 2 hours. Store cake in an airtight container in refrigerator or at room temperature up to 3 days.

Maple-Glazed Pumpkin Bundt Cake

ACTIVE 15 MIN. - TOTAL 3 HOURS, 20 MIN.

SERVES 12

CAKE

- Baking spray
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1 1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1 tsp. ground allspice
- 3/4 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp. baking powder
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 2 1/2 cups granulated sugar
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 (15-oz.) can pumpkin puree (not pumpkin pie filling)

GLAZE

- 1/3 cup pure maple syrup
- 3 Tbsp. unsalted butter

- 1/4 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 cup powdered sugar, sifted
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- Chopped toasted walnuts (optional), for garnish

1. Prepare the Cake: Preheat oven to 350°F. Generously grease a 10- to 12-cup Bundt pan with baking spray; set aside.

2. Sift flour into a large bowl. Add the cinnamon, baking soda, nutmeg, allspice, salt, and baking powder; whisk to combine.

3. Whisk vegetable oil and granulated sugar together in a separate large bowl until fully combined. Whisk in eggs, 1 at a time, whisking well after each addition. Whisk in vanilla until incorporated.

4. Add flour mixture and pumpkin puree alternately to sugar mixture, beginning and ending with the flour mixture, whisking after each addition just until ingredients are combined. (Do not overmix.)

5. Pour batter into prepared pan, smoothing top into an even layer. Firmly tap pan on counter a few times to release any air bubbles. Bake in preheated oven until a wooden pick inserted into center of Cake comes out clean, 55 to 60 minutes. Let cool in pan on a wire rack 10 minutes. Invert onto wire rack; remove pan, and let cool completely, about 2 hours.

6. Prepare the Glaze: Heat maple syrup, butter, cinnamon, and salt in a medium saucepan over medium-low, stirring occasionally until butter is melted. Remove pan from heat; whisk in the powdered sugar and vanilla. Let cool until slightly thickened, 2 to 4 minutes. Spoon warm Glaze over cooled Cake. (If Glaze



Maple-Glazed Pumpkin Bundt Cake



Chocolate Bundt Cake with Pecans

begins to set before drizzling over. Cake, return pan to heat for a few seconds and whisk until smooth.) Garnish with walnuts, if desired. Store in an airtight container in refrigerator or at room temperature up to 4 days.

Chocolate Bundt Cake with Pecans

ACTIVE 25 MIN. - TOTAL 3 HOURS, 15 MIN.

SERVES 12

- Baking spray
- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- ¾ cup unsweetened cocoa
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup whole buttermilk
- 1 cup strong brewed coffee, cooled
- ½ cup canola oil
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- ¾ cup heavy whipping cream
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 2 tsp. coffee liqueur (such as Kahlúa)
- Chopped toasted pecans, for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat a 10- to 12-cup Bundt pan with baking spray, and set aside.
2. Whisk together flour, sugar, cocoa, baking soda, salt, and baking powder in a large bowl.
3. Whisk together eggs, buttermilk, coffee, oil, and vanilla in a separate medium bowl until combined. Add oil mixture to flour mixture, stirring until combined. Pour batter into prepared pan.
4. Bake in preheated oven until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 45 to 55 minutes. Let cool in pan on a wire rack 10 minutes. Invert cake onto rack; remove pan, and let cool

completely, about 2 hours.

5. Heat cream in a small saucepan over medium, stirring often, until it just begins to steam, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat, and immediately pour over chocolate chips in a medium-size heatproof bowl. (Do not stir.) Let stand 2 minutes; gently stir until chocolate is melted and mixture is smooth. Stir in coffee liqueur until combined. Place cake on a wire rack set inside a large rimmed baking sheet. Drizzle or pour chocolate mixture over top of cooled cake as desired. Before chocolate mixture sets, sprinkle with pecans. Store cake in an airtight container in refrigerator or at room temperature up to 3 days.

Spiced Cream Cheese Bundt Cake

ACTIVE 35 MIN. - TOTAL 3 HOURS, 45 MIN.

SERVES 12

- Baking spray
- 1 (8-oz.) pkg. cream cheese, softened
- ¾ cup unsalted butter, softened
- 1½ cups granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 4 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1¼ tsp. vanilla extract, divided
- 2½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- ⅓ cup whole milk
- ¼ cup packed light brown sugar
- 4 tsp. pumpkin pie spice, plus more for garnish
- 1¼ cups powdered sugar
- 1 Tbsp. heavy whipping cream

1. Preheat oven to 325°F. Coat a 10- to 12-cup Bundt pan with baking spray; set aside.
2. Beat cream cheese and butter in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment on medium-high speed until fluffy, about 4 minutes, stopping to scrape down sides of bowl as needed.
3. Add granulated sugar and kosher salt; beat on high speed for 5 minutes, stopping occasionally to scrape down sides of bowl. With mixer on low speed, add eggs, 1 at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in 1 teaspoon of the vanilla until combined.

4. Stir together flour and baking powder in a medium bowl. With mixer on low speed, add flour mixture and milk alternately to butter mixture, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating until just combined after each addition and stopping to scrape down sides of bowl as needed.

5. Transfer half of the batter (about 3 cups) to another medium bowl; stir in brown sugar and pumpkin pie spice until smooth. Spoon about 1 cup of the plain batter evenly into prepared pan; spoon about 1 cup of the spiced batter over top of plain batter in an even layer. Repeat process two more times, alternating with plain and spiced batters. Using a knife, pull the blade back and forth through the layered batters to create a swirled effect. Smooth the top with a spatula or the back of a spoon.

6. Bake in preheated oven until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, about 1 hour. Let cool in pan on a wire rack 10 minutes. Invert onto wire rack; remove pan, and let cool completely, about 2 hours.

