

NEW LODGE CAST IRON PANS | BEST DRESSINGS | BEST SOUTHERN COOKBOOKS

65

SEASONAL
recipes and tips

Southern CAST IRON®

Gingerbread
TWIST

page 59

**A HOLIDAY FEAST
FIT FOR YOUR FAMILY**

SHARE *the* JOY

These Mississippi gifts will be treasured for years to come



NEILSON'S DEPARTMENT STORE Oxford, Mississippi
Whether it's home goods, shoes, clothing, or accessories, Neilson's Department Store has served the community of Oxford, Mississippi, from The Square since its beginnings in 1839. No matter the style or occasion, Neilson's (the 16th-oldest operating store in the country and oldest in the South) never disappoints. neilsonsdepartmentstore.com



HILLYER HOUSE Ocean Springs, Mississippi
Nestled in the heart of an idyllic beach town, Hillyer House boasts an enviable collection of home goods and art pieces alongside a few Mississippi-made foodstuffs and kitchen tools. This beautifully curated space has served the community for more than 50 years and is a must-stop destination. hillyerhouse.com

MCCARTY'S GALLERY Merigold, Mississippi
Since 1954, these masters of clay have turned out beautiful art pieces as well as functional creations, ranging from plates and platters to planters and sculptures of all sizes. The studio is conveniently located in the heart of Delta Blues country, a short drive from Clarksdale or Cleveland, and if you come on a Friday or Saturday, you could treat yourself to lunch at The Gallery. mccartyspottery.com



LEMURIA BOOKS Jackson, Mississippi
Whether you're looking for a poppy page-turner or a sought-after signed edition, Lemuria Books has you covered. The shop is about to enter its 50th year of service and has more to offer than ever, considering its slate of live events and First Edition Clubs (focusing on fiction, nonfiction, and children's literature). lemuriabooks.com



THE LUCKY RABBIT Hattiesburg, Mississippi
For a hearty helping of nostalgia, give The Lucky Rabbit a visit. This local gem packs tons of rare and vintage items into two side-by-side warehouses and is an unbeatable spot for everything from tableware and furniture to unique gifts and more. Throughout the shop, you'll also find vintage arcade games, post-worthy photo displays, and even working phonebooths. theluckyrabbit.com

May your *holidays* be *perfectly* seasoned.

There's no better time of year to break from old traditions (we're thinking of you, green bean casserole) and experience the joy of dining out at one of Mississippi's extraordinary restaurants. Our state has an abundance of locally owned restaurants with festive flavors that will make your holidays just a little more merry and bright. Learn more at [VisitMississippi.org/Holidays](https://www.visitmississippi.org/holidays).

#WanderMS

VISIT
MISSISSIPPI



Elvie's | Jackson, Mississippi

CONTENTS

November | December 2024

Volume 10, Issue 6

FIRST

FROM THE EDITOR 7

Tie It Up with a Bow

CAST IRON CUPBOARD 9

Dolly Parton x Lodge Cast Iron Collection

CHEF'S TABLE 13

Robbie Shoults

SAVOR THE STATE 17

Alabama: Lane cake

NEXT

ROOT VEGETABLE ROUNDUP 31

Spectacular sides starring these winter veggies

SIMPLY SEASONAL 39

Delicious mains to cozy up to this time of year

SOUTHERN FLAVOR FOR THE HOLIDAYS 47

The ultimate cookbook roundup for gifting

DECK THE HALLS DESSERT TABLE 53

Spirited sweets in favorite holiday flavors

ALL DRESSED UP 61

A staple holiday side reimagined



LAST

FROM THE PANTRY 69

Going Nuts

COOKING WITH DARRYL 71

Mom's Dressing and Loaded Mashed Potatoes

USE & CARE 77

RECIPES & RESOURCES 79

RARE FINDS 81

Aebleskiver pan

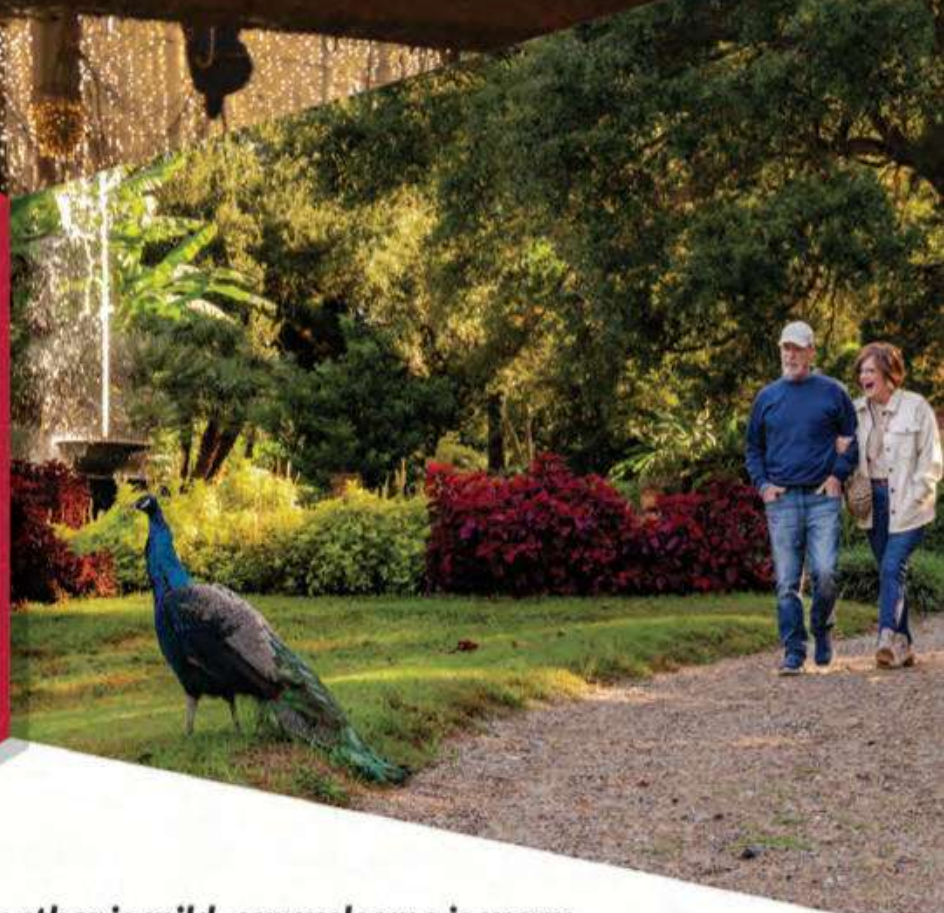


on the cover

Gingerbread Twist page 59
Photography by John O'Hagan
Food Styling by Vanessa Rocchio
Styling by Maghan Armstrong



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your
Winter**



*Our weather is mild, our welcome is warm,
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Good times
ARE BREWING



Let's raise a glass to family, friends, and the sweet taste of tradition! Savoring the flavor of fresh-brewed Luzianne Tea has been a pitcher-perfect part of holiday gatherings since 1902, because Luzianne is more than just iced tea – it's a celebration of the sweet, slow moments that make the season bright.

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Savor the **GOOD TIMES**

TIE IT UP WITH A BOW

With Christmassy mains and festive dessert recipes at the ready, it's official: The time has come to ring in the most joyous time of the year, and with that, it's also time to say farewell to—or rather, reflect on—another delicious year of cooking in cast iron.

You'll notice a trusty cast-iron skillet and a do-it-all Dutch oven make an appearance in this issue more times than we can count. But because it's the holidays, we're also breaking out our specialty cast-iron pans for those extra-special sweets, like Apple Brandy Fruitcakes (page 58) and Figgy Pudding Cakes with Toffee Sauce (page 55). Of course, there are more desserts where those came from, so mosey on over to page 53 to ignite your sweet tooth.

For the prequel to said desserts, you won't have to go far to fall in love with seasonal mains like Pear-Clementine-

Glazed Ham (page 43), Dijon-Cane Syrup-Glazed Turkey (page 45), Cranberry Short Ribs with Blue Cheese Grits (page 44), and even more. And if you flip to page 61, homestyle classics as well as new and interesting takes on the Southern staple dressing abound.

Bonuses in the issue include a helping of produce-packed sides featuring seasonal root vegetables, a handful of recipes to revamp that old dressing recipe that's been passed down through generations, and some of our favorite Southern cookbooks perfect for gifting to your loved ones.

So, get your stockings hung, make sure your holiday menu is prepped to perfection, and be sure to tote sweet treats to your neighbors to keep the spirit of the season alive. From our team to yours, we wish you the happiest of holidays and beyond.



For daily cast iron recipes, tips, and stories you don't want to miss, be sure to follow us on social media, and show us your cast iron pride by using #southerncastiron.



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SAUSAGE SKILLET
PASTA BAKE



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DISCOVER MORE ABOUT
OUR CHEESES AND FIND
THIS RECIPE

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

DOLLY'S LODGE CAST IRON SKILLET COLLECTION & GIFT BUNDLE

Earlier this year, Dolly Parton and Lodge launched a collection of cast-iron cookware inspired by the icon's life and music. This holiday season, these two Tennessee legends have created a unique gift set featuring fan-favorite Lodge cookware, accessories, and Dolly's brand-new cookbook, *Good Lookin' Cookin'!* The gift bundle will even include an over-the-top unboxing experience sure to excite the Dolly fan in your life. lodgecastiron.com/dolly-parton



TASTES & TOOLS



BANNER BUTTER

There's nothing better than real butter, and this Georgia company makes some of the best in the South. Infused with fresh herbs and spices or enhanced with a bit of sweet sorghum, Banner Butter has you covered for every dish and every occasion. Grab a hunk of crusty bread and dig in! bannerbutter.com



HERITAGE SHORTBREAD

Traditional Scottish shortbread lives on in the US thanks in part to this South Carolina company. Using an original, century-old family recipe, Heritage Shortbread is lovingly baked with natural, quality ingredients, making it a delicious surprise for the special people in your life. If you can't bear to part with these irresistible bite-size pieces, grab a warm cup of cocoa or tea and treat yourself to a cozy dessert during the holidays. heritageshortbread.com



THE APOTHECARY'S KITCHEN PEPPERMINT BARK

The holidays aren't complete without a box of this North Carolina-made peppermint bark. All-natural and handcrafted with premium dark and white chocolates, this delicious treat makes for a great stocking stuffer anyone in your life will appreciate. And there's nothing wrong with saving a box or two for yourself to snack on all season long—we know we would. theapothecaryskitchen.com



LOUISVILLE POTTERY COLLECTION MIXING BOWLS

These Kentucky-made nesting bowls are beautiful in their simplicity. With nearly straight sides, the deep vessels are perfect for mixing doughs, and the small spouts are handy for pouring batters of all kinds. The baker in your life will thank you for this artisan creation to use in the kitchen. stonewareandco.com



The magic IS IN THE MAYO

SCAN FOR RECIPES



BLUEPLATEMAYO.COM



THAT'S THE *Good Stuff*

Gathering in the kitchen is the heart of holiday celebrations, and Blue Plate Mayo is the ingredient that brings it all together. Our recipe using only the egg yolks makes Blue Plate so rich 'n creamy, it's the secret to divine deviled eggs, golden crispy turkeys, and melt-in-your-mouth cakes. When you've got Blue Plate in the kitchen, you've got the good stuff!

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ADVERTISING

Asado by the Sea

A NEW HILTON HEAD ISLAND SEAFOOD FESTIVAL SIGNATURE EVENT

FEBRUARY 17-23, 2025



Hernan and Alberto met at Le Cordon Bleu in Miami, Florida, and built a friendship that culminated in the 2011 opening of Del Sur in Miami. Three years later, they relocated to St. Simons Island, Georgia, and opened Del Sur Artisan Eats, which quickly became a beloved local destination, with a menu that combines Southern and coastal favorites with comforting South American fare. In 2022, Del Sur expanded to offer a Brunswick, Georgia, location with a similar offering of breakfast and lunch items.

Head to the Hilton Head Island Seafood Festival for Asado by the Sea, an exclusive culinary event that promises to tantalize your taste buds and leave you craving more. Immerse yourself in an extraordinary dining experience that fuses Southern seafood flavors with the fiery, rustic traditions of Argentine asado. This unique gastronomic event will be crafted by acclaimed chefs Hernan Stutzer and Alberto Llano from Del Sur in Saint Simons Island, Georgia. Their passion and expertise will bring fresh, local catches to life, creating a feast that celebrates the best of both worlds.

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Saturday Seafood Festival

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Kegs & Eggs

Wrap up the festival with made-from-scratch brunch bites, live music, and local brews.



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Omni Hilton Head Oceanfront Resort Gets a Glow-Up

The renovation has transformed the hotel, blending indoor and outdoor spaces with sophistication and comfort.

OPEN-AIR LOBBY

Adorned with curated elements inspired by the sea, the lobby captivates with its blend of natural textures, muted tones, and tasteful nautical accents.

COASTAL COURTYARD

Lush greenery, swaying palm trees, and vibrant blooms create a tapestry of color while meandering pathways beckon guests to explore this enchanting outdoor space.

OUTDOOR SANCTUARY

With a seamless blend of modern comfort and coastal aesthetics, the renovated balconies provide the perfect vantage point for panoramic views and spectacular sunsets.

By LAND & by SEA

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Delve into the island's abundant history, culture, and culinary delights with each delectable bite. Embark on wildlife encounters as unique as our Island, culinary experiences with celebrity guest chefs, art exploration, and distinctive dining opportunities at South Carolina's most iconic culinary festival.

Learn more at hiltonheadseafoodfestival.com



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ROBBIE SHOULTS

HOW THIS TEXAS MAN AND HIS MULTIGENERATIONAL FAMILY BUSINESS THRIVE ON TRADITIONS, COMMUNITY ROOTS, AND GOOD FOOD

BY DANIEL DUBUISSON



In Marshall, Texas, a family legacy that started from humble beginnings has become a cornerstone of the community. Robbie Shoults' forebearers founded what is known today as Bear Creek Smokehouse, a multigenerational family business and the embodiment of hard work, faith, and tradition—values deeply rooted in Robbie and the entire Shoults family. Robbie carries on the family business some 80 years after its start, honoring the past through his dedication to solidifying and expanding that legacy.

“I never knew anything else,” he says. “My granddad started the business in 1943. My dad grew up in it. They raised me in it, and it’s really all I ever knew. We’re all about food and giving people the best possible experience, food, and customer service when they come visit us.”

Bear Creek Smokehouse—affectionately known as the “Finest Tourist Trap in Texas”—began when Robbie’s grandparents Hick and Nellie started raising and smoking turkey on the family farm. As the family grew, so did the business, expanding from a modest farm operation to a large-scale general store, meat processing plant, and several newer ventures, including the recently opened High Horse 1898, a restaurant that has quickly become a town favorite.

“I really feel like we’re living the American dream,” Robbie says. “We’ve worked hard, we’ve persevered, and we’ve raised our kids to do the same. Our son, Hunter, manages the processing plant. Our daughter, Krista, manages our downtown space. My mother is 83 but is still in and out of the general store, as are a few of



our grandchildren. Our family motto—‘food, family, and faith’—is more than just words to us. It’s a way of life.”

Robbie and his family’s newest venture, High Horse 1898, brings a fresh culinary experience to downtown Marshall. Already known for its laid-back atmosphere and delicious fare, the restaurant offers a variety of mouthwatering dishes, from sandwiches and burgers to soups, salads, and grain bowls. But opening a brick-and-mortar restaurant was a new challenge for the family, one that required collaboration, creativity, and a bit of help from friends.

“The building was built in 1898 and needed some work before we could do anything with it. I hate to see empty buildings downtown, so the city gave us a good deal on the building; we opened up Marshall Mercantile in it first. We’ve got a big gift shop in there and space for big events on the upper floors. We’re even donating some of the space to open a new extension of the Harrison County Museum, but High Horse is the newest addition.”

Robbie and his family’s passion for preserving the old while embracing the new is evident in every detail of High Horse 1898. To bring their vision to life, the Shoults family collaborated with Shawn Somerford, owner of The Blue Frog in downtown Marshall. Shawn helped launch the restaurant, hiring the entire team, training cooks, and overseeing day-to-day operations. The partnership has been a success, allowing Shawn to also keep her own restaurant open while ensuring High Horse thrives.

Bear Creek Smokehouse and High Horse 1898 aren’t just places to eat; they’re places where Robbie hopes memories are made. From barbecue to burgers, the Shoults family’s dedication to quality and tradition is reflected in every dish they serve, and their love for and use of cast iron plays a significant role in that dedication, especially when it comes to Robbie’s wife, Tracy, and her famous Texican Skillet Cornbread—a recipe Robbie is happy to share with *Southern Cast Iron*.

