

What Women Want

LEADING SOUTHERN CHEFS SHINE AT THE POWERFUL & DELICIOUS DINNER

Written by Kelly Jordan

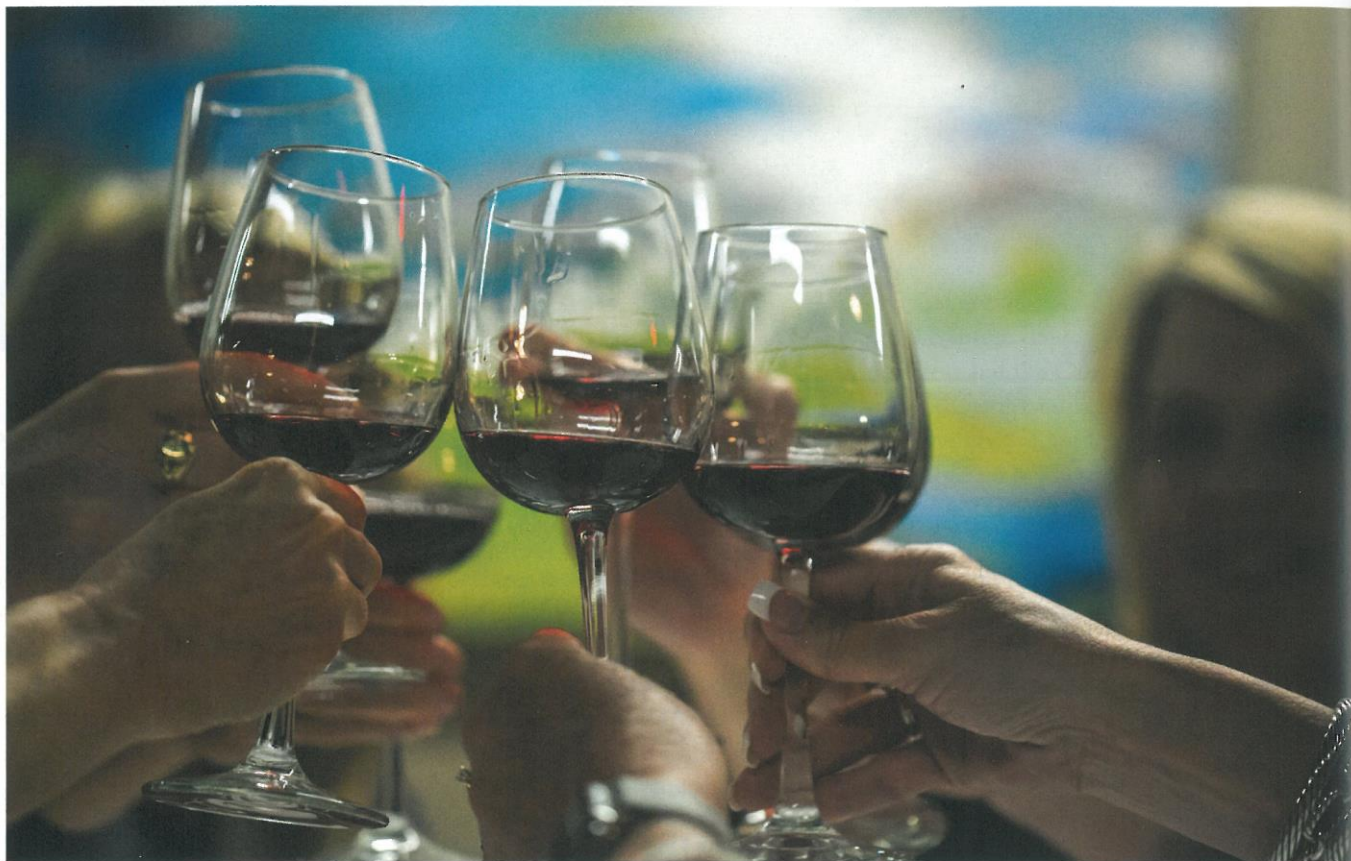


PHOTO: RAFTERMEN/AFWF

THE 14TH FLOOR conference level of the Loews Atlanta Hotel hummed with excitement on a Thursday evening last May as guests filled the space for the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival's sixth annual Powerful & Delicious dinner.

The surrounds, which served as the Connoisseur Lounge throughout the weekend, were done up in Southern-contemporary furnishings and decor in preparation for the evening and the food-filled weekend ahead. I was thrilled to meet the women-only guest list (112 in all) personally invited by the festival's host committee to attend the night's "Next Generation: Breaking Barriers" themed supper, highlighting top female toques from across the region. Coming just a day

after Harvey Weinstein's indictment and in the midst of the #MeToo movement, it was particularly moving to be in a room filled with smart, successful women at the top of their fields.

We got acquainted and loosened up with the fabulous Elliott Potter Cocktail (named for a Birmingham local, recipe on page 49) mixed by Rachael Roberts, owner of The Atomic Lounge in Birmingham. This tangerine-hued summer sipper was the perfect match to the humid weather and dangerously drinkable. While balancing our glasses and gobbling Curry Leaf Pickled Shrimp (recipe on page 51), several of us explored the Maker's Mark table.