7. Whisk together the powdered sugar, 1½ tablespoons water, cream, and the remaining ¼ teaspoon vanilla in a medium bowl until smooth. Drizzle over cooled cake. Sprinkle pumpkin pie spice over the glaze to garnish, if desired.

Spiced Cream Cheese Bundt Cake





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**IRRESISTIBLY
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HOSPITALITY

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Teach that classic bird
some tasty new tricks

RECIPES: NICOLE HOPPER AND JOSH MILLER; FOOD STYLING: CHELSEA ZIMMER; PROP STYLING: CHRISTINA DALEY

Mayo-Roasted
Turkey with
Classic Gravy,
page 82



"I Can't Believe It's Not Smoked" Turkey

ACTIVE 40 MIN. - TOTAL 4 HOURS,
PLUS 12 HOURS DRY BRINING

SERVES 8 TO 10

- 1 (12- to 14-lb.) turkey
- 5 Tbsp. kosher salt
- 1 Tbsp. granulated sugar
- 2 tsp. black pepper
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 2 Tbsp. smoked paprika, divided
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup butter, softened, divided
- 3 garlic cloves, finely chopped (about 1 Tbsp.)
- 1 canned chipotle pepper in adobo sauce, finely chopped, plus 2 Tbsp. adobo sauce from can, divided
- 1 tsp., plus $\frac{1}{4}$ cup maple syrup, divided
- 1 tsp. chopped fresh oregano, plus 2 sprigs, divided
- 1 tsp. chopped fresh sage, plus 2 sprigs, divided
- 2 Tbsp. canola oil
- 1 (8-oz.) smoked ham hock
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- Fresh oregano and sage sprigs (optional)

1. Remove giblets and neck from turkey; set aside for gravy, if desired. Pat turkey dry. Stir together salt, sugar, pepper, garlic powder, and 1 teaspoon of the smoked paprika in a small bowl. Sprinkle over turkey and in cavity. Place turkey on a wire rack set inside a rimmed baking sheet. Chill, uncovered, at least 12 hours or up to 36 hours.

2. Remove turkey from refrigerator; let stand at room temperature 1 hour. Preheat oven to 350°F with rack in lower third position. Set a roasting rack inside a large roasting pan.

3. Stir together $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the butter; chopped garlic; 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons of the chopped chipotle pepper; 1 teaspoon each of the maple syrup, chopped oregano, and chopped sage; and 2 teaspoons of the smoked paprika in a medium bowl until combined. Set aside. Stir together canola oil and 2 teaspoons of the smoked paprika in a small bowl until

combined, and set aside.

4. Loosen skin from turkey breast and thighs; spread the butter mixture under skin, being careful to avoid tearing the skin. Rub oil mixture all over turkey. Tuck wing tips under; transfer turkey to prepared roasting pan, breast side up. Stuff ham hock and oregano and sage sprigs in cavity. Tie legs together with kitchen twine; loosely cover

turkey with aluminum foil. Roast in preheated oven for 90 minutes.

5. Meanwhile, heat the Worcestershire sauce and remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ cup each butter and maple syrup, 2 tablespoons adobo sauce, and remaining 1 teaspoon smoked paprika in a small saucepan over medium-low. Cook, stirring occasionally, until butter is melted and mixture is smooth.

6. Uncover turkey; brush with butter mixture. Roast, uncovered, until a thermometer inserted into thickest portion registers 160°F, 1 hour to 1 hour, 30 minutes, brushing with butter mixture every 20 minutes.

7. Transfer turkey to a cutting board; reserve drippings for gravy. Let rest for 30 minutes before carving. Garnish with oregano and sage, if desired.

NO SMOKER?
Use spices and a chipotle pepper for deep flavor.





HOT STUFF
Canned chipotle peppers pack a fiery punch.

Mayo-Roasted Turkey

ACTIVE 40 MIN. - TOTAL 4 HOURS, 40 MIN., PLUS 12 HOURS DRY BRINING

SERVES 8 TO 10

- 1 (12- to 14-lb.) turkey
- 2 tsp. poultry seasoning
- 5 Tbsp., plus 1/2 tsp. kosher salt, divided
- 2 1/4 tsp. black pepper, divided
- 1 cup mayonnaise (such as Hellmann's), divided
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh rosemary, plus 4 sprigs, divided
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh sage, plus 4 sprigs, divided
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh thyme, plus 4 sprigs, divided
- 6 garlic cloves, grated (1 Tbsp.), plus 1 garlic head, halved crosswise, divided
- 1 lemon, zested and quartered, divided
- 1 yellow onion, quartered
- Mixed herb sprigs and lemon halves and wedges (optional)

1. Remove giblets and neck from turkey; set aside for gravy, if desired. Pat turkey dry. Stir together poultry seasoning, 5 tablespoons of the kosher salt, and 2 teaspoons of the black pepper in a bowl. Sprinkle over turkey and in cavity. Place turkey on a rack set inside a rimmed baking sheet. Chill uncovered 12 to 36 hours.

2. Remove turkey from refrigerator 1 hour before cooking. Preheat oven to 425°F with rack in lower third position. Set a roasting rack inside roasting pan.

3. Stir together 3/4 cup of the mayonnaise, minced herbs, grated garlic, lemon zest, and remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon black pepper in a medium bowl until combined.

4. Loosen skin from turkey breast and thighs; spread mayonnaise mixture under skin. Rub remaining 1/4 cup mayonnaise all over turkey. Tuck wing

tips under; transfer turkey to prepared roasting pan, breast side up. Stuff yellow onion quarters, garlic head, lemon quarters, and herb sprigs in turkey cavity. Tie legs together with kitchen twine.

5. Roast turkey in preheated oven for 30 minutes. Loosely cover with aluminum foil, and reduce heat to 350°F. Roast until a thermometer inserted into thickest portion registers 160°F, 2 hours to 2 hours, 30 minutes, uncovering turkey during last few minutes to crisp skin.