THIS PAGE (Clockwise from top right): The Shoults family; Bear Creek Smokehouse’s eclectic general store; barbecue plate from Bear Creek Smokehouse. PREVIOUS PAGE (From left to right): Bear Creek Smokehouse’s new and improved general store exterior; Robbie Shoults, current owner of the family’s businesses.



“It’s her recipe, and we actually serve it in the general store,” Robbie says. “She’ll make it in her family cast-iron skillet at home, but at the store, instead of using a skillet, we bake it in muffin pans. It’s easier to produce more of it that way, and it’s become a real hit.”

But like any Southerners in the kitchen, Robbie and Tracy still have a trick or two to this cornbread up their sleeves.

“We left out a top-secret ingredient in the recipe I’m giving you,” Robbie confides. “We like to melt a stick of butter and mix it in with the batter. It adds an incredible richness to the cornbread, and if you want to take it a step further, try smoking some fresh sweet corn and using that instead of canned corn. The flavor is just amazing.”

For Robbie and company, food isn’t just about sustenance—it’s about family, tradition, and community. Whether it’s a simple skillet of cornbread or a hearty meal, every bite carries with it the love and care of generations past—just like their cherished, passed-down cast-iron pieces.

As Bear Creek Smokehouse, Marshall Mercantile, High Horse 1898, and the rest of the Shoults’ operation continue to grow and evolve, Robbie remains committed to his roots and ensuring the next generation is prepared to take up the mantle.

“Our family’s been blessed beyond measure,” he says. “We’ve worked hard, we’ve trained our kids to do the same, and we’ve tried to be a positive influence on our customers and community. At the end of the day, if we can help make someone smile or brighten their day with a good meal, then we’ve done something right.”

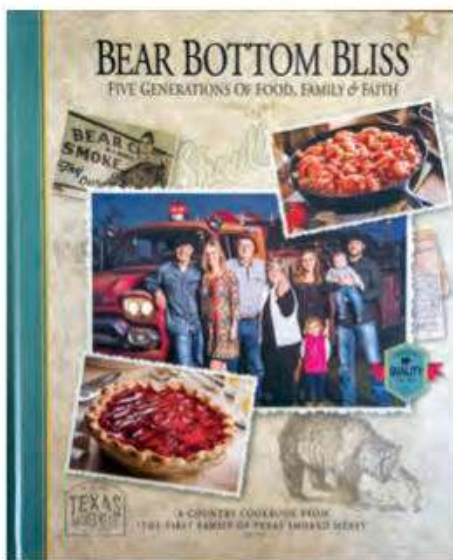


“OUR FAMILY’S BEEN BLESSED BEYOND MEASURE. WE’VE WORKED HARD, WE’VE TRAINED OUR KIDS TO DO THE SAME, AND WE’VE TRIED TO BE A POSITIVE INFLUENCE ON OUR CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITY.”

—ROBBIE SHOULTS



(Clockwise from top left): The Marshall Mercantile and High Horse 1898 downtown exterior; Kale & Brussels Salad with Salmon; High Horse 1898’s cozy yet modern dining room.



▲ The Shoults family created this country cookbook as a way to share down-home recipes and tips passed down from generation to generation. Readers will also enjoy historical anecdotes and heartwarming stories, including how Bear Creek Smokehouse came to be. Grab your copy today by going to bearcreeksmokehouse.com/products/bear-bottom-bliss-cookbook.

TEXICAN SKILLET CORNBREAD

Makes 12 servings

- 1 tablespoon bacon grease
- 2 large eggs, whisked
- 1⅓ cups buttermilk
- 1 cup cornmeal
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- 1½ cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
- 1 (15.25-ounce) can corn kernels
- ½ white onion, diced
- 4 medium jalapeño peppers, 2 diced and seeded, 2 sliced for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. Add 1 tablespoon bacon grease to a 10-inch cast-iron skillet. Place the skillet in the oven to heat grease.
3. In a medium bowl, combine eggs, buttermilk, and cornmeal. Set aside.
4. In a separate bowl, combine flour, baking powder, salt, baking soda, and garlic powder.
5. Pour egg mixture into dry ingredients. Mix well.
6. Fold in cheese, corn, onion, and diced jalapeños.
7. Carefully remove the skillet from the oven. Pour the mixture into the skillet. (Tip: You want to hear the batter sizzle as it hits the skillet.) Place sliced jalapeños on top of the batter.
8. Bake for 45–50 minutes, or until golden brown.
9. Remove from oven and serve with soup or chili. Enjoy! 🍴





A STROLL DOWN MEMORY LANE

A SWEET, SPIRALED TAKE ON A TIME-HONORED SOUTHERN DESSERT: LANE CAKE

WRITTEN BY MORGAN CRAWFORD SCOTT / PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM BATHIE / RECIPE DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD STYLING BY KATIE MOON DICKERSON / STYLING BY MAGGIE HILL

MORE THAN 100 YEARS AGO IN COLUMBUS, GEORGIA, a woman by the name of Emma Rylander Lane from Clayton, Alabama, entered her recipe for “Prize Cake” in a county fair competition. The lucky few taste testers of a soon-to-be (and appropriately named) prize-winning cake likely didn’t understand the allure this dessert would hold amongst Southerners—especially around Christmastime—for many years to come. The recipe really grew legs when it appeared in the renowned novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*, written by Harper Lee, a fellow Alabamian. Since then, its shiny exterior and raisin- and nut-studded interior has been beloved by everyone from President Jimmy Carter to your next-door neighbor, and our roulade version is one you’ll certainly want to have on your dessert table this holiday.

LANE CAKE ROULADE

Makes 8 to 10 servings

- 4 large eggs, room temperature
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon almond extract
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sour cream, room temperature
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable oil
- Confectioners’ sugar, for dusting
- Bourbon Simple Syrup (recipe on page 79)
- Lane Cake Filling (recipe on page 79)
- Swiss Meringue Buttercream (recipe on page 79)

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Lightly spray a 15½x10½-inch cast-iron baking pan with baking spray with flour. Line bottom of pan with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat eggs and granulated sugar at high speed until thick and pale, 5 to 7 minutes. Beat in extracts.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. Gently fold flour mixture into egg mixture.
4. In a small bowl, whisk together sour cream and oil. Add 1 cup batter, and stir until well combined. Gently fold sour cream mixture into remaining batter. Pour batter into prepared pan, and spread evenly with an offset spatula.
5. Bake until set and lightly browned and top springs back when touched, 20 to 25 minutes. Immediately run a sharp knife around sides of pan to loosen cake. Using a fine-mesh sieve, dust top of cake with confectioners’ sugar. Place a clean kitchen towel on top of cake. Place a baking sheet or a large cutting board on top, and invert cake. Carefully remove hot pan and parchment. Starting with one

- long side, immediately roll up cake and towel together, jelly roll style. Place, seam side down, on a wire rack, and let cool completely.
6. Carefully unroll cake, and brush interior with Bourbon Simple Syrup. (You will have some left over.) Gently spoon and spread Lane Cake Filling onto cake, and gently reroll cake without towel, lifting, laying, and gently tucking roll on top of filling and making sure not to press hard; place, seam side down, on a wire rack, using towel as a sling. Refrigerate for 1 hour.
 7. Brush top and sides of roulade with Bourbon Simple Syrup. Trim edges as desired, and spread Swiss Meringue Buttercream all over top and sides of roulade. Serve immediately, or refrigerate until ready to serve. It is best served the same day. 🍷





Southern Season's Greetings

Make spirits merry & bright with a getaway to one of the Peach State's many unique cities.



EXTRA SPARKLE

Avalon on Ice
Nov. 24–Jan. 20

**Holiday
Hop & Shop**
December 2

Noon Year's Eve
December 31

SPARKLING LIGHTS OF ALPHARETTA

Each winter, Alpharetta, Georgia, transforms into a holiday wonderland that captivates visitors with its enchanting atmosphere and festive spirit. The city comes alive with twinkling lights, charming decorations, and a palpable sense of warmth. Strolling along the illuminated streets, visitors are transported into a festive wonderland, where the spirit of the season abounds.

Holiday shopping in Alpharetta is an experience like no other, offering a blend of charm, variety, and unique finds. With its festively adorned storefronts, the downtown district becomes a picturesque backdrop for your shopping adventure. Start your spree at La Bella Maison, a boutique known for its curated selection of home décor and distinctive gifts, perfect for adding a touch of holiday magic to any living space. For fashion-forward finds, Avalon beckons with its upscale shops, featuring renowned brands like Anthropologie and Kendra Scott. Meanwhile, Queen of Hearts Antiques & Interiors offers a treasure trove of vintage delights, making it an ideal stop for those seeking one-of-a-kind presents

with a nostalgic touch. For outdoor enthusiasts, Mountain High Outfitters is where you can find quality gear and apparel for those who enjoy exploring the natural beauty surrounding Alpharetta. With these must-visit stores, your holiday shopping getaway in Alpharetta promises to be a delightful and memorable experience.

Dining in Alpharetta during the holidays is a culinary journey filled with warmth and flavor. Begin your festive feast at Lapeer Steak & Seafood, a charming restaurant that exudes sophistication. Its seasonal menu showcases locally sourced ingredients, promising a taste of the freshest flavors of Georgia. For an upscale yet cozy ambience, Vinny's on Windward offers Italian-inspired dishes with a modern twist, perfect for indulging in rich, comforting flavors when the weather turns cold. For a truly unique dining experience, don't miss UP on the Roof. When in Alpharetta, this rooftop gem is a must-visit destination for a dining experience that truly elevates the holiday spirit. With a menu designed to tantalize the taste buds, guests can indulge in a diverse range of dishes, from small bites to gourmet entrées, all while enjoying the crisp, cool air under the glow of twinkling lights.

Find even more at: awesomealpharetta.com/holiday-happenings-in-alpharetta.

ALPHARETTA: AWESOME MOMENTS AWAIT

From trendy boutiques and award-winning restaurants to vibrant festivals and live music, there's something for everyone.



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moments await!

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— *awesome* —
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ESCAPE TO BLUE RIDGE TOGETHER

A romantic getaway to Blue Ridge, Georgia, is just what you need when the weather gets chilly and the holidays are near—it's the best time of year to visit the mountains. Plan your escape during the holidays to take advantage of the magic of Blue Ridge at Christmas, or wait until the New Year, when you really need a break after the hustle and bustle of the season.



- 1. Rent a cozy cabin in the mountains.** Search for your own perfect mountain cabin or luxury vacation home at blueridgemountains.com.
- 2. Take time to wind down.** Unpack and explore trails nearby. Or simply find a comfy spot on the porch.
- 3. Cook a meal together.** Bring in a private chef or cook dinner together. Pick up fresh ingredients in town from markets like Mercier Orchards or source locally prepared food from shops and restaurants like the Pasta Market, Chester's Provisions, or Out of the Blue.
- 4. Cuddle up by the fireside.** Cuddle up by the fireside with a glass of wine and a good book or a movie night!
- 5. Explore the mountains.** Hike to the head of the Appalachian Trail, Aska Trails, or Swinging Bridge.
- 6. Take a walk downtown.** Get coffee at Mountain Mama's or Das Kaffee Haus in downtown Blue Ridge, or brunch at The Black Sheep or Big Foot Biscuit at the Dogwood.
- 7. Visit a local winery or brewery.** Spend an afternoon tasting local brews at Mercier's Tasting Room, Bear Claw or Serenberry Vineyards, or one of six craft breweries.
- 8. Have a couple's spa day.** Treat yourself to a couple's massage or other relaxation treatments at Serenity in the Mountains or Teatree Spa.
- 9. Watch the game.** Vacation home rentals come with all the comforts of home, including wifi and big screen tvs.
- 10. Treat yourself to a romantic dinner.** Last but definitely not least, experience a romantic dinner at one of Blue Ridge's finest restaurants, like Ferraro's Kitchen, Harvest on Main, The General Ledger, The Black Sheep, or Grace.

4631

Get Away Together



GEORGIA'S



Georgia's coolest
mountain town

BLUERIDGEMOUNTAINS.COM





EXTRA SPARKLE

Light of Trenton
Nov 29–Dec 31

**Dade Expo
Holiday Market**
December 7

**Rising Fawn
Studio Tour**
December 7 & 8

**Christmas
Crossing and
Parade**
December 14

Live Nativity
December 21

TRENTON-DADE SHARES ITS MAGIC

Visiting Dade County, Georgia, during the holiday season is a delightful experience filled with charm, natural beauty, and festive spirit. Nestled in the Appalachian foothills, this small but picturesque county offers a peaceful retreat from the hustle and bustle of larger cities. During the holidays, Dade County transforms into a winter wonderland, with its rolling hills and awe-inspiring mountains, often dusted with snow, and its quaint towns adorned with twinkling lights and decorations.

Experience the magic of Christmas and enjoy the holiday spirit with stunning light displays around the town square during the Saturdays of “Light of Trenton.” You’ll be treated to joyful singing and a live nativity scene celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ. There will be cookie decorating, face painting, and a dazzling parade of lighted floats through downtown Trenton. Don’t miss the festive holiday market with a variety of gifts and treats that are perfect for delighting friends and family on Christmas morning. You can even visit with Santa and his elves to make sure he knows everything on your list. Atop of Lookout Mountain, you can visit the Rising Fawn Studio Tour December 7th and 8th. Experience the works of talented artists who open their studios to showcase their work during the holiday season.

While you’re on Lookout Mountain, pay a visit to Cloudland Canyon State Park. The park’s stunning landscapes, including deep canyons and cascading waterfalls, are even more magical in the winter months. Hiking trails are quieter, and the crisp air enhances the breathtaking views.

You’ll experience the magic of the season when you adventure into Dade County, Georgia!



Find even more events at: alliancefordade.com/annual-events.



Make Your Christmas Memories with Us!

Let the sparkle of "Light Up Trenton" get you in the holiday mood with our spectacular light displays around the square. Where singing abounds and a live nativity celebrates our Savior's birth. Enjoy our Holiday Market filled with great holiday gifts and treats sure to help make new memories with family and friends. You can even visit with Santa and his elves to make sure he knows everything on your list! You'll experience the magic of the season when you adventure into Dade! Come Join Us!

706.657.4488
Trenton, GA



SCAN FOR MORE





TAKING IT EASY IN GILMER

Ellijay, nestled in the North Georgia mountains, is the perfect destination for a holiday getaway from Thanksgiving to New Year's Eve. With its cozy cabins, festive lights, and mountain charm, it offers everything you need for a memorable winter retreat.

Start your stay in one of Ellijay's inviting cabins. Whether you're looking for a romantic hideaway or a lodge for the whole family, you'll find the perfect spot to relax by a crackling fire and enjoy the crisp mountain air.

One of the highlights of the season is the Holiday Lights of Ellijay, a stunning walkthrough display open from November 25th to December 31st. Wander through the Lions Club Fairgrounds and marvel at thousands of twinkling lights, festive decorations, and seasonal music. It's an experience that's sure to delight visitors of all ages.

Downtown Ellijay also shines bright with its Christmas Lights display. Stroll through the charming streets, shop for unique gifts, and enjoy the festive atmosphere. The town's cozy cafes and charming boutiques offer the perfect setting to soak up the holiday spirit.

Beyond the lights and festivities, Ellijay provides a serene backdrop for reconnecting with loved ones. Explore scenic trails, visit local shops and restaurants, or simply enjoy the peaceful mountain setting. It's the perfect place to unwind and embrace the true spirit of the season.

In short, Ellijay offers a blend of cozy accommodations, dazzling light displays, and warm mountain hospitality. This holiday season, make Ellijay your destination for a magical and memorable getaway.

Raise a Glass to Reconnecting in the Mountains

It's time to move the Girls' Trip out of the group chat and into reality. With an adorable downtown district, unbeatable shopping, vineyards, and over 2,000 cozy cabins, there is no better place to recharge with your favorite ladies than Ellijay, Georgia.



SCAN HERE



FOR OUR DIGITAL GUIDE!

