

Southern Living

SEPTEMBER 2011

OUR BEST & EASIEST APPLE DESSERTS

BONUS:
SPECIAL
MID-
ATLANTIC
SECTION

56 TOP-RATED
FALL RECIPES
LIGHTENED SOUTHERN
CLASSICS, TAILGATE
MENUS & MORE



101 LOOKS
YOU'LL LOVE
FROM OUR TEXAS SHOW HOUSE

**OUR AUTUMN
GETAWAY GUIDE**
THE SOUTH'S MOST
CHARMING COLLEGE TOWNS

**THE SECRET TO
EVERY GREAT GARDEN**

Apple-Cream Cheese
Bundt Cake
PAGE 100





Check out the
feast cooked up by
Charleston chefs,
page 82.

features

**82 Chef Showdown:
Lowcountry Style**

We challenged the South's culinary superstars to create a three-course harvest feast at the oh-so-Southern Inn at Palmetto Bluff

92 Delta Rising

A grassroots movement of backyard and church gardening is bringing fresh, healthy food to the people of the Mississippi Delta

98 Sweet Apple Temptations


These fresh apple desserts are good to the core

CHEF SHOWDOWN

Lowcountry Style

Three chefs. Five key ingredients. One killer location. We took the South's culinary superstars and challenged each to create a three-course harvest feast at the oh-so-Southern Inn at Palmetto Bluff. The result? Nothing short of spectacular



A photograph of three men standing on a grassy lawn at dusk. The man in the center, Mike Lata, has his arms around the shoulders of Robert Stehling on the left and Sean Brock on the right. They are all smiling and holding drinks. In the background, several women are standing and talking, and there are large trees with Spanish moss hanging from them. Three lanterns are hanging from the trees. The scene is lit with warm, golden light.

Three of the South's most talented chefs pause for a pic at the stunning Inn at Palmetto Bluff (from left) Robert Stehling, Mike Lata, and Sean Brock.

Food lovers love Charleston. The persistent reliance on local farmers and fishermen, a profound respect for seasonality, and an ingenious appreciation for tradition make for showstopping meals. Recently, this honest, home-spun approach to great food has garnered national attention. The James Beard Foundation Awards (the Oscars of the food world) named Charleston chefs the top toques in the Southeast three years in

a row: Robert Stehling of Hominy Grill (2008), Mike Lata of FIG (2009), and Sean Brock of McCrady's (2010; he has since opened Husk, a semifinalist for Best New Restaurant 2011). We took them out of their kitchens to the Inn at Palmetto Bluff, gave them five key ingredients—peaches, rice, pork belly, okra, and shrimp—and challenged them to go head-to-head and celebrate the bounty with a harvest feast. It's clear that *we're* the winners here.

Mike Lata, FIG

A soulful chef who treats "seasonal" as a mandate and makes "simple" an art form; James Beard Foundation Award Winner, 2009



Roasted Pork Belly with Late-Harvest Peaches and Arugula

MAKES: 8 servings **HANDS-ON TIME:** 30 min. **TOTAL TIME:** 4 hr., 10 min.

- 1 (3 1/2- to 4-lb.) pork belly*
- 1 Tbsp. kosher salt
- 2 tsp. freshly ground pepper
- 1 large sweet onion, chopped
- 2 celery ribs, chopped
- 5 garlic cloves, crushed
- 6 fresh thyme sprigs
- 1 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 4 to 6 peaches, peeled and cut into 6 wedges each
- 2 Tbsp. sherry vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. honey
- 1 tsp. chopped fresh thyme
- 4 cups loosely packed arugula

1. Preheat oven to 300°. Make 1/2-inch-deep cuts in fattiest side of pork. Rub pork with kosher salt and freshly ground pepper. Arrange onion and next 3 ingredients in a large roasting pan; drizzle with oil, stirring to coat. Place pork, fattiest

side up, on vegetables in pan.
2. Bake at 300° for 3 1/2 to 4 hours or until tender. Let stand 10 minutes. Remove pork from pan, reserving 1 Tbsp. drippings. Discard remaining drippings and vegetables.

3. Cook pork in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet over medium heat 3 to 5 minutes on each side or until browned and crisp.

4. Stir together peaches and next 3 ingredients. Heat reserved 1 Tbsp. drippings in a large skillet over medium heat. Cook peach mixture in hot drippings, stirring often, 3 to 5 minutes or until thoroughly heated. Season with additional salt and pepper to taste. Slice pork, and serve with warm peaches and arugula.

*See "Poultry Key" throughout for unfamiliar ingredients.

Skillet-Roasted Okra and Shrimp

MAKES: 6 servings **HANDS-ON TIME:** 30 min. **TOTAL TIME:** 30 min.

- 1 lb. unpeeled, large raw shrimp (31/35 count)
 - 3 cups (about 8 oz.) fresh okra, cut in half lengthwise
 - 3 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
 - 1 pt. heirloom cherry tomatoes
 - 3 large garlic cloves, thinly sliced
 - 1/2 tsp. dried crushed red pepper
- Garnish:** thinly sliced okra blossoms

1. Peel shrimp; devein, if desired.
2. Sauté okra in 1 Tbsp. hot oil in a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat 4 to 5 minutes or until browned. Transfer to a bowl.

3. Cook tomatoes in 1 Tbsp. hot oil in skillet over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, 2 to 3 minutes or until skins are charred. Place in bowl with okra.

4. Sauté shrimp, garlic, and dried crushed red pepper in remaining 1 Tbsp. hot oil in skillet over medium-high heat 2 to 3 minutes or just until shrimp turn pink. Stir in okra and tomatoes. Add salt and pepper to taste; cook 1 to 2 minutes or until thoroughly heated. Garnish, if desired.



Lemony Rice Pudding with Figs and Saba

MAKES: 10 servings. HANDS-ON TIME: 10 min. TOTAL TIME: 10 hr., 10 min.

- 1 cup uncooked long-grain rice
- 1 Tbsp. powdered sugar
- 7 cups milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup granulated sugar
- 1 Tbsp. lemon zest
- $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. salt
- 1 vanilla bean, split
- 1 pt. fresh figs, quartered
- Saba (see "Pantry Key")

1. Bring 4 cups water to a boil in a large saucepan. Stir in first 2 ingredients, and cook, stirring occasionally, 5 minutes; drain.

2. Return rice to saucepan; stir in milk and next 4 ingredients. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat; reduce heat to low, and simmer, stirring occasionally, 45 minutes or until thick. Remove vanilla bean. Remove from heat, and transfer to a glass bowl. Let stand 1 hour, stirring occasionally. Cover and chill 8 hours.

3. Spoon into serving dishes; top each with figs and a drizzle of saba.

NOTE: We tested with Carolina Plantation Rice (carolinaplantationrice.com) and Zingerman's Saba Balsamic Syrup (zingermans.com).

PANTRY KEY

Pork Belly: This new chef fave has nothing to do with the digestive tract—it's uncured bacon. Order it from your butcher or cowcawcreek.com.
Saba: An ancient sweetener traditionally made from grape juice.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
Pork belly over Herbed
Farro with chanterelles;
guests en route to dinner;
Sautéed Chanterelles;
chef Sean Brock



**THE INN AT
PALMETTO
BLUFF**

This 20,000-acre tract of pristine Lowcountry paradise (ancient live oaks blanketed by Spanish moss; tidal marshes rich in wildlife) houses 50 lavish cottages with screened porches, pine floors, and steam showers. Cottages from \$300; palmettobluffresort.com or 866/706-6565