6. Transfer turkey to a cutting board; reserve drippings for gravy. Let turkey rest for 30 minutes before carving. Garnish with mixed herb sprigs and lemon halves and wedges, if desired.

Classic Gravy

ACTIVE 40 MIN. - TOTAL 1 HOUR, 15 MIN.

SERVES 8 TO 10

- 2 Tbsp. canola oil
- Neck and giblets from a whole turkey
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- 2 carrots, chopped
- 2 celery stalks, chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, smashed
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 6 cups unsalted chicken stock, plus more if needed
- 4 flat-leaf parsley sprigs
- 4 thyme sprigs
- 2 fresh bay leaves
- 1/2 cup pan drippings from any roasted turkey, divided
- Butter, if needed
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- Kosher salt and black pepper to taste

1. Heat oil in a large pot or Dutch oven over medium-high. Add turkey neck and giblets, onion, carrots, celery, and garlic. Cook, stirring occasionally, until turkey pieces are browned, about 8 minutes. Add wine, scraping to release any browned bits. Cook, stirring often, about 1 minute.

2. Add stock, parsley, thyme, and bay leaves. Bring to a boil over medium-high; reduce heat

to medium-low, and simmer, undisturbed, until reduced by about half, 30 minutes.

3. Pour stock mixture through a fine mesh strainer into a large heatproof bowl; discard solids. (Add more stock as needed to yield 3 cups.)

4. Strain drippings; discard solids. Let stand 5 minutes; spoon fat from liquid. Set aside fat and drippings separately.

5. Heat 3 tablespoons reserved fat in a saucepan over medium (add butter as needed to yield 3 tablespoons fat). Add flour, and cook, stirring constantly, until toasted, 2 to 3 minutes.

6. Gradually pour reserved stock into flour mixture in a thin, steady stream, whisking constantly. Whisk in reserved drippings. Cook, stirring often, until thick enough to coat the back of a spoon, 10 to 15 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

French Onion Turkey

ACTIVE 45 MIN. - TOTAL 4 HOURS, 45 MIN., PLUS 12 HOURS DRY BRINING

SERVES 8 TO 10

- 1 (12- to 14-lb.) turkey
- 3 Tbsp. kosher salt
- 1 Tbsp. black pepper
- 1 tsp. onion powder
- 1 1/2 tsp. granulated sugar, divided
- 4 yellow onions, sliced into 12 (1-inch-thick) rounds, plus 1 yellow onion, quartered, divided
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 (1-oz.) envelope onion soup and dip mix
- 1/4 cup crispy fried onions (such as French's), finely crushed
- 1 tsp. balsamic vinegar
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1/4 tsp. dry mustard
- 4 fresh thyme sprigs, plus more for garnish
- 2 red onions, cut into wedges
- 2 sweet onions, cut into wedges

1. Remove giblets and neck from turkey. Pat turkey dry. Stir together salt, black pepper, onion powder, and 1 teaspoon of the sugar in a small bowl. Sprinkle over turkey and in cavity. Place turkey on a wire rack set inside a rimmed baking sheet. Chill turkey, uncovered, at least 12 hours or up to 36 hours.

2. Remove turkey from refrigerator; let stand at room temperature 1 hour. Preheat oven to 425°F with rack in lower third position. Arrange yellow onion rounds in bottom of a large roasting pan.

3. Stir together butter, onion soup mix, crispy fried onions, balsamic vinegar, garlic powder, dry mustard, and remaining 1/2 teaspoon sugar in a medium bowl until smooth and creamy.

4. Loosen skin from turkey breast and thighs; spread butter mixture under skin and all over turkey. Tuck wing tips under; transfer turkey to prepared roasting pan, breast side up. Stuff yellow onion quarters and 4 thyme sprigs in turkey cavity. Tie legs together with kitchen twine. Pour 1 cup water into bottom of roasting pan.

5. Roast turkey in preheated oven for 30 minutes. Loosely cover with aluminum foil, and reduce heat to 350°F. Roast for 1 hour. Remove from oven, and nestle red and sweet onion wedges around turkey. Loosely cover with foil, and bake at 350°F until onions are tender and a thermometer inserted into thickest portion registers 160°F, 1 hour to 1 hour, 30 minutes.

6. Transfer turkey to a cutting board and onions to a serving platter; reserve drippings for gravy. Let rest for 30 minutes before carving. Transfer meat to platter with roasted onion wedges. Garnish with thyme.

CRUNCH TIME
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FOOD STYLING: CHELSEA ZIMMER; PROP STYLING: CHRISTINA DALEY

NEW TRADITIONS

Spiced-Up Sides

Southern chefs with global roots share their spins on holiday favorites

THE TURKEY doesn't always have to be the center of attention on Thanksgiving. We turned to five chefs—who are originally from all over the world but have come to call the South home—to prove that the sides steal the show. Their riffs on classics combine familiar ingredients with others that might be new to you. The green

beans are made creamy with coconut milk instead of canned soup, the sweet potatoes are topped with chile-laced pecans rather than marshmallows, and the Cranberry Chutney (seasoned with ginger, mustard seeds, and cloves) is bound to upstage the typical canned sauce. Infused with bold flavors, these recipes are sure to liven up your feast and complement all your favorite standbys.



Trinidad and Tobago Macaroni Pie

“Macaroni pie is not a dish I would make frequently, mainly because it requires so much discipline to not devour the whole thing! It takes me back to my childhood, as it was a staple for all of our large family gatherings. It's truly the perfect addition to any holiday table.”

—Sedesh Boodram Wilkerson, chef at The Anvil Pub & Grill in Birmingham

ACTIVE 15 MIN. - TOTAL 55 MIN.