PICK 
ELLIJAY
GEORGIA



CAN'T-MISS BITES

Louisiana Bistreaux
louisianabistreaux.com

Malone's Steak House
malonesatlanta.com

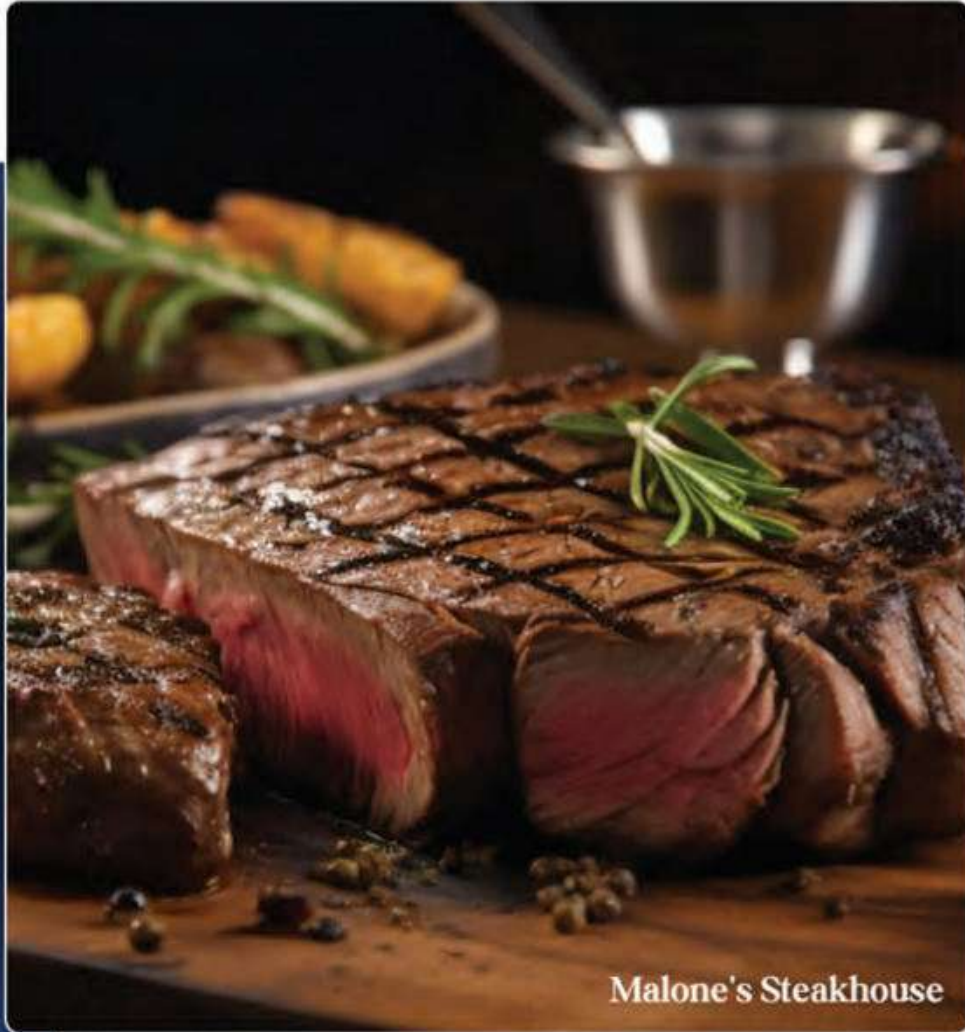
Old Lady Gang
oldladygang.com

ADVENTURES IN EAST POINT

Visiting East Point, Georgia, during the holiday season offers a blend of small-town charm, festive events, and a touch of Hollywood magic. Located just minutes from Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, East Point is an ideal destination for travelers looking to experience the warmth and community spirit of a Southern town while maintaining the convenience of being so close to Atlanta.

The city's connection to the film industry adds an extra layer of excitement to the holiday season. As part of Georgia's booming film scene, East Point is minutes from Tyler Perry Studios and has been the backdrop for numerous movies and TV shows, including *The Wonder Years*, *Stranger Things*, and *The Walking Dead*. This cinematic flair is often highlighted during the holidays, with special film screenings and themed events that celebrate the town's role in Hollywood South.

East Point's proximity to Atlanta makes it easy to enjoy both local festivities and broader metropolitan attractions. While in town, be sure to visit some of the locally owned restaurants that add to the city's charm. Enjoy Southern comfort food at This Is It! Southern Kitchen & Bar-B-Q, or try the eclectic menu at Spondivits (known for its expansive seafood selection). For a cozy brunch, stop by Eat My Biscuits, where you can savor freshly baked biscuits, pastries, and festive brunch cocktails. Whether you're admiring holiday lights in East Point's historic downtown or spending the day shopping at Camp Creek Marketplace (which boasts a collection of more than 55 retail shops and restaurants), the city offers a perfect blend of holiday cheer and culinary delights. East Point is a delightful destination for those seeking a festive and culturally rich holiday experience.



Malone's Steakhouse



Louisiana Bistreaux



Old Lady Gang



Spondivits Seafood

WHERE THE WORLD MEETS...AND EATS!

[@visiteastpoint](https://www.instagram.com/visiteastpoint) | [visiteastpoint.org](https://www.visiteastpoint.org)

East Point Convention and Visitors Bureau | 1526 E Forrest Avenue, Suite 105
East Point, Georgia 30344 | (470) 903-2766

HOLIDAYS IN ALPINE HELEN

Traveling to Alpine Helen, Georgia, during the holiday season is like stepping into a Bavarian winter oasis. The town, known for its charming Alpine architecture, truly bursts with festive cheer. The season kicks off with the Lighting of the Village on November 29 at 6 p.m., a magical event where the entire town is illuminated with thousands of twinkling lights. This tradition marks the start of the holiday season, filling the air with excitement and warmth.

One of the highlights of your visit will be Helen's Annual Lighted Christmas Parade on December 14 at 6 p.m., where floats, cars, and even Santa himself make their way through the town, all adorned with colorful lights. The parade is a joyful celebration that captures the spirit of the season, bringing together locals and visitors alike.

Don't miss the Alpine Winter Lights (from November 29 through February 17), a spectacular display that transforms Helen into a glowing wonderland. The lights, combined with the town's quaint European-style buildings, create an enchanting atmosphere perfect for a holiday stroll. From festive events to cozy shops and restaurants, Helen offers an unforgettable holiday experience.



EXTRA SPARKLE

Christmas Market
Nov. 30, Dec. 1, 7, & 8

**Mistletoe
Marketplace Festival**
December 7-8

For more events:
visit helenga.org.

Alpine Winter Lights
Extend your holiday
memories through
February.



facebook.com/AlpineHelenWhiteCountyCVB

N.E. Georgia Mountains just 90 minutes North of Atlanta



Alpine Helen

Sautee Nacoochee, Cleveland & Unicoi State Park

Food • Fun • Shopping
Something for Everyone!

800-858-8027 www.helenga.org

Alpine Helen-White County Regional Visitor Center, 726 Bruckenstrasse, Helen, GA 30545



FITZGERALD

Visiting Fitzgerald, Georgia, during the holiday season is a unique experience filled with Southern charm. On Main Street, string lights illuminate the downtown, and the neon lights of the historic Art Deco Grand Theatre are aglow! There you can enjoy a movie, live performance, or concert. The park in front of the theater is a prime place to relax (you can even play a game of giant chess or checkers). Locally owned shops will treat you to Southern hospitality, and eateries will delight you with delicious regional and international cuisine. Walk the town's brick streets as you shop and sightsee, enjoy the murals, or embark on an architectural tour. You are likely to see wild chickens along the way. Visit fitzgeraldga.org to find out why chickens are running wild in Fitzgerald and why there is a giant metal chicken in the middle of town. Check out the calendar to see what event might be happening during your visit.



WOODSTOCK

Visiting Woodstock, Georgia, feels like coming home to a welcoming retreat filled with warmth and charm. Just 30 minutes from Atlanta, Woodstock invites you to discover vibrant views, diverse eats, and year-round events in North Georgia's favorite city. The holiday season brings an extra layer of magic to this bustling town, where more than 35 restaurants await you in the walkable downtown, offering everything from Southern comfort food to international delights. Stroll through the decorated streets, explore locally owned shops, and find unique gifts at the holiday market. Woodstock also boasts Atlanta's closest outlet mall, perfect for checking off everything on your holiday shopping list. With its festive events, cozy ambiance, and convenient location, Woodstock offers a perfect blend of small-town charm and big-city convenience, making it an ideal destination for your holiday getaway.

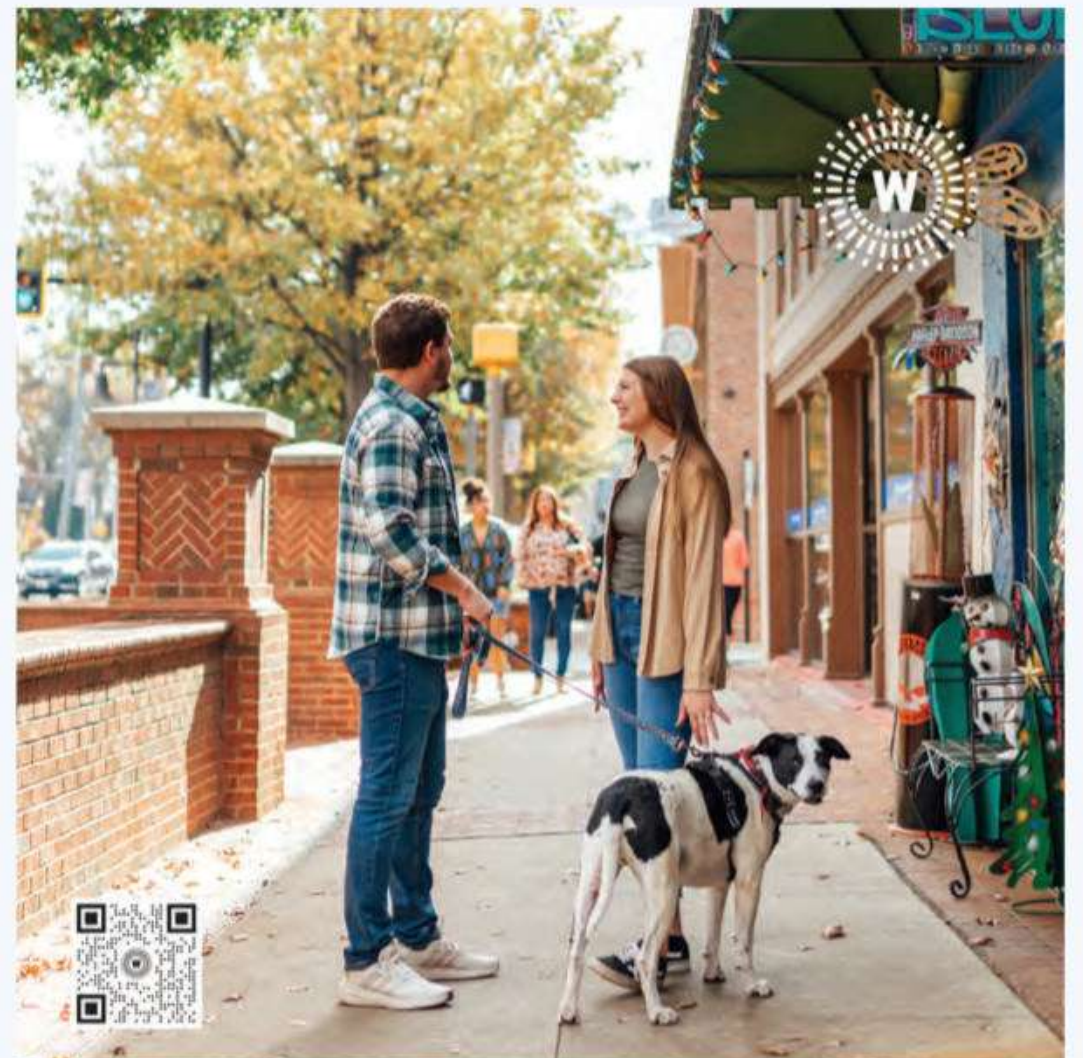


Small Town, USA, is Fitzgerald, Georgia.

Come experience the small-town charm, the brick streets, the historic theatre, the museums and galleries, the unique shops, camping, kayaking and...who can forget about the wild chickens!



Fitzgerald Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
www.fitzgeraldga.org
 1-800-386-4642



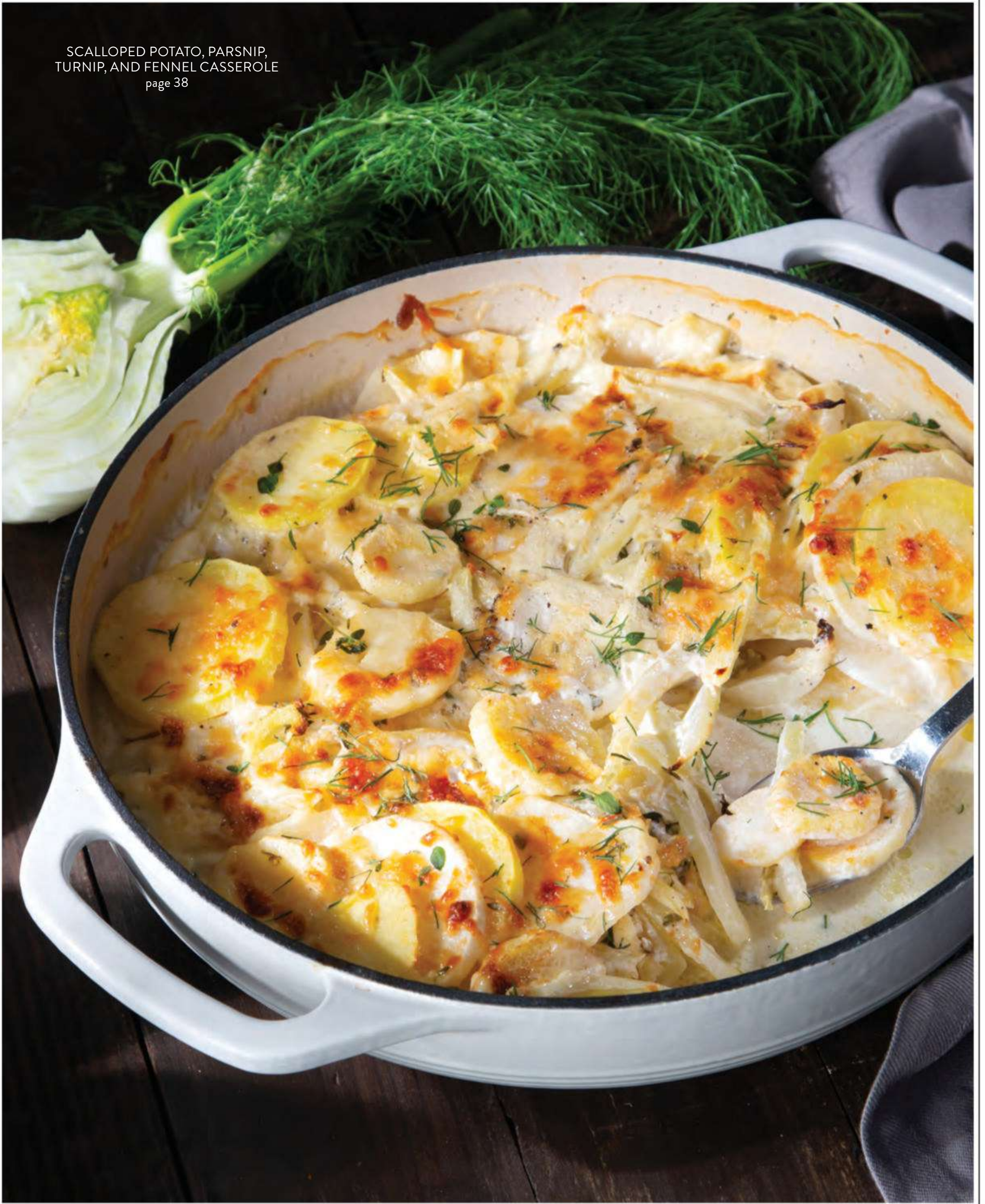
ESCAPE × GATHER × REFRESH
 VISITWOODSTOCKGA

ROOT VEGETABLE ROUNDUP

HEARTY TUBERS AND BULBS THAT BLOSSOM BENEATH THE SOIL—RUTABAGA, PARSNIPS, TURNIPS, POTATOES, AND MORE—SERVE AS THE FOUNDATION IN THESE NUTRIENT-DENSE, WINTRY DISHES



SCALLOPED POTATO, PARSNIP,
TURNIP, AND FENNEL CASSEROLE
page 38



◦ BEETS ◦



These vibrant root vegetables come in colorful varieties—red, golden, and Chioggia (or candy-striped). Beets can be roasted, steamed, or boiled to cook them or grated or thinly sliced to be eaten raw. Store them without the greens in the refrigerator crisper for 2 to 3 weeks.





BALSAMIC-AND-CITRUS ROASTED BEETS

Makes 6 to 8 servings

- 2 medium golden beets (about $\frac{3}{4}$ pound), peeled and cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-thick wedges
- 2 small candy-striped beets (about $\frac{1}{2}$ pound), peeled and cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-thick wedges
- 4 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- $2\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons kosher salt, divided
- 2 medium red beets (about 1 pound), peeled and cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-thick wedges
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup balsamic vinegar
- 3 tablespoons firmly packed brown sugar, divided
- 2 large oranges, peeled and sliced crosswise
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, cubed and softened

Garnish: chopped toasted pistachios

1. Preheat oven to 400°.
2. In a medium bowl, toss together golden beets, candy-striped beets, $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons oil,

and 1 teaspoon salt. Place in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet.

3. In same bowl, toss together red beets, $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons oil, and 1 teaspoon salt. Place in skillet with golden and candy-striped beets.
4. Bake for 30 minutes.

5. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, stir together vinegar, 2 tablespoons brown sugar, and remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt.

6. In another medium bowl, toss together oranges, remaining 1 tablespoon brown sugar, and remaining 1 tablespoon oil. Pour vinegar mixture over beets; add oranges.

7. Bake until beets are tender, 30 to 35 minutes. Add butter; gently swirl skillet to incorporate. Garnish with pistachios, if desired.

CRISPY ROOT VEGETABLE ROAST

Makes 6 to 8 servings

- 5 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and divided
- 2 russet potatoes, peeled

- 2 sweet potatoes, peeled
- 1 rutabaga, peeled
- 1 turnip, peeled
- 6 cloves garlic, smashed
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground black pepper

Garnish: fresh thyme sprigs

1. Preheat oven to 400°.
2. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, add 2 tablespoons melted butter, swirling to coat bottom.
3. Using a knife or mandoline, slice all potatoes, rutabaga, and turnip into $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch-thick rounds. Keeping sliced vegetables together by type, place in skillet. Tuck in garlic among sliced vegetables. Brush vegetables with remaining 3 tablespoons melted butter; sprinkle with salt and pepper.
4. Bake until vegetables are tender and golden brown, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Garnish with thyme, if desired.



MELTING SWEET POTATOES

Makes 4 to 6 servings

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 4 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch slices
- 1 cup beef broth
- 2 tablespoons minced shallot
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 tablespoon Cajun seasoning*
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme
- 2 sprigs fresh rosemary

1. Preheat oven to 400°.
2. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Place potato slices in a single layer in oil. Cook until browned, 3 to 4 minutes per side.

3. In a small bowl, stir together broth, shallot, and garlic, and pour over potatoes. Sprinkle butter and Cajun seasoning on top. Top with thyme and rosemary.

4. Bake until potatoes are tender, about 30 minutes.

**We used Slap Ya Mama Original Blend Cajun Seasoning.*

TURNIP AND MUSHROOM STEW

Makes 6 to 8 servings

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup unsalted butter
- 1 pound fresh baby portobello mushrooms, quartered
- 1 pound turnips, peeled and chopped
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 cloves garlic, minced

- 3 cups vegetable broth
 - 1 (14.4-ounce) bag frozen pearl onions, thawed
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dry sherry
 - 2 dried bay leaves
 - 8 sprigs fresh thyme
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons kosher salt
 - 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cups thawed frozen peas
- Garnish: fresh thyme leaves, ground black pepper

1. In a 5-quart enamel-coated cast-iron Dutch oven, melt butter over medium heat. Add mushrooms and turnips. Cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are lightly browned and moisture is mostly evaporated, 15 to 20 minutes.
2. Add flour and garlic to vegetable mixture. Cook, stirring constantly, for 2 minutes. Add broth, onion, sherry, bay leaves, thyme, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer until thickened, 35 to 40 minutes.
3. Add peas to vegetable mixture; cook until just warmed through, about 2 minutes. Garnish with thyme and pepper, if desired.

◦ POTATOES ◦

Coming in a plethora of varieties, potatoes are one of the best items you can stock up on at the farmers' market. Store them in a basket or other breathable container in a cool kitchen cabinet or the pantry—away from onions—and they'll keep for several weeks. Wash when ready to use.



◦ TURNIPS ◦

Southerners are very well versed in the turnip plant's leafy greens, but the root should not be overlooked. Mild, with a peppery flavor and sweet undertones, turnip roots are excellent treated like potatoes and roasted or boiled and mashed. Or dice and add to a good ole pot of greens.





This bunch of rosy-hued turnips is a variety called viola. The colorful roots have a bright white interior and the greens boast a touch of purple. These beautiful turnips were expertly grown by farmer Andrew Kesterson of Belle Meadow Farm. His produce and several other farms can be found at Birdsong Farmers' Market in Birmingham, Alabama.



CHICKEN QUARTERS WITH HEARTY ROOT VEGETABLES

Makes 4 servings

- ¼ cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
 - 2 teaspoons kosher salt
 - 2 teaspoons fennel seeds, crushed
 - ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
 - 4 skin-on chicken quarters
 - 4 tablespoons olive oil, divided
 - 1 large sweet potato, peeled and cut into ½-inch-thick slices
 - 1 large sweet onion, cut into ½-inch-thick slices
 - 4 large turnips, peeled and cut into ½-inch-thick slices
 - 2 tablespoons chopped fresh sage
- Garnish: fresh sage leaves

1. Preheat oven to 400°.
2. In a small bowl, stir together brown sugar, salt, fennel seeds, and pepper.
3. Rub chicken quarters with 2 tablespoons oil and half of sugar mixture.
4. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, heat remaining 2 tablespoons oil over medium-high heat. Add chicken; cook, turning frequently, for 6 minutes. (Be careful not to burn skin.) Remove chicken from skillet, and pour off drippings.
5. Arrange potato, onion, and turnips in spirals in pan. Sprinkle with chopped sage and remaining sugar mixture. Place chicken on vegetables.
6. Bake until an instant-read thermometer inserted in thickest portion of chicken registers 165° and vegetables are tender, about 1 hour. Carefully tilt skillet to pour off excess drippings before serving. Garnish with sage leaves, if desired.

SCALLOPED POTATO, PARSNIP, TURNIP, AND FENNEL CASSEROLE

Makes 6 to 8 servings

- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened and divided
- 2⅓ cups ¼-inch-sliced peeled Yukon gold potatoes (about 3 large potatoes)
- 2⅓ cups ¼-inch-sliced parsnips (about 5 medium parsnips)
- 2½ cups ¼-inch-sliced peeled turnips (about 3 large turnips)
- 2 cups ¼-inch-sliced fennel bulb (about 1 medium bulb)
- ¾ cup shredded Parmesan cheese, divided
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt



- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- Garnish: fresh thyme, fennel fronds

1. Preheat oven to 400°.
2. Spread 1 tablespoon butter in bottom and up sides of a 12-inch enamel-coated cast-iron braiser.
3. In a large bowl, toss together potatoes, parsnips, turnips, fennel, and ½ cup cheese. Layer vegetables in prepared pan.
4. In a small saucepan, heat cream, stock,

thyme, salt, pepper, and remaining 3 tablespoons butter over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until butter is melted and bubbles begin to form around sides of pan. (Do not boil.) Pour mixture all over vegetables.

5. Bake for 30 minutes. Sprinkle remaining ¼ cup cheese onto vegetables. Bake until vegetables are tender and golden brown, about 15 minutes more. Let cool for 15 minutes before serving. Garnish with thyme and fennel fronds, if desired. 🍴

◦ PARSNIPS ◦

Related to carrots, parsnips are creamy white in color, with a nutty, sweet flavor. They have a wide base and are slightly fibrous, making them ideal for roasting or puréeing versus eating raw. Large parsnips may have a woody core; just cut that part out and use the rest of the root.



Simply SEASONAL

SATISFYING DINNER IDEAS
GUARANTEED TO GIVE YOU THAT COZY
COMFORT YOU CRAVE THIS WINTER



CRANBERRY SHORT RIBS
WITH BLUE CHEESE GRITS
page 44

SAUSAGE AND
FENNEL COBBLER
page 45





BROWNED BUTTER STEAKS AND SORGHUM RISOTTO

Makes 2 to 4 servings

- 1½ cups whole sorghum grain*
- 6 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 4 cups water
- 5 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
- 1 (8-ounce) container fresh baby portobello mushrooms, quartered
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 1 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- 2½ teaspoons kosher salt, divided
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper, divided
- 2 (1¼-pound) bone-in rib eye steaks
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 4 sprigs fresh thyme
- 3 cloves garlic, smashed
- Garnish: chopped fresh thyme, freshly ground black pepper

1. In a large bowl, place sorghum and water to cover by 2 inches. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Drain well.

2. In a large saucepan, heat broth and 4 cups water over medium heat until simmering. Reduce heat to medium-low; cover and keep warm.

3. In a large cast-iron Dutch oven, melt 1 tablespoon butter over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms and chopped thyme. Cook, stirring occasionally, until golden brown, about 8 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, remove from pot.

4. Add sorghum to pot, and cook over medium-high heat, stirring constantly, for about 1 minute. Stir in 1 cup warm broth mixture; cover and cook, stirring frequently, until liquid is almost absorbed, about 5 minutes. Repeat procedure with remaining warm broth mixture, 1 cup at a time (about 1 hour total).

5. Stir wine into risotto. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until liquid is almost absorbed, about 4 minutes. Remove from heat, stir in mushroom mixture, cheese, ½ teaspoon salt, and ½ teaspoon pepper until smooth. Keep warm.

6. Sprinkle remaining 2 teaspoons salt and remaining ½ teaspoon pepper all over steaks; let stand at room temperature for 15 to 20 minutes.

7. In a large cast-iron skillet, heat remaining 4 tablespoons butter and oil over high heat until butter is melted and light brown, about 3 minutes. Add steaks; cook until browned, about 5 minutes. Turn steaks, and add thyme sprigs and garlic to skillet. Cook, frequently spooning butter mixture over steaks, for 5 to 10 minutes, or to desired degree of doneness. Remove from heat, and let stand for 10 minutes before slicing. Serve steaks over sorghum risotto. Garnish with thyme and pepper, if desired.

*We used Bob's Red Mill Whole Grain Sorghum.



PEAR-CLEMENTINE—GLAZED HAM

Makes about 12 servings

- 1½ cups pear preserves
- ½ cup fresh clementine or orange juice
- 1½ tablespoons grated fresh ginger
- 1 tablespoon stone-ground mustard
- 1 (10- to 11-pound) bone-in smoked ham (shank portion)
- 1 cup water

Garnish: charred pear and clementine halves, fresh bay leaves

1. Preheat oven to 325°.

2. In the container of a blender, process preserves, clementine or orange juice, and ginger until smooth. Spoon mixture into a bowl; stir in mustard.

3. Using a knife, lightly score outside of ham. Place ham in a 15-inch cast-iron skillet. Pour 1 cup water in skillet. Loosely cover with foil.

4. Bake for 1 hour. Uncover and bake until an instant-read thermometer registers 160°, about 1½ hours more, brushing occasionally with preserves mixture and loosely covering with foil to prevent excess browning, if necessary. Let stand for 20 minutes before serving. Garnish with pears, clementines, and bay leaves, if desired.



CRANBERRY SHORT RIBS WITH BLUE CHEESE GRITS

Makes 4 servings

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons kosher salt
- 2 teaspoons ground black pepper
- 3½ pounds bone-in beef short ribs
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 cup low-sodium beef broth
- ½ cup pure unsweetened cranberry juice
- 1 tablespoon stone-ground mustard
- ½ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 1½ cups fresh or thawed frozen cranberries
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- Blue Cheese Grits (recipe follows)
- Garnish: fresh rosemary sprigs, crumbled blue cheese

1. Preheat oven to 325°.
2. In a large enamel-coated cast-iron Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat.
3. Sprinkle salt and black pepper all over ribs. Add ribs to pot, and cook until browned all over, about 1 minute per side.
4. In a small bowl, place flour; gradually whisk in broth until smooth. Whisk in cranberry juice, mustard, and red pepper until well combined. Add broth mixture to pot with ribs; bring to a boil. Cover with lid.
5. Bake until meat is fork-tender and can easily be removed from bone, about 1½ hours. Remove ribs from pot.
6. Stir cranberries into broth mixture in pot; bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat, and simmer, uncovered, until cranberries being to burst, 8 to 10 minutes. Stir in vinegar.
7. Meanwhile, shred meat with forks, discarding bones and any fat. Stir meat into cranberry mixture in pot; cook until heated through. Serve with Blue Cheese Grits. Garnish with rosemary and blue cheese, if desired.

BLUE CHEESE GRITS

Makes about 4 cups

- 2 cups water
- 2 cups whole milk
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 cup quick-cooking grits
- ¼ cup crumbled blue cheese

1. In a medium enamel-coated cast-iron Dutch oven, bring 2 cups water, milk, and salt to a boil over medium-high heat. Gradually whisk in grits. Reduce heat, partially cover, and simmer, stirring occasionally, until grits are tender, about 10 minutes. Stir in blue cheese. Serve immediately.



FRENCH ONION MEATBALLS

Makes 4 to 6 servings

(photo on page 42)

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 cups ¼-inch-sliced onion (about 2 large onions)
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 2 cups low-sodium beef broth
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 (20-ounce) package frozen beef meatballs, thawed
- 1 cup shredded Gruyère cheese
- 1 (24-ounce) container prepared mashed potatoes, heated according to package directions

Garnish: fresh thyme leaves

1. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet or braiser, melt butter with oil over medium-low heat. Add onion and garlic; cook, stirring occasionally, until softened and lightly browned, about 25 minutes.
2. Sprinkle flour onto onion mixture, and stir until combined; cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes. Stir in broth, chopped thyme, salt, and pepper; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer until slightly thickened, about 10 minutes.
3. Preheat oven to broil.
4. Stir meatballs into onion mixture; cover and cook for 5 minutes. Sprinkle cheese onto meatballs.
5. Broil 6 inches from heat until cheese is melted and lightly browned, 3 to 5 minutes. Serve with mashed potatoes. Garnish with thyme leaves, if desired.



SAUSAGE AND FENNEL COBBLER

Makes 4 to 6 servings

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1¼ pounds spicy Italian sausage, casings removed
- 2 cups sliced onion
- 1 cup sliced fennel bulb
- 1½ cups ¼-inch-sliced red bell pepper
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 2 tablespoons concentrated tomato paste
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 3 cups fresh baby spinach
- 1½ cups self-rising soft wheat flour
- ½ cup coarse stone-ground yellow cornmeal
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ½ cup cold unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh chives
- 1¼ cups whole buttermilk

Garnish: fresh basil leaves, fresh oregano leaves, fennel fronds

1. Preheat oven to 375°.
2. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add sausage; cook, breaking up meat with a wooden spoon, until browned and crumbly. Remove sausage using a slotted spoon, and let drain on paper towels.

3. Add onion and fennel bulb to skillet; cook over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until onion begins to brown, about 5 minutes. Add bell pepper and garlic; cook, stirring occasionally, until bell pepper begins to soften, about 5 minutes. Stir in chopped oregano, salt, and black pepper.

4. In a medium bowl, whisk together stock and tomato paste.

5. In another medium bowl, place all-purpose flour. Slowly add stock mixture, whisking until combined. Add to skillet; cook over medium-high heat, stirring constantly, for 1 minute. Add sausage and spinach; cook, stirring constantly, until slightly thickened, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat.

6. In a large bowl, whisk together self-rising flour, cornmeal, and baking powder. Using a pastry blender, cut in cold butter until mixture is crumbly. Stir in cheese, chopped basil, and chives. Add buttermilk, stirring just until dry ingredients are moistened. Dollop mixture on top of sausage mixture.

7. Bake until golden brown, about 45 minutes. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving. Garnish with basil leaves, oregano leaves, and fennel fronds, if desired.