SERVES 6 TO 8

- 3 Tbsp. unsalted butter, divided
- 8 oz. yellow sharp Cheddar cheese, grated (2 cups)
- 8 oz. low-moisture mozzarella cheese, grated (2 cups)
- 2 (12-oz.) cans evaporated milk
- 2 garlic cloves, minced (about 2 tsp.)

- 1 large egg, whisked
- 1/2 small yellow onion, finely diced (about 1/2 cup)
- 1/2 fresh Scotch bonnet chile, seeded (if desired) and finely minced (1 tsp.)
- 2 Tbsp. tomato paste
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp. fresh thyme leaves, chopped, plus more for garnish
- 1 tsp. kosher salt, plus more for salting water
- Pinch of black pepper
- 1 lb. dried macaroni

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 13- x 9-inch baking dish with 2 tablespoons of the butter.
2. Stir together Cheddar and mozzarella in a medium bowl, and set aside. Whisk together evaporated milk, garlic, egg, onion, chile, tomato paste, mustard, thyme, salt, and a generous pinch of black pepper in a large bowl until very well combined. Set aside.
3. Bring a large saucepan of salted water to a boil over high. Cook macaroni according to package directions for al dente. Drain and return macaroni to saucepan. Add remaining

- 1 tablespoon butter, stirring until melted. Add half of cheese mixture, and stir until fully combined. Stir in reserved evaporated milk mixture until pasta is coated. Pour into prepared baking dish, spreading evenly, and sprinkle top with remaining cheese mixture.
4. Bake in preheated oven until top is golden brown, 30 to 35 minutes. Remove from oven, and let rest at least 10 minutes before serving. Garnish macaroni pie with thyme leaves, if desired.



Cranberry Chutney

“The one thing that's never missing on my Thanksgiving menu is cranberry sauce, and since sauces are like chutneys, I make this recipe

year-round. It has black mustard seeds, ginger, and other ground spices added to the cranberries; the brown sugar balances the tartness. The ingredients are simmered together until the pectin-rich cranberries burst open and the mixture develops a deep, jewellike color.”

—Palak Patel, chef and cookbook author in Atlanta

ACTIVE 15 MIN.

TOTAL 1 HOUR, 15 MIN.

MAKES 2 CUPS

- 1 lb. fresh or frozen cranberries
 - 1 Tbsp. neutral cooking oil (such as canola oil)
 - 1/4 tsp. black mustard seeds
 - 1/2 cup packed light brown sugar, plus more to taste
 - 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
 - 1/8 tsp. ground cloves
 - 1/8 tsp. cayenne pepper
 - 1 (1-inch) piece fresh ginger, peeled and grated (about 1 tsp.)
 - 1/2-1 tsp. kosher salt, to taste
1. If using fresh cranberries, discard any stems or soft fruit. If using frozen berries, thaw and drain well.
 2. Heat oil in a medium saucepan over medium until shimmering. Add mustard seeds, and cook until they sputter, 30 seconds to 1 minute. Stir in cranberries, brown sugar, 1/2 cup water, apple cider vinegar, cloves, cayenne pepper, and grated ginger. Cook, stirring occasionally, until cranberries burst and mixture thickens, 10 to 15 minutes. Taste and add sugar as desired.
 3. Stir 1/2 teaspoon of the salt into cranberry mixture, and let cool to room temperature, about 1 hour. Taste chutney, and add more salt, if desired. Serve at room temperature, or transfer to an airtight container and store in refrigerator up to 2 weeks.



Creamed
String Beans,
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Rajas Poblanas
with Potatoes,
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Braised Sweet Potatoes with Piri Piri Pecans

“The spices used in American Thanksgiving recipes are everyday ingredients in Cape Town, South Africa, where I’m from. Nutmeg, allspice, cinnamon, and cardamom give these sweet potatoes great depth of flavor. I opted to ditch the classic streusel topping while honoring its crunch with spiced pecans. The piri piri pepper is native to Mozambique, but any chile powder will do.”

—Dale Gray, cookbook author in Brookhaven, Mississippi

ACTIVE 15 MIN. - TOTAL 1 HOUR, 15 MIN.

SERVES 8

PIRI PIRI PECANS

- 1 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup pecan pieces
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/4 tsp. piri piri or ancho chile powder

BRAISED SWEET POTATOES

- 3 lb. medium-size white sweet potatoes (about 6), peeled and cut into 1/2-inch slices
- 1 (3-inch) cinnamon stick
- 1 whole star anise
- 8 Tbsp. butter
- 1 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1/2 cup fresh orange juice (from 1 orange)
- 1/2 cup fresh lemon juice (from 3 lemons)
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh ginger
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. ground cardamom
- 1/2 tsp. ground allspice
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg

1. Prepare the Piri Piri Pecans: Heat olive oil in a small skillet over medium. Add pecans, salt, and piri piri; cook, stirring often, until nuts are toasted, 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer to a bowl.

2. Prepare the Braised Sweet Potatoes: Preheat oven to 400°F. Place sliced sweet potatoes, cinnamon stick, and star anise in bottom of a 13- x 9-inch baking dish. Melt butter in a medium saucepan over medium. Add brown sugar, orange juice, lemon juice, ginger, ground cinnamon, cardamom, allspice, salt, and nutmeg; cook, stirring often, until sauce starts to bubble, about 2 minutes.

3. Pour brown sugar mixture over sweet potatoes in baking dish. Gently stir to coat sweet potatoes with sauce. Cover with aluminum foil. Bake in preheated oven until potatoes are fork-tender, about 1 hour, stirring once halfway through baking time. Sprinkle with Piri Piri Pecans. (Leave whole spices for presentation, if desired, but remove before serving.)



Creamed String Beans

“I grew up hating vegetables in the Philippines, but for some reason, I love any vegetables that are cooked in coconut milk—especially in this dish. It reminds me of how life can be simple yet amazing. My family was poor, but my siblings and I spent our childhood making lots of fun memories.”

—Nikko Cagalanan, chef and owner of Kultura in Charleston, South Carolina

ACTIVE 20 MIN. - TOTAL 20 MIN.

SERVES 8

- 2 Tbsp. canola oil
- 5 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 large white onion, thinly sliced (about 3 cups)
- 1 (4-inch) piece fresh ginger, peeled and cut into thin strips (about 1/2 cup)

- 2 lb. fresh green beans, trimmed
- 1 (13⁵/₈-oz.) can unsweetened coconut milk, well shaken
- 1 Tbsp. chicken bouillon granules
- 1 tsp. fish sauce, plus more to taste
- 1 tsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper, plus more to taste
- 3 scallions, cut into 2-inch pieces
- Cooked rice

1. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Add garlic, onion, and ginger; cook, stirring often, until onion is softened, about 5 minutes.

2. Add beans to skillet; cook, stirring often, 1 minute. Add coconut milk, bouillon, fish sauce, salt, and pepper. Simmer over medium-high, stirring often, 8 minutes. Add scallions; cook, covered, until beans are tender, about 3 minutes.

3. Season with additional fish sauce, salt, or pepper to taste. Serve with cooked rice.



Rajas Poblanos with Potatoes

“Thanksgiving is all about sides—with potatoes always taking center stage! I love this dish because it perfectly fits the very American tradition, which I have adopted as an excuse to hang out with friends and share a bit of my roots.”

—Ana Castro, chef and owner of Acamaya in New Orleans

ACTIVE 30 MIN. - TOTAL 45 MIN.

SERVES 8

- 3 lb. fingerling potatoes
- 5 Tbsp. kosher salt, divided, plus more to taste
- 3 poblano chiles (about 11 oz.)

- 1/4 cup unsalted butter
- 1 medium-size yellow onion, thinly sliced (about 2 cups)
- 6 large garlic cloves, thinly sliced (about 3 Tbsp.)
- 1 1/2 (8-oz.) pkg. cream cheese
- 1/2 serrano chile, stemmed and chopped (about 1 tsp.)
- 1/2 cup fresh parsley leaves
- 3/4 cup heavy whipping cream, warmed
- 1 cup (about 4 oz.) shredded mozzarella cheese (optional)

1. Bring potatoes, 3 quarts water, and 3 tablespoons of the salt to a boil in a large saucepan over high; cook until potatoes are tender, about 18 minutes.

2. While potatoes cook, preheat oven to broil with rack 6 inches from heat source. Place poblanos on a large rimmed baking sheet lined with foil. Broil until charred, 12 to 15 minutes, turning once. Place charred poblanos in a bowl, and cover with a lid or plastic wrap; let steam 10 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, melt butter in a large cast-iron skillet over medium. Add onion, garlic, and 1 tablespoon of salt; cook until onion is softened, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat; set aside.

4. Using a paper towel, rub off charred skin from peppers; remove stems and seeds. Cut 2 poblanos into strips; set aside. Place remaining poblano in a blender along with cream cheese, serrano, and parsley. Add warm cream; process until smooth, about 30 seconds. Pour into skillet with onion mixture; fold in reserved poblano strips. Simmer over medium, stirring often, about 2 minutes.

5. Drain potatoes; return to pan. Using a wooden spoon, smash potatoes; sprinkle with remaining 1 tablespoon salt. Transfer to poblano mixture in skillet; stir to combine. Season with additional salt to taste. Sprinkle with mozzarella (if using). Broil in preheated oven until top is golden and crispy, 2 to 3 minutes.

Sourdough
Bread
Dressing



RECIPES: MARIANNE WILLIAMS; FOOD STYLING: CHELSEA ZIMMER; PROP STYLING: CHRISTINA DALEY

FAMILY STYLE

The Unsung Hero

When it's a please-all occasion, this dressing will take off the pressure

T

HANKSGIVING is one of the few times of the year when family members from near and far gather around a table, bringing with them a host of dietary preferences, strong opinions, and casseroles.

There are the traditionalists, who scan the buffet to make sure all of the usual recipes are present and accounted for—it's just not the holidays without creamed onions, you know. There are the adventurous types, who shock everyone with a dish that came out of left field. (I apologize for the short ribs with Swiss chard I made instead of turkey in 2010.) And then there are the precious children, who eat only beige

and brown foods on a daily basis but then make an exception to this rule on holidays—when they reject a veritable sea of beige and brown options and just want dessert.

It may seem impossible to satisfy everyone, especially on Thanksgiving, but here's your secret weapon: dressing. Yes, it's as expected as pumpkin pie, but it's also infinitely adaptable. Load it up with butternut squash, mushrooms, and spinach to make it a vegetarian main. Stir in Cheddar and bake it in muffin trays for a side that kids will devour. Adjust it to fit your needs: Use gluten-free bread, toss in toasted nuts, or spice it up with chorizo. The turkey may be the star, but the dressing will win the crowd.

Sourdough Bread Dressing

ACTIVE 35 MIN. - TOTAL 1 HOUR, 20 MIN.

SERVES 8

- 1 (1½-lb.) day-old sourdough bread loaf, cut into ¾-inch cubes (about 12 cups)
- ¾ cup unsalted butter, divided, plus more for greasing dish
- 1 lb. sweet Italian sausage
- 1 medium-size sweet onion, thinly sliced (about 2½ cups)
- 4 large celery stalks, chopped (about 1½ cups)
- ¾ tsp. black pepper
- 1½ tsp. kosher salt, divided
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley, plus small leaves for garnish
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh sage, plus small leaves for garnish
- 1 Tbsp. fresh thyme leaves, plus more for garnish
- ¾ cup dry white wine
- 3 cups chicken stock
- 2 large eggs, beaten

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Butter a large (3-quart) baking dish, and set aside. Place bread cubes in a large heatproof bowl.