DIJON-CANE SYRUP—GLAZED TURKEY

Makes 10 to 12 servings

Dry brine:

- ½ cup kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons ground black pepper

- 2 tablespoons firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons orange zest
- 1 tablespoon lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon dry mustard

Turkey:

- 1 (12- to 14-pound) fresh or thawed frozen turkey, giblets discarded
- ½ cup unsalted butter, softened
- 1 tablespoon orange zest
- 4 tablespoons Dijon mustard, divided
- 1 small orange, quartered
- 20 sprigs fresh thyme
- 6 cloves garlic
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- ½ cup cane syrup

Garnish: orange slices, fresh thyme sprigs

1. For dry brine: In a small bowl, stir together all ingredients.
2. For turkey: Pat turkey dry with paper towels. Place turkey in a large rimmed baking sheet; rub with dry brine. Refrigerate, uncovered, for at least 8 hours or up to 24 hours.
3. Preheat oven to 425°.
4. Rinse turkey, and pat dry with paper towels. Loosen turkey skin, leaving skin intact.
5. In a small bowl, stir together butter, orange zest, and 1 tablespoon mustard. Rub butter mixture under skin and all over turkey. Place orange, thyme, and garlic inside turkey cavity. Tie legs together with kitchen twine. Sprinkle salt and pepper all over turkey.
6. Spray a 15-inch cast-iron skillet with cooking spray. Add broth and turkey to prepared skillet.
7. Bake for 30 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 325°. Bake, basting every 30 minutes with pan juices, until an instant-read thermometer inserted in thickest portion of turkey registers 145°, about 1 hour, loosely covering with foil during last 30 minutes of baking to prevent excess browning. In another small bowl, stir together cane syrup and remaining 3 tablespoons mustard; brush mixture all over turkey. Bake until an instant-read thermometer inserted in thickest portion of turkey registers 165°, about 30 minutes more. Transfer turkey to a serving platter, and loosely cover with foil. Let stand for 30 minutes before serving. Garnish with orange and thyme, if desired. 🍴



◦ KITCHEN TIP ◦

Cooking a whole turkey is easy, but you need to plan ahead. If you buy a frozen turkey, be sure to give the turkey enough time to fully thaw. For every pound of turkey, allow at least 6 hours of thawing in the refrigerator. The general rule for cooking unstuffed birds is 20 minutes per pound at 325°.

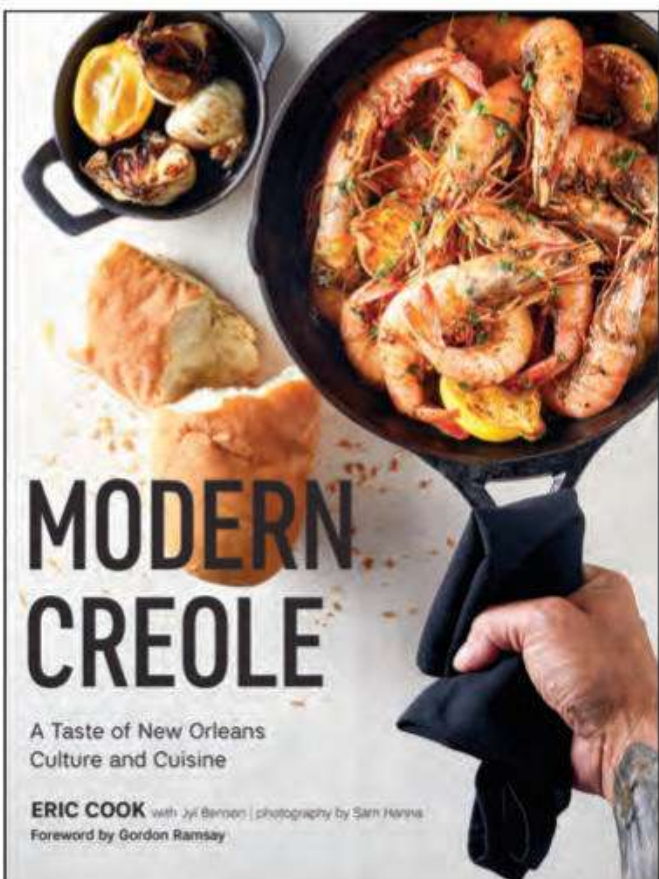


SOUTHERN FLAVOR FOR THE HOLIDAYS

BY DANIEL DUBUISSON

GIFT THE HOME COOK IN YOUR LIFE A NEW AND NOTEWORTHY COOKBOOK THAT CELEBRATES THE REGION'S CULINARY HERITAGE AND WILL HAVE THEM REACHING FOR THEIR APRON

As the holiday season approaches, there's no better time to dive into the rich flavors of the South. Whether you're a seasoned cook looking to expand your repertoire or just eager to bring new flavors to your table, these four newly released cookbooks offer a wealth of inspiration. From the deep roots of Creole cuisine to the flavors of the Gulf Coast, each book provides a unique perspective on Southern cooking, complete with recipes that are perfect for holiday gatherings. Whether you're preparing a family feast or looking for new ideas to share with loved ones, these books provide everything you need to make this special season even more delicious and memorable. Here's a closer look at the four, each one a celebration of Southern tradition and innovation.



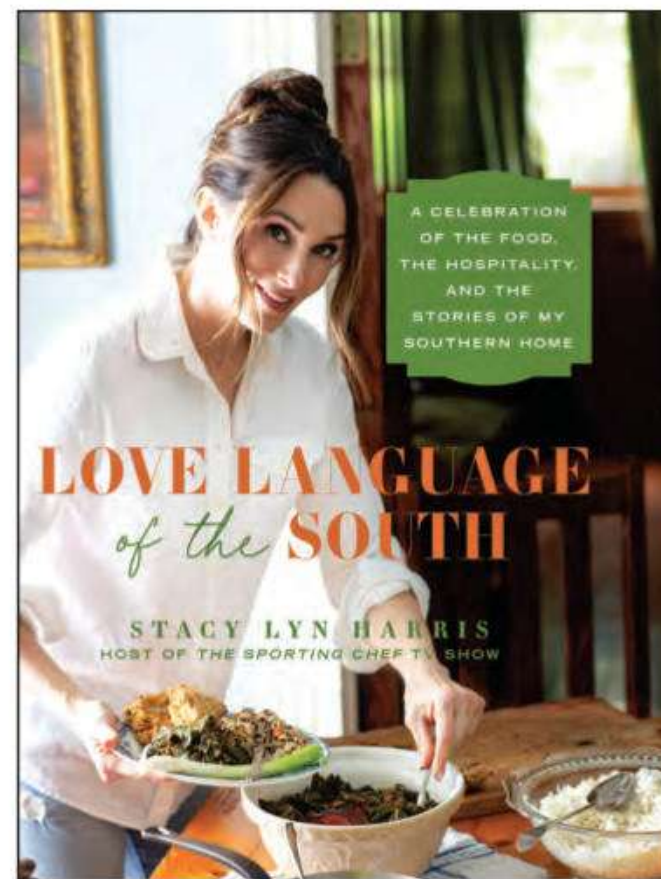
MODERN CREOLE: A TASTE OF NEW ORLEANS CULTURE AND CUISINE

ERIC COOK & JYL BENSON

In *Modern Creole: A Taste of New Orleans Culture and Cuisine*, New Orleans, Louisiana, chef Eric Cook teams up with culinary writer Jyl Benson to bring the vibrant flavors of Creole cuisine into the modern era. Eric, a celebrated chef known for his restaurants Gris-Gris and Saint John, channels his deep love for New Orleans and Louisiana into this cookbook, offering a collection of recipes that honor both the state and his family's rich culinary traditions while adding contemporary twists.

The cookbook is a tribute to the resilience and creativity of Creole cooking, showcasing how traditional recipes can be adapted to modern tastes without losing their essence. The duo emphasizes the importance of fresh, local ingredients in capturing the authentic flavors of Creole cuisine. The recipes range from classic gumbo, jambalaya, and bread pudding to more inventive dishes like his Family-Style Pot Roast, which Eric shares as a perfect dish for the holiday table.

THIS PAGE (top to bottom): Eric Cook of Gris-Gris and Saint John restaurants; Eric's new cookbook, *Modern Creole*.
OPPOSITE PAGE (left to right): Pork Backbone Stew from *Bayou*; Seared Sea Scallops with Middlins from *Salt & Shore*.



LOVE LANGUAGE OF THE SOUTH

STACY LYN HARRIS

Chef Stacy Lyn Harris's *Love Language of the South* is a heartfelt exploration of the connections between food, family, and tradition. Known for her passion for farm-to-table cooking, Stacy Lyn combines her love for Southern cuisine with stories of the people and places that inspire her. This cookbook is a celebration of the South's culinary heritage, with recipes that reflect Stacy Lyn's deep-rooted belief in the power of food to bring people together.

Her approach to cooking is centered around the idea that food is a love language—a way to express care, comfort, and connection. Her recipes are designed to be shared with loved ones, making them perfect for the holiday season. Among the many delightful offerings in the book is her recipe for Salted Maple Candied Nuts, a simple yet decadent treat that captures the essence of Southern hospitality. These candied nuts, with their perfect balance of sweet and salty flavors, are ideal for gifting or serving at festive gatherings.

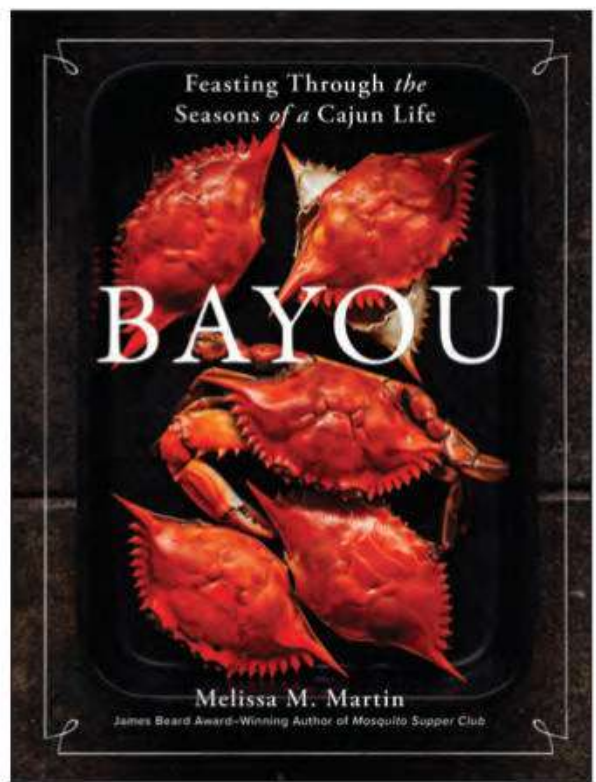
THIS PAGE (left to right): Chef and author Stacy Lyn Harris; *Love Language of the South*.
OPPOSITE PAGE (clockwise from top): *Bayou*; Chef Melissa M. Martin; *Salt & Shore*; Sammy Monsour and Kassady Wiggins.

BAYOU

MELISSA M. MARTIN

Melissa M. Martin, the acclaimed chef and owner of the Mosquito Supper Club in New Orleans, Louisiana, takes readers on a deep dive into the culinary culture of the Louisiana bayou with her cookbook *Bayou*. Melissa's book is a love letter to the foodways of her homeland, where the rhythms of the seasons dictate what's on the table. Through evocative storytelling and beautifully crafted recipes, Melissa brings the flavors of the bayou to life, offering a window into a world where food and community are inextricably linked.

Bayou is rich with recipes that highlight the ingredients and techniques unique to this region. One standout is her Pork Backbone Stew, a hearty dish that embodies the soul of bayou cooking. Simmered slowly with a blend of spices and aromatics, this stew is a warm and comforting meal, perfect for a chilly winter evening. The recipe, like many in the book, reflects Melissa's commitment to preserving the culinary traditions of her home and the people who have shaped these time-honored traditions.

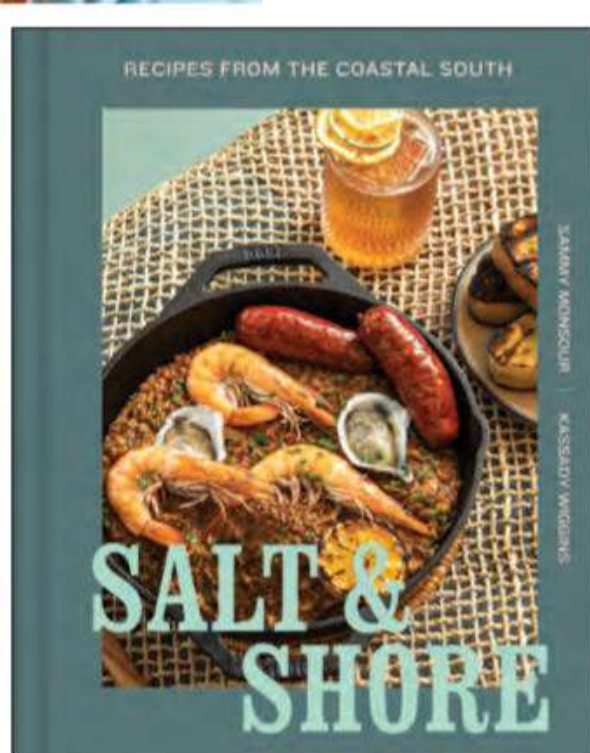


SALT & SHORE: RECIPES FROM THE COASTAL SOUTH

SAMMY MONSOUR & KASSADY WIGGINS

In *Salt & Shore: Recipes from the Coastal South*, Chefs Sammy Monsour and Kassady Wiggins celebrate the vibrant flavors of the Southern coast. This cookbook is a tribute to the bounty of the sea and the rich culinary traditions that have evolved along the coastal regions of the South. With a focus on sustainable seafood and fresh, locally sourced ingredients, the book offers readers a chance to explore the diverse and delicious dishes that define coastal Southern cooking.

It's filled with recipes that highlight the natural beauty and flavors of the coast, from fresh oysters and shrimp to seasonal vegetables and grains. Be sure to take note of the Seared Sea Scallops with Middlins, a recipe that showcases the elegance and simplicity of coastal cuisine. This cookbook is a must-have for anyone who loves the coast and the unique culinary experiences it offers.





FAMILY-STYLE POT ROAST

Makes 4 to 6 servings

Recipe excerpted from Modern Creole: A Taste of New Orleans Culture and Cuisine by Eric Cook with Jyl Benson, photography by Sam Hanna. Reprinted by permission of Gibbs Smith Books.

1 (3- to 4-pound) boneless bottom round rump roast

Kosher salt

Black pepper

3 tablespoons blended oil or vegetable oil

3 large carrots, quartered and halved

3 large stalks celery, chopped

1 large onion, chopped

1 cup hearty red wine

6 red potatoes, halved

Warm French bread, cut into slices, for serving

1. Generously season the roast with salt and pepper on all sides.
2. Heat the oil in a cast-iron Dutch oven over medium-high heat. When it smokes, add the roast and hard sear on all sides, carefully turning as necessary with tongs. Use tongs to carefully remove the roast to a plate and set aside.
3. Add the carrots, celery, and onion to the pot and reduce heat to medium-low. Cook, stirring

often, until the carrots and onion have started to caramelize, about 15 minutes. The bottom of the pot should be covered in a brown glaze.

4. Add the wine and use a wooden spoon to scrape the brown bits from the bottom of the pot. Add the potatoes and 4 cups of water and stir to combine. Return the roast to the pot. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer until the meat is tender and falling apart, about 3 hours.

5. Serve the roast and vegetables with plenty of hot French bread to mop up the sauce.

SALTED MAPLE CANDIED NUTS

Makes 2 cups

Recipe excerpted from Love Language of the South by Stacy Lyn Harris. Copyright © 2024. Reprinted by permission of Worthy Books.

- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter**
- 2 cups roughly chopped pecans**
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup**
- 1 tablespoon light or dark brown sugar, firmly packed**
- Pinch of salt**

1. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.

2. Melt the butter in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add the pecans, syrup, brown sugar, and salt. With a wooden spoon, stir continuously for 3 to 5 minutes, until the nuts are completely coated and the nuts have soaked up the liquid. Transfer the nuts to the prepared baking sheet and spread them apart to cool. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 1 month.

PORK BACKBONE STEW

Makes 8–10 servings

(photo on page 47)

Recipe excerpted from Bayou by Melissa M. Martin (Artisan Books). Copyright © 2024. Photographs by Denny Culbert.

- 3 pounds (1.4 kg) pork backbones or necks**
- 2 pounds (910 g) pork shoulder, cut into 2-inch (5 cm) cubes**
- ¼ cup (60 ml) apple cider vinegar or Steen's cane vinegar**
- 2 tablespoons kosher salt**
- 2 tablespoons cracked black pepper**
- 2 teaspoons cayenne pepper**
- 1 cup (240 ml) hot sauce, preferably Original Louisiana Hot Sauce**
- 3 cups (375 g) all-purpose flour**

2½ cups (600 ml) canola oil
 4½ pounds (2 kg) yellow onions, finely diced
 2 cups (290 g) finely diced green bell peppers
 1 cup (100 g) finely diced celery
 ¼ cup (35 g) finely chopped garlic
 2 fresh tabasco or Criollo Sella peppers, or jalapeños, finely chopped
 3 bay leaves
 2 quarts (1.9 L) pork stock (recipe follows)
 Cooked rice, for serving
 ¼ cup (15 g) finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
 ¼ cup (15 g) finely chopped green onions

1. Wash the backbones really well, dry them really well, then season the backbones and pork shoulder with the vinegar, salt, black pepper, cayenne, and hot sauce, rubbing the seasoning into the meat. Set aside at room temperature while you make a roux.