2. Melt 4 tablespoons of the butter in a 12-inch skillet over medium-high. Add sausage; cook, stirring occasionally, until browned and crumbly, about

4 minutes. Transfer to bowl with bread. Place skillet over medium-high heat, and add 4 tablespoons of the butter.

Add onion, celery, pepper, and ½ teaspoon of the salt; cook, stirring occasionally, until onion is golden brown, about 6 minutes. Stir in parsley, sage, and thyme; cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Transfer to bowl with bread and sausage.

3. Add wine to skillet, and increase heat to high. Cook, stirring occasionally, until wine is reduced to about ¼ cup, about 3 minutes. Add stock and remaining 4 tablespoons butter and 1 teaspoon salt; remove from heat, and stir until butter is melted, about 2 minutes. Pour over bread mixture, stirring to combine. Let cool slightly, about 5 minutes.

4. Gently stir beaten eggs into bread mixture. Transfer mixture to prepared baking dish. Bake, uncovered, in preheated oven until golden brown, about 40 minutes. Remove from oven; garnish with parsley, sage, and thyme. Serve immediately.

Two More Takes

Transform our basic recipe into something surprising



Veggie-Packed Sourdough Dressing

Prepare recipe as directed through Step 1. In Step 2, replace sausage with 8 oz. sliced **cremini mushrooms**; cook, undisturbed, until browned, about 4 minutes.

Replace sweet onion with 1 sliced **red onion**; cook until softened, about 3 minutes. Stir in 5 oz. **baby spinach** and 1 (15-oz.) pkg. thawed **frozen chopped butternut squash**;

cook until spinach wilts, about 2 minutes. Omit sage and thyme. In Step 3, replace chicken stock with 3 cups **vegetable stock**; proceed with recipe as directed. Garnish with **parsley**.

ACTIVE 30 MIN. - TOTAL 1 HOUR, 15 MIN. - SERVES 8



Cheesy Dressing Muffins

Prepare recipe as directed in Step 1, but **butter** the wells of 2 (12-cup) muffin trays. In Step 2, omit sausage, parsley, and sage. In Step 3, increase **butter** to ½ cup. In Step 4, stir 1 cup shredded **sharp white Cheddar cheese** into bread mixture along with eggs. Divide mixture among wells of muffin trays. Top

evenly with 1 ½ cups additional shredded **Cheddar**. Bake at 375°F until golden brown, about 30 minutes. Garnish with **thyme**.

ACTIVE 25 MIN. - TOTAL 1 HOUR - MAKES 24

**Bread Winner**

If you can't find brioche, use a loaf of King's Hawaiian sliced bread.

**OVER EASY**

The Big Cheese

Satisfy a full house with this savory bacon, egg, and Cheddar casserole

Cheese Dreams Breakfast Casserole

ACTIVE 20 MIN. - TOTAL 1 HOUR,
10 MIN.

SERVES 8

- 4 oz. extra-sharp yellow Cheddar cheese, finely shredded (about 1 cup)
- ½ cup unsalted butter, softened
- ¼ tsp. smoked paprika
- 1½ tsp. Worcestershire sauce, divided
- 1¼ tsp. dry mustard, divided
- ½ tsp. cayenne pepper, divided
- 14 (½-inch-thick) slices brioche, crusts trimmed, lightly toasted (from 1 [14-oz.] loaf)

- 8 large eggs
- 2 cups half-and-half
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 6 thick-cut bacon slices, cooked and crumbled
- 1 Tbsp. finely chopped chives

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 13- x 9-inch baking dish with cooking spray. Set aside.
2. Beat cheese and butter in a medium bowl with an electric mixer on medium speed until blended, about 15 seconds. Add smoked paprika, ½ teaspoon of the Worcester-

shire, and ¼ teaspoon each of the dry mustard and cayenne; beat until incorporated, about 10 seconds.

3. Spread 1 tablespoon of the cheese mixture on 1 side of toasted bread slices to cover completely. Cut each slice into 4 squares. Starting in one corner, shingle 14 of the bread squares down the length of prepared dish, overlapping slices slightly. Repeat process with remaining squares to create 4 rows of 14 (alternate directions with rows, if desired).

4. Whisk together eggs, half-and-half, salt, remaining 1 teaspoon each Worcestershire and dry mustard, and remaining ¼ teaspoon cayenne in same medium bowl. Pour egg mixture over shingled bread in baking dish. Sprinkle with bacon, and cover with aluminum foil.

5. Bake until cheese is melted and egg mixture is puffed, about 30 minutes. Remove foil; bake until lightly browned and filling is set, 10 to 15 minutes more. Let casserole stand 10 minutes before slicing. Sprinkle with chives, and serve warm.

SNACK TIME

Sip and Savor

Serve this elegant duo to tide over your guests until the feast

Spicy Pear-and-Cheddar Bites

ACTIVE 15 MIN. - TOTAL 20 MIN.

SERVES 8

Stir together 3 Tbsp. each **extra-virgin olive oil** and melted **unsalted butter**, 2 tsp. minced **garlic**, 1 ½ tsp. finely chopped **fresh thyme**, and ¼ tsp. each **garlic powder** and **kosher salt** in a medium bowl. Arrange 24 **large round buttery crackers** (such as Breton) in a single layer on 2 rimmed baking sheets lined with Reynolds Kitchens® Unbleached Parchment Paper; brush with olive oil mixture. Bake at 350°F with racks in top third and lower third positions until golden brown, about 6 minutes. Transfer crackers to a platter; top each with a slice of **smoked sharp white Cheddar cheese** and a thin slice of **red Anjou pear**. Spoon ½ tsp. **hot pepper jelly** over each pear slice; garnish with **fresh thyme**.

Bourbon Sparkler

ACTIVE 5 MIN. - TOTAL 5 MIN.