2. Warm a deep, heavy-bottomed 10-quart (9.4 L) pot over medium heat for 1 to 2 minutes. Add the flour and oil and cook, stirring continuously with a wooden spoon and reducing the heat to low when the flour starts to change color and begins to smoke slightly. Don't walk away—focus on stirring your roux. When the roux is the color of dark chocolate, 45 minutes to 1 hour, carefully add the yellow onions, stirring to coat them thoroughly with the roux. Increase the heat to medium and cook, stirring every 5 minutes, until they turn a deep, dark caramelized color, another 45 minutes to 1 hour. Be careful of the sticking on the bottom of the pot; a little sticking is good if you scrape it up quickly. Add the bell peppers, celery, garlic, tabasco peppers, and bay leaves and cook, stirring often so the vegetables don't stick and the precious roux doesn't burn, until the vegetables soften and have lost their bite, 20 to 30 minutes. Reduce the heat if necessary.

3. Move all the vegetables to one side of the pot. With the heat on medium, add the backbones and quickly give each side a sear, then transfer to a platter and do the same with the pork shoulder. Place all the pork back into the pot, reduce the heat to its lowest setting, and cover the pot. Let smother for 1 hour and 45 minutes, stirring often to keep things from sticking to the bottom of the pot.

4. Just before the meat mixture finishes cooking, warm the stock in a pot over medium heat, then add it to the stew 1 quart (960 ml) at a time. Bring the pork and stock to a simmer after adding each quart. Simmer for another 1 hour and 45 minutes. You're making a stovetop braise and you don't want to boil the pork, so keep the heat as low as possible and make sure you are barely simmering the liquid and it is not at a

rolling boil. Check to see if the pork is starting to come apart. Once it is tender and braised, the stew is ready. Your stock will have reduced a bit.

5. Serve the stew over rice and top with the parsley and green onions.

PORK STOCK

Makes 1 gallon

5 pounds pork bones
 4 pounds yellow onions, peeled and quartered
 1 pound celery stalks, roughly chopped
 1 pound green bell peppers, roughly chopped
 3 bay leaves
 2 gallons water

1. Wash the pork bones really well. Place the bones, onions, celery, bell peppers, and bay leaves in a large stockpot. Add the water to the pot, bring to a boil over medium heat, and simmer for 6 to 8 hours.

2. In the first hour, skim and discard any scum that comes to the surface; continue skimming as needed throughout the cooking process. Keep the stock at a steady simmer but not a full boil: You want gentle little bubbles making little sounds and giving off steam, not a rolling boil. After 6 hours, taste the stock to see if it has developed enough flavor; go longer for a richer stock. It takes time for bones to release all their goodness. When you are happy with the flavors, strain it through a fine-mesh sieve and let the liquid cool.

3. Leave the stock uncovered in the refrigerator after it has cooled, then skim off the fat the next day; it will all rise to the top. You can discard the fat or save it for another use, like frying potatoes or starting a roux. Pour the cooled stock into containers and use within a day or two or freeze for up to 6 months.

Note: You can source pork bones from a butcher or farmers' market vendor who sells pork products.

SEARED SEA SCALLOPS WITH MIDLINS

Makes 2 servings

(photo on page 47)

Recipe excerpted from Salt & Shore: Recipes from the Coastal South by Sammy Monsour and Kassady Wiggins (Weldon Owens). Copyright © 2024.

4 tablespoons salted butter
 ½ cup diced yellow onion
 ½ cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced green bell pepper
 1 tablespoon minced garlic
 1 cup Carolina Gold rice middlins*

½ cup dry white wine
 4-6 cups fish stock

1 lb diver-caught sea scallops

Kosher salt

Freshly ground black pepper

Avocado oil, for cooking

¼ cup finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
 2 green onions, white and green parts, thinly sliced

Lemon wedges and fresh celery leaves, for garnish

1. In a deep 9-inch cast-iron skillet over medium heat, melt 1 tablespoon of the butter. Add the yellow onion, celery, bell pepper, and garlic and sweat, stirring frequently, until translucent, 3–5 minutes. Add the rice middlins and toast, stirring frequently, for 1 minute. Add the wine and cook, stirring frequently, until absorbed. Reduce the heat to medium-low. Add about 1½ cups of the stock and cook, stirring frequently, until the stock is absorbed by the rice. Continue adding the stock in roughly 1½-cup increments, just as you would if making risotto, until the rice is al dente.

2. When the rice is about halfway through cooking, preheat a cast-iron griddle over medium-high heat for 3 minutes. While the griddle heats, remove the foot muscle from the side of each scallop, then place the scallops on paper towels, cover with more paper towels, and pat dry to remove excess moisture. Lightly season the scallops on all sides with salt. When the griddle is ready, carefully pour just enough oil onto the surface to coat lightly, then place the scallops on the griddle. Sear until a rich golden brown starts to form on the first side, 2–3 minutes. Then, working quickly, add 1 tablespoon of the butter to the griddle and allow to brown. Continue cooking the first side of the scallops until a deep golden brown crust forms, 1–2 minutes longer. Flip each scallop and turn off the heat. Allow the scallops to continue cooking on the griddle for 2–3 minutes longer, then transfer to a plate and let rest.

3. If you've timed everything well, the rice has just become al dente and is ready to finish. Add the remaining 2 tablespoons butter, the parsley, and the green onions to the middlins and stir until incorporated. Season with salt and black pepper.

4. Divide the middlins between bowls, scatter the scallops on top, and garnish with a lemon wedge, celery leaves, and more black pepper. Serve right away. 🍴

**Middlins are broken pieces of rice that occur during the milling process.*

Deck the

HALLS DESSERT TABLE

STIR UP SOME MAGIC IN THE KITCHEN WITH THESE FESTIVE TREATS



*cover
recipe*

GINGERBREAD
TWIST
page 59

GINGERBREAD WEDGES WITH
MOLASSES GLAZE
page 59





FIGGY PUDDING CAKES WITH TOFFEE SAUCE

Makes 14 servings

Cakes:

- 1½ cups chopped dried figs
- ½ cup chopped dried dates
- 1 cup water
- ¼ cup brandy
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¾ cup plus 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- 2 large eggs
- Zest of 1 orange
- 1 tablespoon molasses
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- 1¼ teaspoons baking soda
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 (4-ounce) bar semisweet chocolate, chopped

Sauce:

- 2 cups heavy whipping cream

- 1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- ¼ cup unsalted butter

Garnish: sweetened whipped cream

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Spray wells of a cast-iron mini cake pan with baking spray with flour.
2. For cakes: In a small saucepan, bring figs, dates, 1 cup water, brandy, and vanilla to a boil over medium-high heat; cook for 5 minutes. Remove from heat. Cover and let stand for 10 minutes.
3. In a large bowl, beat butter and sugars with a mixer at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, orange zest, and molasses, beating until combined.
4. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with fig mixture, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition. Fold in chopped chocolate. Spoon batter into prepared pan.

5. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes.

6. For sauce: In a medium saucepan, bring all ingredients to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring frequently. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer until sauce is reduced to 1¾ cups, about 15 minutes. Let cool slightly. Serve cakes warm with sauce. Garnish with whipped cream, if desired.

AMBROSIA POUND CAKE

Makes 1 (13-cup) Bundt cake

- 1½ cups unsalted butter, softened
- 2¼ cups granulated sugar
- Zest of 1 large orange
- 3 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon coconut extract
- 3 cups plus 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour, divided
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons whole buttermilk, divided
- 1 cup finely chopped pecans
- 1 cup maraschino cherries, stemmed, chopped, and patted dry
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- Garnish: unsweetened coconut flakes, orange zest strips, chopped pecans

1. Preheat oven to 325°.
2. In a large bowl, beat butter, granulated sugar, and orange zest with a mixer at medium speed until fluffy, about 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in extracts.
3. In another large bowl, whisk together 3 cups flour, salt, and baking soda. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with 1 cup buttermilk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition. Fold in pecans.
4. Spray a 13-cup cast-iron Bundt or fluted cast-iron tube pan with baking spray with flour.
5. In a small bowl, toss together cherries and remaining 1 tablespoon flour; fold into batter. Spread batter into prepared pan.
6. Bake until a wooden pick inserted near center comes out clean, about 1 hour and 22 minutes. Let cool in pan for 15 minutes. Invert cake onto a wire rack, and let cool completely.
7. In another small bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar and remaining 2 tablespoons buttermilk until smooth; drizzle onto cooled cake. Garnish with coconut, zest strips, and pecans, if desired.

◦ ALL ABOUT AMBROSIA ◦

*If you love ambrosia as much as we do, try our
Caramelized Ambrosia with Toasted Coconut at
southerncastiron.com or Classic Ambrosia Salad
at tasteofthesouthmagazine.com.*





APPLE-CRANBERRY STREUSEL PIE

Makes 1 (10-inch) pie

Buttermilk Pie Dough (recipe follows)

- 4 cups fresh or thawed frozen cranberries
- 4 cups sliced peeled Honeycrisp apples
- 1¾ cups granulated sugar
- ¼ cup cornstarch
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- ¾ cup old-fashioned oats
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- ¼ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- ¼ cup unsalted butter, melted

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll Buttermilk Pie Dough to ⅛-inch thickness. Transfer to a 10-inch cast-iron skillet, pressing into bottom and up sides. Fold edges under, and crimp as desired.
3. In a large saucepan, stir together cranberries, apples, granulated sugar, cornstarch, and ginger. Cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until thickened and bubbly. Spoon into prepared crust.
4. In a small bowl, stir together oats, flour, brown sugar, and melted butter. Sprinkle onto fruit mixture.
5. Bake until crust is golden brown and filling is bubbly, 45 to 50 minutes. Let cool on a wire rack for at least 1 hour before serving. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

BUTTERMILK PIE DOUGH

Makes 1 (10-inch) crust

- 1⅓ cups all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ cup cold unsalted butter, cubed
- 3 to 4 tablespoons cold whole buttermilk

1. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse flour, sugar, and salt. Add cold butter, and pulse until mixture is crumbly. With processor running, gradually add 3 tablespoons buttermilk until a dough forms; add remaining 1 tablespoon buttermilk if needed.
2. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and shape into a disk. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes or up to 3 days. Let dough stand at room temperature for 15 minutes before rolling.



APPLE BRANDY FRUITCAKES

Makes 12

- 1½ cups chopped dried fruit (golden raisins, cherries, apricots, apple rings)
 - ½ cup granulated sugar
 - ½ cup apple brandy or cider, plus more for brushing
 - 1 large orange, zested (about 2 tablespoons)
 - ⅓ cup fresh orange juice (about 1 large orange)
 - 5 tablespoons unsalted butter
 - ¼ cup chopped candied ginger
 - ¾ cup self-rising flour
 - ¼ cup chopped pecans
 - 2 teaspoons apple pie spice
 - 1 teaspoon ground ginger
 - ¾ teaspoon kosher salt
 - 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- Garnish: confectioners' sugar**

1. In a medium cast-iron skillet, heat dried fruit, granulated sugar, brandy or cider, orange

zest and juice, butter, and candied ginger, over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until simmering. Transfer to a large heatproof bowl, and let stand for 20 minutes.

2. Preheat oven to 325°. Spray a 6-well cast-iron Turks head pan with baking spray with flour.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, pecans, pie spice, ground ginger, and salt.
4. Add egg to cooled fruit mixture, stirring until combined. Add flour mixture, stirring until combined. Spoon 2½ tablespoons batter into each prepared well. Cover and refrigerate remaining batter.
5. Bake until golden brown and a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, about 25 minutes. Let cool in pan for 15 minutes. Carefully turn out warm cakes, and lightly brush with brandy or cider, if desired. Repeat with remaining batter. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week. Garnish with confectioners' sugar just before serving, if desired.

GINGERBREAD TWIST

Makes about 6 servings

(photo on page 53)

Dough:

- 1 cup warm whole milk (105° to 110°), divided
- 1 (0.25-ounce) package active dry yeast
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup unsalted butter, melted
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sour cream
- 1 large egg
- $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 cups all-purpose flour, divided, plus extra for dusting
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoons kosher salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cookie butter*
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened

Filling:

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon ground ginger
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground cloves
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground allspice
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon ground nutmeg

Icing:

- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons whole milk

1. For dough: In a medium bowl, combine $\frac{3}{4}$ cup warm milk and yeast. Let stand until foamy, about 10 minutes.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer, stir together melted butter, sugar, sour cream, egg, and remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ cup warm milk by hand.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together $3\frac{1}{2}$ cups flour and salt. Add half of flour mixture to butter mixture. Using the paddle attachment, with mixer on low speed, add yeast mixture, beating just until combined. Beat in remaining flour mixture.
4. Switch to the dough hook attachment. Beat at medium speed until dough is smooth and elastic, about 3 minutes; add up to remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ cup flour if needed. (Dough should not be sticky.)
5. Spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Loosely cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°) until doubled in size, about 1 hour.
6. Spray a 10-inch cast-iron skillet with cooking spray.
7. Lightly punch down dough. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into a 16x12-inch rectangle.
8. Spread cookie butter and butter onto dough.

9. For filling: In a small bowl, stir together brown sugar, cinnamon, ginger, cloves, allspice, and nutmeg. Sprinkle sugar mixture over butter. Starting with one long side, roll up dough into a log; pinch seam to seal. Cut in half lengthwise, leaving 2 inches at top intact. Carefully twist dough pieces, cut side up, around each other. Pinch ends together. Carefully wrap dough around itself, creating a circle. Place in prepared skillet. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°) until almost doubled in size, about 45 minutes.

10. Preheat oven to 350°.

11. Bake, uncovered, until golden brown and wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, about 45 minutes, covering with foil to prevent excess browning, if necessary.

12. For icing: In a small bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar and milk until smooth. Drizzle over Gingerbread Twist.

**We used Biscoff Cookie Butter.*

GINGERBREAD WEDGES WITH MOLASSES GLAZE

Makes 8

(photo on page 54)

Cake:

- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup molasses
- 1 large egg
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla extract
- $1\frac{1}{3}$ cups all-purpose flour
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons ground ginger
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon ground allspice
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon ground cloves
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup whole milk

Glaze:

- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons whole milk
- 1 tablespoon molasses

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Spray wells of a cast-iron wedge pan with baking spray with flour.
2. For cake: In a large bowl, beat butter and brown sugar with a mixer at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add molasses, egg, and vanilla, beating just until combined.

3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, ginger, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt, allspice, and cloves. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with milk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition. Divide batter among prepared wells.

4. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, about 40 minutes. Let cool completely.

5. For glaze: In another medium bowl, whisk together all ingredients until smooth. Drizzle over cooled wedges.

CHOCOLATE BARK

Makes 24 to 36 pieces

- 2 (10-ounce) bags white or dark chocolate melting wafers*
- Peppermint-Cookie Topping (recipe follows)

1. Line a large square cast-iron griddle or baking pan with parchment paper, and refrigerate for 10 minutes.
2. In a large microwave-safe bowl, heat desired chocolate on medium in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until melted. Pour melted chocolate in center of prepared pan, and quickly spread with an offset spatula. Sprinkle with Peppermint-Cookie Topping. Refrigerate until set, about 30 minutes.
3. Break into pieces. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

**We used Ghirardelli.*


◦ KITCHEN TIP ◦

This chocolate bark is easily customizable with your favorite sweet or salty toppings.

PEPPERMINT-COOKIE TOPPING

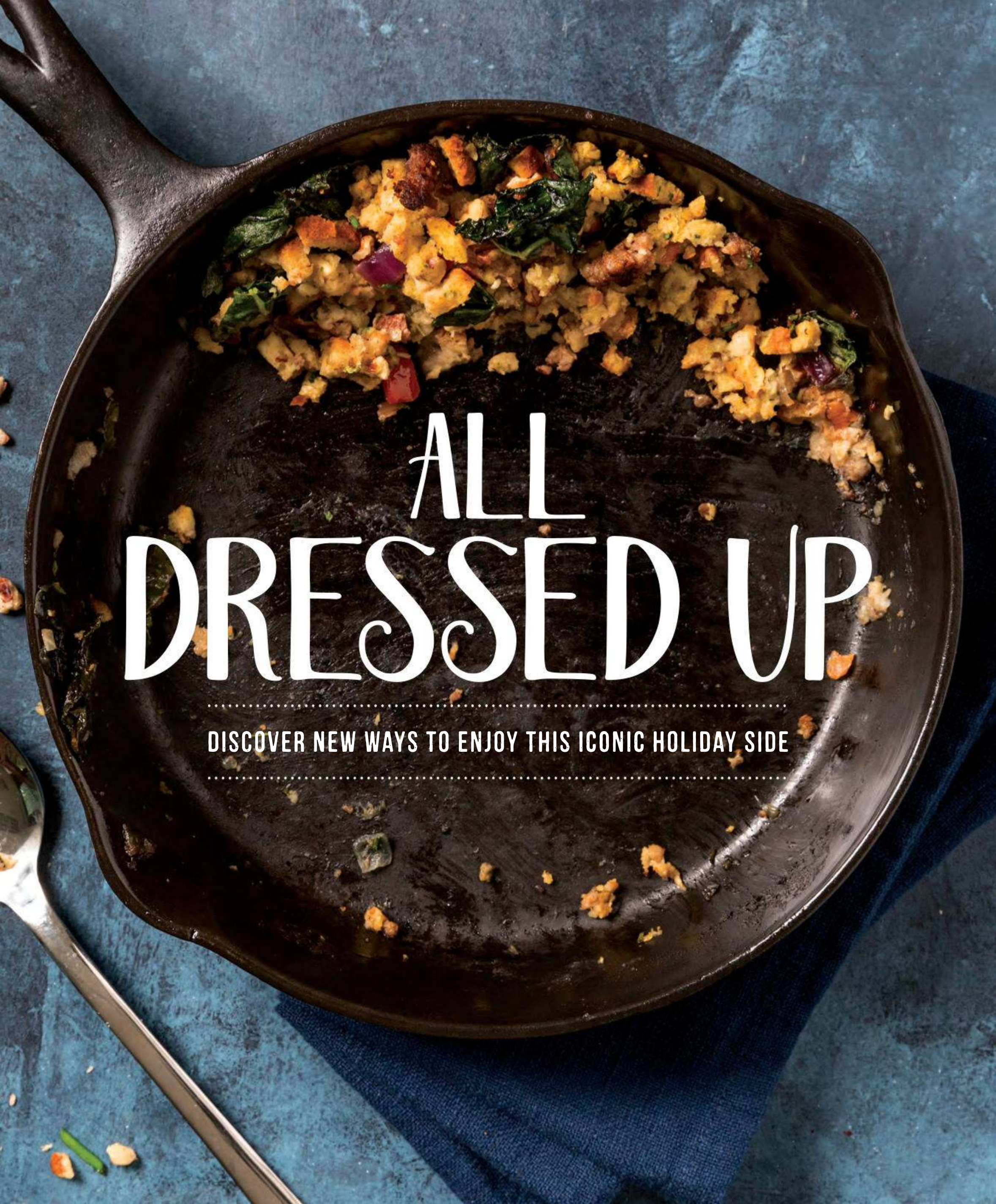
Makes about $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups

- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups chopped cream-filled chocolate sandwich cookies*
- 1 cup crushed soft peppermint candy pieces

1. In a small bowl, stir together all cookies and candy. 

**We used Oreo Chocolate Sandwich Cookies.*





ALL DRESSED UP

.....
DISCOVER NEW WAYS TO ENJOY THIS ICONIC HOLIDAY SIDE
.....

BROWNED BUTTER-ROSEMARY
CORNBREAD DRESSING
page 67





MINI CRANBERRY-PECAN CORNBREAD DRESSINGS

Makes 6 servings

- 1½ cups fresh or thawed frozen cranberries
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¼ cup water
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2½ cups sliced leeks (white and light green parts only)
- 2 cups chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped pecans, divided
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh sage
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme
- 10 cups cubed day-old cornbread
- 2½ cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1½ teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Place 6 (6-inch) cast-iron skilletlets on a rimmed baking sheet. Spray skilletlets with cooking spray.

2. In a small saucepan, stir together cranberries, sugar, and ¼ cup water, and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to medium, and simmer until berries have softened but not burst, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat; drain.

3. In a large skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add leeks and celery; cook, stirring occasionally, until tender, about 15 minutes.

Add ⅔ cup pecans, sage, and thyme; cook, stirring occasionally, for 3 minutes. Remove from heat.

4. In a large bowl, stir together 1 cup cranberry mixture, leek mixture, cornbread, broth, eggs, salt, and pepper. Spoon mixture into prepared skilletlets. Top with remaining cranberry mixture and remaining ⅓ cup pecans.

5. Bake until lightly browned, about 30 minutes.

◦ KITCHEN TIP ◦

This dressing can also be baked in a 12-inch skillet or a 13x9-inch baking dish.

CLASSIC SOUTHERN CORNBREAD DRESSING

Makes 10 to 12 servings

- ½ cup unsalted butter
- 3 cups chopped yellow onion
- 2 cups chopped celery
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh sage
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves
- 2 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 5 large eggs
- 1½ teaspoons kosher salt
- Peppery Cornbread (recipe follows), coarsely crumbled
- Garnish: fried sage leaves (see Kitchen Tip)

1. Preheat oven to 325°.

2. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Add onion, celery, and garlic; cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, 5 to 8 minutes. Remove from heat. Add chopped sage and thyme.

3. In a large bowl, whisk together broth, eggs, and salt until well combined. Gently stir in onion mixture and crumbled Peppery Cornbread. Spoon mixture into same skillet. Loosely cover with foil.

4. Bake for 20 minutes. Uncover and bake until top is lightly browned and an instant-read thermometer inserted in center registers 165°, about 15 minutes more. Let stand for 15 minutes before serving. Garnish with fried sage, if desired.

PEPPERY CORNBREAD

Makes 1 (12-inch) loaf

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 3 cups plain yellow cornmeal
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 3 cups whole buttermilk
- ½ cup unsalted butter, melted
- 3 large eggs

1. Preheat oven to 425°. Pour oil into a 12-inch cast-iron skillet. Place skillet in oven until hot, about 10 minutes.

2. In a large bowl, whisk together cornmeal, flour, sugar, baking powder, salt, baking soda, and pepper. Make a well in center.

3. In a medium bowl, whisk together buttermilk, melted butter, and eggs. Add buttermilk mixture to cornmeal mixture, and whisk until well combined. Carefully spread batter into hot skillet. (Batter should sizzle.)

4. Bake until golden brown and a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, about 20 minutes. Turn out cornbread onto a wire rack. Let cool completely.

◦ KITCHEN TIP ◦

To fry fresh sage leaves, heat a small amount of oil in an 8-inch cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Pat sage dry with paper towels; add to hot oil, and cook until crisp, about 1 minute. Let drain on paper towels. Sprinkle with salt.



◦ DRESSING VS. STUFFING ◦

The age-old debate on the name for this notable holiday side dish has been going on for many moons. Some say calling it dressing or stuffing depends on where you reside geographically (Northerners often refer to it as “stuffing,” while Southerners are keen on “dressing”); others say it depends on preparation and ingredients used. Online sources say stuffing is when the mixture is stuffed in the cavity of a bird, like a turkey, but many people above the Mason-Dixon Line will still call it stuffing even if it’s baked in a casserole dish. (The latter is the smarter preparation in order to stick to food safety guidelines.) We tend to think the terms are relatively interchangeable, but we’re team dressing in our test kitchen. We also lean toward a cornbread foundation as opposed to bread, but whatever else you include is totally up to you and is what makes this dish so versatile.





APPLE-SAUSAGE CORNBREAD DRESSING

Makes 10 to 12 servings

- 1 (16-ounce) package ground pork sausage
 - 1 cup diced yellow onion
 - 1 clove garlic, minced
 - 1 tablespoon chopped fresh sage
 - 1 (32-ounce) carton chicken broth
 - 2 large eggs
 - ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
 - 1 teaspoon kosher salt
 - ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
 - 5 cups cubed day-old white bread
 - 5 cups cubed day-old cornbread
 - 1 large Honeycrisp apple, chopped
- Garnish: fresh parsley, fresh sage

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. Heat a 12-inch cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Add sausage, onion, garlic, and sage; cook, stirring frequently, until sausage is browned and crumbly and vegetables are tender, about 10 minutes.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together broth,

eggs, parsley, salt, and pepper until combined. Gently stir in sausage mixture, all bread, and apple until well combined. Spoon mixture into same skillet; cover with foil.

4. Bake for 15 minutes. Uncover and bake until top is golden brown, 15 to 20 minutes more. Garnish with parsley and sage, if desired.

◦ KITCHEN TIP ◦

To use fresh bread, toast cubes in a 350° oven until dry to the touch.

TOASTED BREAD DRESSING WITH HERBS

Makes 6 to 8 servings

- 1 (1-pound) loaf crusty white bread, cut into 1-inch cubes
- ½ cup unsalted butter
- 2 cups chopped yellow onion
- 2 cups chopped celery
- 2½ cups low-sodium chicken broth

- 2 large eggs
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
- ¼ cup chopped fresh sage
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh rosemary
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper

1. Preheat oven to 250°.
2. On a rimmed baking sheet, place cubed bread.
3. Bake until bread is dried out, about 1 hour. Let cool. Increase oven temperature to 350°.
4. In a 10-inch cast-iron skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onion and celery; cook, stirring occasionally, until tender, about 15 minutes.
5. In a large bowl, whisk together broth, eggs, parsley, sage, rosemary, salt, and pepper until combined. Stir in bread and vegetables. Spoon mixture into same skillet, and cover with foil.
6. Bake for 20 minutes. Uncover and bake until lightly browned, 20 to 25 minutes more.

BROWNED BUTTER-ROSEMARY CORNBREAD DRESSING

Makes 10 to 12 servings

- 1 cup unsalted butter, divided
 - 2 large sprigs fresh rosemary
 - 3 cups whole buttermilk
 - 5 large eggs, divided
 - 3 cups plain yellow cornmeal
 - 1 cup all-purpose flour
 - 4 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
 - 2 teaspoons baking powder
 - 1 teaspoon baking soda
 - 3 cups sliced celery
 - 2 cups chopped onion
 - 1½ tablespoons minced garlic
 - 1 tablespoon minced fresh rosemary
 - 1 tablespoon poultry seasoning
 - ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
 - 3 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- Garnish:** fresh rosemary

1. Preheat oven to 425°.
2. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, melt ¾ cup butter over medium heat. Add rosemary sprigs; cook until butter starts to brown, 3 to 4 minutes. Discard rosemary; pour butter into a medium bowl. Whisk in buttermilk; add 3 eggs, one at a time, whisking until combined after each addition.

3. Place same skillet in oven to preheat.
4. In a large bowl, whisk together cornmeal, flour, 2 teaspoons salt, baking powder, and baking soda. Stir in buttermilk mixture just until combined. Carefully spread batter into hot skillet.
5. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 20 to 25 minutes. Remove from skillet, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Reduce oven temperature to 375°. Wipe skillet clean.
6. In same skillet, melt remaining ¼ cup butter over medium-high heat. Add celery, onion, and garlic; cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat.
7. In another large bowl, break cornbread into 1- to 2-inch pieces. Stir in vegetable mixture, minced rosemary, poultry seasoning, pepper, and remaining 2 teaspoons salt.
8. In another medium bowl, whisk together 1 cup broth and remaining 2 eggs; gently stir broth mixture into cornbread mixture just until cornbread mixture is moistened. Gradually stir in remaining broth as needed until mixture is moistened but not wet. Spoon cornbread mixture into skillet.

9. Bake until top is golden brown and dressing is firm to the touch, 45 to 50 minutes. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving. Garnish with rosemary, if desired. 🍴

◦ KITCHEN TIP ◦

The cornbread can be made a day ahead and stored in an airtight container.



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GOING NUTS

WRITTEN BY MORGAN CRAWFORD SCOTT

THIS TIME OF YEAR, WHEN GIFT-GIVING IS AT ITS PEAK, you've probably received a bundle of candied mixed nuts as a sweet and thoughtful gift from the kitchen. Or maybe you find yourself reaching for a prized bag of pecans stashed away in your freezer. Either way, when it comes to these nutrient- and protein-packed beauties, the many varieties to choose from lend themselves to enhancing your holiday baking game in so many ways, in so many recipes. Read on to crack into what nuts work best in which recipes so you can come back to your favorites year after year.

Pecans

Besides being the star of your favorite holiday pie, these oblong-shaped nuts can be found in a wide variety of recipes. They have a distinct flavor that's sweet, buttery, and nutty, and they have the highest fat content of any nut. (No wonder they're so tasty!) You can find pecans in many different forms: shelled or unshelled, roasted or raw, salted or unsalted, halved or in pieces. They work well in pies, tarts, and cookies and add a creamy, fatty element. The key to choosing good pecans is selecting a quality, reputable brand—local is best, if possible.

RECIPE WE LOVE: Bourbon-Old Fashioned Pecan Pie

Chestnuts

These dark brown, round nuts are too delicious to only have their moment in the "The Christmas Song," a classic by Nat King Cole. Their earthy, starchy, and slightly sweet flavor makes them a worthy candidate for many recipes, and they are undoubtedly synonymous with the holiday season. To pick the best chestnuts, look for ones that are plump, shiny, and not dry; make sure to rinse, score, and soak them before roasting and peeling for optimal use.

RECIPE WE LOVE: Chestnut-Hazelnut Caramel Pie

Hazelnuts

These spherical nuts have a complex flavor (particularly when toasted) that can be rich, nutty, and slightly sweet. They produce a crunch that can't be beat, and they're excellent when paired with chocolate, especially in tarts and biscotti. If you're able to remove the skin, which can be bitter, that's ideal.

RECIPE WE LOVE: Chocolate Blackberry Roll with Hazelnut Cream

Walnuts

These jagged nuts are a Christmas classic. They're earthy, slightly bitter, and nutty in flavor, and they've got a higher oil content, which means they'll take less time to toast. The two most common kinds to buy are English walnuts and black walnuts. They do well in savory bakes due to their natural bitterness that provides nice contrast, but we also love to use them in dense breads and loaves.

RECIPE WE LOVE: Honey-Nut Sweet Rolls

Almonds

These oval-shaped nuts are mild in flavor, have a slight bite, and won't compete with other ingredients. You'll traditionally find them in the grocery store whole, slivered, or sliced. They're very versatile, and you can even grind them to create almond meal or flour, which can be helpful when dabbling with gluten-free baking. They add nice texture to cakes and breads, and we love them when paired with fruits like pears, strawberries, raspberries, and even coffee-forward things.

RECIPE WE LOVE: Pear Almond Skillet Cake

Pistachios

These green-hued nuts are perfect for snacking but even better when baked into everything from muffins to macaroons. Their slightly sweet, mild yet buttery flavor is similar to that of an almond, but they're also woody and earthy. You can find them in grocery stores pretty much year-round, either shell on or off. They pair well with dried fruits like cherries, figs, apricots, and more.

RECIPE WE LOVE: Dried Cherry and Pistachio Macaroons

Check out our favorite nut-forward recipes at southerncastiron.com and bakefromscratch.com.



CANDIED MIXED NUTS

Makes about 6 cups

Consider making a double batch of these sweet and spicy nuts—they're so addictive, you'll probably have to keep a stash for yourself.

- 2 large egg whites**
- 1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar**
- 3 teaspoons finely chopped fresh rosemary, divided**
- 2 teaspoons chili powder**
- 1 teaspoon ground chipotle chile pepper**
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt**
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper**
- ¼ teaspoon ground red pepper**
- 2 (15-ounce) cans salted mixed nuts**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 300°. Spray a 12-inch cast-iron skillet with cooking spray.
- 2.** In a large bowl, whisk egg whites until foamy; whisk in brown sugar, 1½ teaspoons rosemary, chili powder, chipotle chile pepper, salt, black pepper, and red pepper until well combined. Stir in nuts until well coated. Spread nuts into prepared skillet.
- 3.** Bake until nuts are golden brown and fragrant, about 25 minutes, stirring every 10 minutes.
- 4.** Transfer nuts to a piece of parchment or wax paper, and sprinkle with remaining 1½ teaspoons rosemary. Let cool completely. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks. ●

◦ KITCHEN TIPS ◦

Nuts garner even more flavor when toasted. To toast nuts, heat them in a small dry skillet over medium heat, stirring or shaking skillet occasionally, until lightly browned and fragrant. Let them cool completely before using.