SERVES 1

Place 1 **brown sugar cube** in the bottom of a coupe glass; add 5 dashes of **whiskey barrel-aged bitters** (such as Fee Brothers). Pour in 1 Tbsp. **bourbon**, and gently stir to combine. (Sugar will not be completely dissolved.) Top with ½ cup **Champagne**; garnish with a **lemon twist**.





PIECE OF CAKE

Chess Moves

A double-chocolate filling makes this classic pie better than ever

Chocolate
Chess Pie

RECIPES: ALANA AL-HATLANI; FOOD STYLING: JULIAN HENSARLING; PROP STYLING: MISSIE NEVILLE CRAWFORD



TOP IT OFF

Two more delicious options



Chocolate-Orange Chess Pie

Follow recipe as directed through Step 2. In Step 3, replace vanilla extract with 2 tsp. grated **orange zest**. Proceed with recipe as directed. Garnish with whipped cream and **orange peel strips**.



Turtle Chess Pie

Follow recipe as directed through Step 2. In Step 3, omit whipped cream. Stir together 6 Tbsp. **jarred salted caramel sauce** and 4 Tbsp. **pecan pieces** in a small bowl. Spoon over pie just before serving.

Chocolate Chess Pie

ACTIVE 15 MIN. - TOTAL 50 MIN., PLUS 1 HOUR, 30 MIN. COOLING

MAKES 1 (9-INCH) PIE

- 1/4 cup unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 cup packed light brown sugar
- 3 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1/4 cup heavy whipping cream
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa

- 2 Tbsp. all-purpose flour or fine yellow cornmeal

- 1 frozen piecrust (such as Marie Callender's), parbaked according to pkg. instructions
- Whipped cream

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Melt butter and chocolate chips in a large microwavable bowl on HIGH in 30-second intervals, stopping to stir between each, about 1 minute total.
2. Whisk brown sugar into chocolate mixture. Whisk in

eggs, 1 at a time, until fully incorporated.

3. Stir whipping cream, vanilla, and salt into chocolate mixture. Sift in cocoa and flour (or cornmeal, if you prefer a little more texture); whisk just until combined. Pour mixture into parbaked piecrust; bake in preheated oven until center is puffed but still jiggles slightly, 35 to 40 minutes. Let cool completely before slicing, about 1 hour, 30 minutes. Serve with whipped cream.

COOKING SCHOOL

TIPS AND TRICKS FROM THE SOUTH'S MOST TRUSTED KITCHEN

How To Make a Darn Good Gravy

Perfect our richest, silkiest sauce ever (page 82) with these steps



1. SAUTÉ

Brown the turkey neck, giblets, onion, carrots, celery, and garlic. This creates flavorful bits (known as “fond”) in the bottom of the pan that will add depth to the base of the gravy.



2. DEGLAZE

Pour in wine (or water) to release the brown bits, scraping the bottom of the pan with a wooden spatula to loosen any stubborn spots. Cook until the liquid has almost evaporated.



3. INCLUDE HERBS

Add chicken stock along with parsley, thyme, and bay leaves. Simmer, undisturbed, until reduced by about half to help concentrate and enrich the mixture. Strain, discard solids, and set aside stock.



4. SEPARATE

While the turkey rests, strain the drippings. Pour them into a fat separator, and let sit for 5 minutes; use the fat for the roux. Or chill the drippings, and skim the solids off the top with a spoon.



5. MAKE A ROUX

Heat 3 tablespoons of the fat in a saucepan over medium heat. Add flour, and cook, whisking constantly, until toasted. Don't rush this process, or your gravy will taste like raw flour.



6. FINISH

Gradually pour the reserved stock into the roux, whisking constantly. Add the strained drippings. Cook, stirring often, until the mixture coats the back of a spoon. Season with salt and pepper to taste before serving.

Flavor Boosters

Salt is an essential ingredient in gravy, and the products below can provide extra savoriness and depth, according to *Southern Living* Test Kitchen Pro Nicole Hopper. “Start with a little at a time, and remember that most of these items are quite concentrated. Add them before seasoning the gravy with salt and pepper, and then use those if still needed,” she says.



SOY SAUCE

A powerhouse pantry staple; \$4, walmart.com



ANCHOVIES

Plump and perfectly briny; \$12, zingermans.com



WHITE MISO

Savory and a touch sweet; \$12, edenfoods.com



FISH SAUCE

Just a dash; \$10, redboatfishsauce.com

COOK OF THE MONTH

Laura Hill

CABOT, ARKANSAS

Go-to kitchen item: “I’m a gadget girl. If there is a specific tool for something, I guarantee you I have it. My mini spatula from Pampered Chef is a favorite. However, my KitchenAid mixer is probably the one thing that I just can’t do without.”

Beloved *Southern Living* recipe: “The Best Carrot Cake (with the Buttermilk Glaze). True confession: I have never made it myself. My husband knows carrot cake is my favorite, so years ago, he baked one to welcome me home from an annual girls’ trip to the beach. And he has made it every year since. He creates a giant, sticky mess in the process, but it is worth every dish, counter, and floor that I have to clean up afterward.”