Nuts are naturally oily, so you'll get the most out of them by storing them in the freezer (or, at the very least, the refrigerator). This method will extend

the shelf life as opposed to storing them at room temperature in your pantry. Be sure to mark the date on the outside of the freezer-safe bag, too.

Nuts range in price, and some are more expensive than others. If available, shop in the dry bulk bins and bag them yourself for a bit of a discount. This also allows you to buy the exact amount you need to reduce waste.

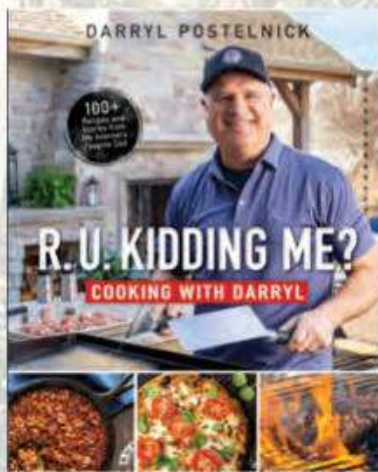


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CELEBRATE THE SEASON WITH THESE CHERISHED FAMILY RECIPES FROM A TIKTOK COOKING SENSATION

STORY AND RECIPES BY DARRYL POSTELNICK

When I was growing up, I never liked my mom's Thanksgiving stuffing, or dressing as most people down South call it. I remember being 12 and seeing my older brother fill his plate with it, leaving little room for turkey, potatoes, and the rest of the dinner. He always said, "Man, I love mom's stuffing." It wasn't too many years later when I decided to venture out and try my hand at that famous stuffing recipe my brother liked so much. I couldn't believe I had been missing out on this delicious holiday side dish all those years before. It was so good that my plate started to look like his once did, and I found myself going back for seconds. I'd even eat it cold that evening or the next day on a Thanksgiving leftover sandwich.

Darryl Postelnick is a loving husband and father and an Illinois native with decades of experience in sales at the executive level. With inspiration from his children, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Darryl turned his love for cooking at home into a thriving following on social media platforms like TikTok and Instagram, where he cooks both in his kitchen and outdoors on the grill for his more than 3.5 million followers.



MOM'S
DRESSING
page 75

What was so good about her recipe? There are a few things. My mom includes the usual onions and celery, but she also browns some breakfast pork sausage to make it a sausage-based stuffing. She leaves some bread out for a couple days to get hard instead of buying day-old bread. But the real difference in her recipe is the addition of tart apple chunks, which add a touch of sweetness and keep things moist, how we prefer it. Back in the day, she would use Granny Smiths, but I switch it up and use Honeycrisps—my personal favorite.

This recipe is great to make an extra batch of so you can enjoy it with other leftovers for the next few days. It goes well on sandwiches with turkey and cranberry sauce or on the side of eggs for breakfast. I've even made an egg sandwich by smashing some stuffing on the griddle, letting it get crispy, and then adding bacon, eggs, and cheese. The crispy stuffing stands in for the two slices of bread. There really are so many creative leftover recipes you can make with it! I don't know why I only seem to make it once a year; it would be a great complement to many of my meals. Here's to making stuffing (or dressing) for more than just the holidays.

It's safe to say our family also consumes a fair amount of potatoes. Whether they're baked, mashed, fried, or smashed, they're our preferred side dish for most meals. It's probably because my wife and I both grew up in meat-and-potato households where

our parents' fixed incomes meant potatoes were a recurring, inexpensive side item for most meals. In fact, the potatoes I grew up on usually came from a box. All we did was mix in milk, water, and butter, and voilà—you had instant potatoes. It wasn't until I was at a friend's house in college that I experienced real potatoes. I'm pleased to share that, since that time, I've never gone back to the boxed stuff.

My wife was the one who started making mashed potatoes for our big holiday meals. We host both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day at our house, having one side of our family for each of the days. My wife makes a large serving of her potatoes, enough to have plenty of leftovers. Since we would make a holiday meal twice in two days, we decided to mix it up a bit and make one of the day's menus centered around loaded mashed potatoes. We get creative with the toppings, baking a pound or so of bacon in the oven until it's perfectly cooked. I mean, who doesn't like bacon? Then she'd make her regular mashed potatoes using a lot of butter and mixing in American cheese, green onions, and a couple eggs to keep the mixture together. She tops it with bacon bits and panko bread crumbs, making this the ultimate loaded potato dish. Every spoonful is heaven. This recipe makes for a great alternative to the regular mashed potatoes, and you'll find that they, too, make a great leftover item by turning it into potato croquettes. Happy holidays, and enjoy!



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LOADED MASHED POTATOES

Makes 8 to 10 servings

- 8 slices bacon
- 8 cups premade mashed potatoes
- 1 (8-ounce) block white American cheese, shredded
- 3 green onions, chopped
- ½ cup whole milk
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 cup panko bread crumbs
- 2 tablespoons Bacon Up Bacon Grease, melted

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. Place bacon on a foil-lined baking sheet. Bake for 20 minutes. Remove bacon and let drain on paper towels. Chop and set aside.
3. In a large bowl, combine potatoes, cheese, green onion, milk, and eggs, stirring until combined. Spray a 3-quart casserole dish or 10-inch cast-iron skillet with cooking spray. Spoon potato mixture into prepared dish.
4. In a small bowl, combine bread crumbs and melted Bacon Up. Sprinkle on top of potato mixture in dish.
5. Bake until bubbly and crumbs are toasted, 30 to 40 minutes. Just before serving, sprinkle with bacon.

MOM'S DRESSING

Makes 8 servings

(photo on page 73)

- 1 pound ground pork
- ½ stick butter
- 1 white onion, chopped
- 5 stalks celery, chopped
- 1 (12-ounce) package bread cubes
- 1 small Honeycrisp apple, finely chopped
- 2¼ cups chicken broth
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Brush a 13x9-inch baking dish with oil.
2. In a cast-iron skillet, cook ground pork over medium heat until browned, about 10 minutes. Remove and let drain. Set aside.
3. In the same skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Add onion and celery and cook until soft, about 15 minutes.
4. In a large bowl, mix cooked pork, onion mixture, bread cubes, apple, broth, salt, and pepper until well combined. Spoon into prepared baking dish and cover with foil.
5. Bake until heated through, about 25 minutes. Let rest, uncovered, for 5 minutes before serving. 🔪

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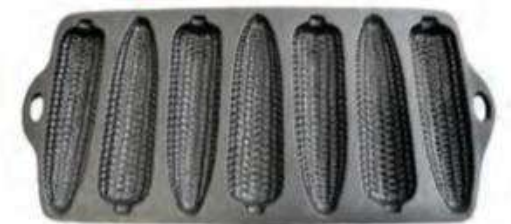
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CAST IRON USE & CARE

If you take the time to properly care for your cast-iron cookware, it will reward you and your family with generations of loyal service. Follow these tips to keep your heirlooms—whether seasoned or enameled iron—in tip-top shape.

SEASONED

KEEP THEM CLEAN

Be sure to clean your pans as soon as they're cool enough to handle. Scrub gently with a stiff-bristle brush or a non-scratch scouring pad. Water leads to rust, so avoid submerging your cast-iron cookware. As to whether to use soap—that's up to you. We avoid it when possible to protect the seasoned surface.

KEEP THEM DRY

After rinsing, it's crucial to dry your cookware completely. Wipe dry with a clean kitchen towel and then rub a very thin coat of vegetable oil all over the cooking surface. Heat on the stovetop over medium-low heat or in a 300° oven until dry, about 10 minutes. Let cool; wipe the surface with a clean towel, and heat for 5 minutes more.

RESPECT YOUR CAST IRON

Taking care of your cookware means understanding its likes and dislikes. Cooking with fats, cleaning gently, and storing in a clean, dry place are the keys to preserving your pans' seasoning. Harsh abrasives, acidic foods, and moisture can break down the finish or cause rust.

ENAMELED

BE GENTLE

The finish on enameled cast iron is delicate, so handle your pieces carefully to avoid chipping. Never use metal utensils since they can scratch the surface.

GREASE THEM UP

Unlike seasoned cast iron, enameled cast iron is not a nonstick surface. To avoid sticking, cook over medium heat using adequate amounts of oil or fat. If sticking does occur, use dish soap, water, and a non-scratch scouring pad to scrub away the mess. For extra-stubborn, stuck-on bits, try boiling water in the piece with a bit of dishwashing liquid.

MAKE THEM SHINE

Over time, enameled cast iron can become discolored or stained. To remove stains, soak the cooking surface in hydrogen peroxide mixed with baking soda, and then scrub with dish soap, water, and a non-scratch scouring pad to keep your enameled cast iron looking as good as new.

RECIPES & RESOURCES

Desserts

- Ambrosia Pound Cake **55**
- Apple Brandy Fruitcakes **58**
- Apple-Cranberry Streusel Pie **58**
- Chocolate Bark **59**
- Gingerbread Twist **59**
- Gingerbread Wedges with Molasses Glaze **59**
- Lane Cake Roulade **17**
- Figgy Pudding Cakes with Toffee Sauce **55**

Mains

- Browned Butter Steaks and Sorghum Risotto **41**
- Chicken Quarters with Hearty Root Vegetables **38**
- Cranberry Short Ribs with Blue Cheese Grits **44**
- Dijon-Cane Syrup-Glazed Turkey **45**
- Family-Style Pot Roast **51**
- French Onion Meatballs **44**
- Pork Backbone Stew **51**
- Pear-Clementine-Glazed Ham **43**
- Sausage and Fennel Cobbler **45**
- Seared Sea Scallops with Middlins **51**
- Turnip and Mushroom Stew **35**

Miscellaneous

- Bourbon Simple Syrup **79**
- Buttermilk Pie Dough **58**
- Lane Cake Filling **79**
- Peppermint-Cookie Topping **59**
- Swiss Meringue **79**

Vegetables & Sides

- Apple-Sausage Cornbread Dressing **66**
- Balsamic-and-Citrus Roasted Beets **34**
- Blue Cheese Grits **44**
- Browned Butter-Rosemary Cornbread Dressing **67**

- Classic Southern Cornbread Dressing **63**
- Crispy Root Vegetable Roast **34**
- Loaded Mashed Potatoes **75**
- Melting Sweet Potatoes **35**
- Mini Cranberry-Pecan Cornbread Dressings **63**
- Mom's Dressing **75**
- Peppery Cornbread **63**
- Scalloped Potato, Parsnip, Turnip, and Fennel Casserole **38**
- Texican Skillet Cornbread **16**
- Toasted Bread Dressing with Herbs **66**

Credits and Resources

Pages 13–16: Photos courtesy of Ellen Flowers (Bear Creek Smokehouse exterior, barbecue plate, general store interior, Marshall Mercantile and High Horse 1898 exterior, Kale & Brussels Salad with Salmon, High Horse dining room); Bear Creek Smokehouse (Robbie Shoults headshots, Shoults family).

Pages 47–52: Photos courtesy of Denny Culbert (Pork Bone Stew, Melissa M. Martin, *Bayou*); Ziv Sade & Sammy Monsour (Seared Scallops with Middlins, Sammy Monsour & Kassady Wiggin, *Salt & Shore*); Sam Hanna (Eric Cook, *Modern Creole*, Family-Style Pot Roast); Stacy Lyn Harris (Stacy Lyn Harris, Salted Maple Candied Nuts); Worthy Book (*Love Language of the South*).

Pages 71–73: Photo courtesy of Darryl Postelnick (family Christmas photo).

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LANE CAKE ROULADE

(continued from page 17)

BOURBON SIMPLE SYRUP

Makes $\frac{3}{4}$ cup

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup bourbon

1. In a small saucepan, whisk together sugar, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water, and bourbon. Bring to a boil over high heat. Remove from heat, and let cool completely. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

LANE CAKE FILLING

Makes 2 cups

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup finely chopped toasted pecans
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup unsalted butter
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup sugar
- 4 large egg yolks
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sweetened flaked coconut
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup roughly chopped red candied cherries
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup golden raisins
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup bourbon

1. In a medium saucepan, cook pecans and butter over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until butter is melted.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together sugar and egg yolks. Add sugar mixture to pecan mixture, and stir until well combined; cook, stirring constantly, until mixture is thickened, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in coconut, cherries, raisins, and bourbon. Let cool completely before using.

SWISS MERINGUE

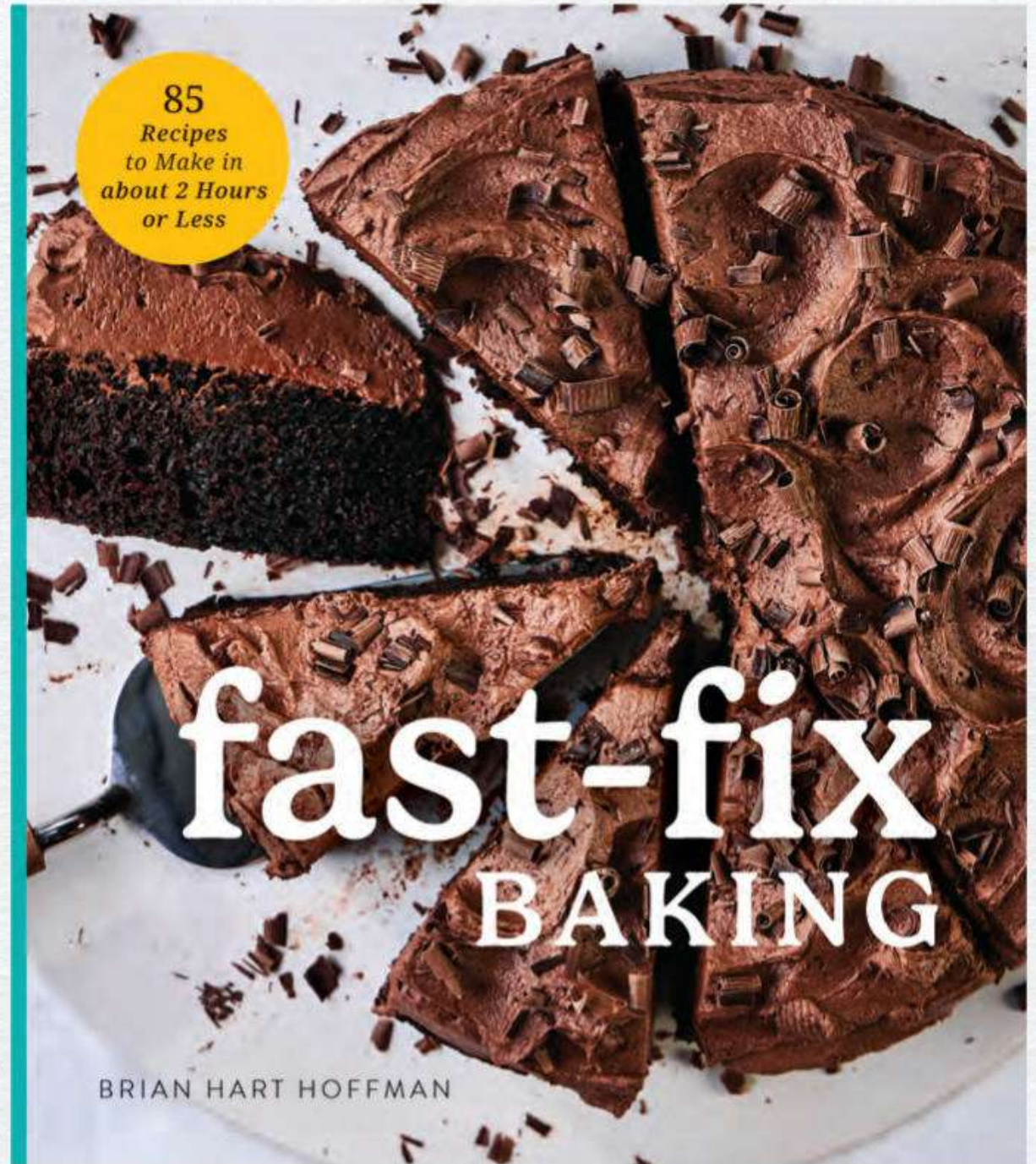
Makes 3 cups

- 4 large egg whites
- 1 cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cream of tartar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla extract

1. In the heatproof bowl of a stand mixer, combine egg whites, sugar, cream of tartar, and salt. Place bowl over a saucepan of simmering water, and cook, whisking constantly, until sugar dissolves and an instant-read thermometer registers 160°.
2. Carefully return bowl to stand mixer. Using the whisk attachment, beat at high speed until white, glossy, and fluffy, 5 to 7 minutes. Use immediately.

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