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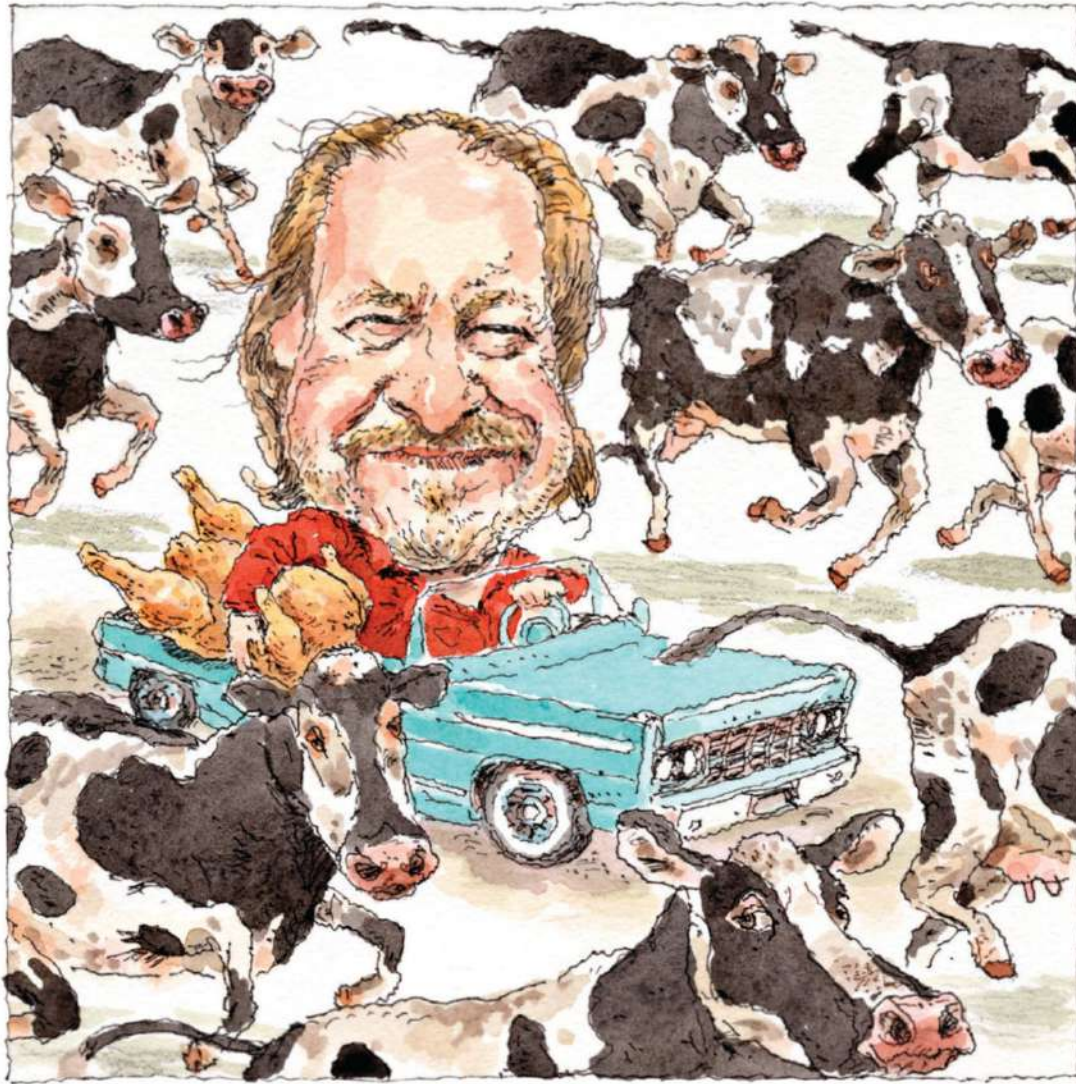
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Homeward Bound

Going back for Thanksgiving somehow makes everything all right



ABOUT 40 years ago, I was marooned in San Marcos, Texas, on Thanksgiving. A whole carload of teenagers picked a fight with me at a Burger King. (You cannot make this up.) I acted tough enough to satisfy my self-respect. But there were a lot of them, so I fled in a rented Ford Fairmont. That vehicle was not exactly built for speed, but I eventually made it to the Holiday Inn alive, thinking to myself that at least things could only get better from there. I was young then and still believed in hope.

The next day, I drove to College Station to write about a football game. In the press box, they served the saddest excuse for a turkey dinner I've ever known. On the way

back, I got lost in a dense fog that had me driving so slow I seem to remember cows passing my car.

Then another year, I was in West Palm Beach, Florida, at a Denny's or an IHOP—whichever place had the Rooty Tooty Fresh 'N Fruity Combo. I was there to cover a Presidential election. The server, dressed in holiday flair, dusted my pancakes with powdered sugar. I hate that stuff but smiled and thanked her anyway, because I knew she wasn't where she wanted to be either.

There's also the time I was stuck out in Los Angeles and ate some fried rice and a cup of hot-and-sour soup. I think it had something in it that might have possibly been turkey.

My point is, I know what it feels like

to be away from home on a day that is shorthand for homecoming, a time meant for being with those who have to love you in spite of yourself.

I think back on these memories when I see crowds of travelers in big airports and in four lanes of gridlock traffic. They come to mind when I watch servicemen—and women—in uniform, standing in interminable lines, trying hard to return to something warm and sane in a world so full of uncertainty.

That doesn't mean that the holiday itself will be perfect. I know that these reunions can often lead to tears—or even a fistfight or two. Families will do that. Maybe, when it's over, we don't so much leave home as flee it...at least until the next November.

These clashes have happened so much among my relatives that we have invented a word for it: "ruin't." Someone might say, "You've ruin't my Thanksgiving." Although I have personally never been accused of spoiling that holiday, I ruin't a Christmas back in 1999.

I still think it's worth anything you have to do to get home. Almost all of the people from my mother's generation are gone now. Only my mom remains of her great, great family. But even in that melancholy, it's worth it, just to be there.

I will eat turkey that actually tastes like turkey and then drag the dusty Christmas tree up from the basement, and everything will be all right.

Sometimes when I'm at the airport, I'm reminded of these thoughts as I see a determined young mother battling to make it to the gate—with one hand holding onto her screaming toddler with a death grip and her free arm cradling an infant. And I wonder if this might be the first time the littlest one has ever gone home to see her people.



MAKE THE
holidays
MEMORABLE

This Thanksgiving, make every bite mouthwatering with McCormick Turkey Gravy. Its smooth richness and perfect blend of spices will have everyone racing to the table, ready to dig in.



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