As an icebreaker, Maker's Mark asked each attendee to write herself a note to be opened in 10 years. The message was

popped inside a Maker's Mark bottle and sealed with wax as a personal aspirational keepsake to take home and open in a decade. "Where am I going and how far have I come?" I asked myself. The reflection fit the mood of the occasion, which was dedicated to toasting and raising up women.

While I celebrated the night with strangers, the anxiety I typically experience when faced with new people melted away. Despite the high-caliber positions most of these women held, the atmosphere was one of acceptance and friendship—not competition or judgment.

As we headed to our tables, Dominique Love, businesswoman and co-founder of the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival, reiterated the level of success



represented in the room. "Tonight, you're going to be meeting rock-star chefs, sommeliers and mixologists who just happen to be women," said Love.

Our night's meal was emceed by Alba Huerta, owner of Houston bar, Julep. When Love recalled a recent scouting trip she took with *Esquire* to discover the best bars in America, she gushed over Huerta's Ramos Gin Fizz. "I've yet to find anyone who can make one so great," she recalled. Cappie Peete, beverage director for AC Restaurants, worked with Catherine Miles, senior vice president and creative and marketing director of Broadbent Selections, to pair our wines for the evening.

Then, there was the stellar lineup of femme chefs: Brittanny Anderson (James Beard-nominated chef and owner of Metzger Bar & Butchery and Brenner Pass in Richmond, Virginia), Maggie Huff (semifinalist for Outstanding Pastry Chef by the James Beard Foundation and pastry chef at FT33 in Dallas), Cheetie Kumar (semifinalist for the James Beard Award's Best Chef: Southeast and owner of Garland Restaurant, Neptunes Parlour, and the music venue, Kings, in Raleigh, North Carolina), and Misti Norris (James Beard finalist and the creator and chef at Petra and the Beast in Dallas).

Love told the crowd that for years, the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival has focused on shining an international spotlight on the rich food and beverage traditions of the South. "Though we were sensitive to inclusiveness and were constantly saying, 'more women, more chefs of color,'



(opposite page) The invitation-only dinner was filled with female power-players from a variety of industries; (clockwise from far left) the female-focused night placed a spotlight on Margie Samuels, co-founder of Maker's Mark; Chef Brittanny Anderson served raw fluke resting in a broth of carrot and spices; Host Alba Huerta introduces Chef Cheetie Kumar, who not only owns and operates a bar, a restaurant and a music venue, she's also a legit rock star as guitarist in the band, Birds of Avalon; crispy rice, melt-in-your-mouth lamb belly and pickled spring vegetables were seasonal and sensational; Rachael Roberts concocted the summery Elliott Potter Cocktail in honor of a local at The Atomic Lounge.



Elliott Potter Cocktail

Recipe by Rachael Roberts, Owner,
The Atomic Lounge

Yield: 1 cocktail

- 1 ounce Maker's Mark bourbon
- 1/2 ounce Cappelletti VINO Aperitivo
- 1/2 ounce Bärenjäger Honey Liqueur
- 1 ounce lemon juice
- 1/2 ounce strawberry syrup

In a cocktail shaker with ice, add ingredients, mix and strain into cocktail glass of choice.



Misti Norris' pressed and shaved pork was gorgeously plated and painstakingly prepared—from a flavor perspective, it was worth it!

we were falling short,” she said. In response, they cleared out their advisory council this year and replaced it with one that was all female. “Many of them are in this room tonight,” Love continued. “We hope to underscore the fact that these women are doing great things, so pay attention.”

Pay attention, we did. As the room thundered with applause and the sounds of clinked glasses, our first course arrived. Prepared by Anderson, this bright, light dish of raw fluke (a mild fish similar to flounder) was an elegant beginning.

The fish sat atop a delicate soup of carrot juice, dill, nigella and kumquat and served as a subtle lead-in to the heartier dishes ahead. It was paired with dry English champagne, the Gusbourne Brut Blanc de Blancs, which offered a gentle mix of sweet and bubbly.

Kumar cooked a spicy carrot-glazed lamb belly with olive-oil-poached potatoes, pickled spring vegetables and crispy grains. Despite my usual aversion to lamb, this was my favorite dish of the night. It was paired perfectly with the highly drinkable Flotsam & Jetsam Cinsault (a light red with notes of pear and a peppery finish that balanced the gaminess of the lamb). Everyone at my table delighted over the food and the all-women crowd. We were especially thrilled to see that our serving staff was predominately male (I only noticed one female server).

Norris came next and showed off her flair for pickling and aging with her delicious plate of pressed and shaved pork, served with fermented Texas black beans, shrimp oil and tomato. As Norris discussed the multistep process of preparing the pork (it was braised, pressed, fried, shaved and



Rachael Roberts, owner of The Atomic Lounge, takes a break from cocktail shaking in the luxe Connoisseur Lounge.

slow-cooked), I marveled at the texture (akin to salmon) and the flavors packed into the thin slices of protein.

As we reached the end of the meal, Huff presented our final course, Peaches and Cream with bay laurel sabayon (a light Italian sauce made with egg yolks and sugar) over a gingersnap crumble. Known for producing savory desserts, this woman spoke my food language. Salty, sweet, crumbly and served in a generous portion, I only wish I had more room to polish this off. It was paired with Broadbent Madeira from Portugal, a tropical and saccharine wine that never goes bad.

With the meal now at a close, we thanked the chefs and said goodbye to one another. Clutching my Maker's Mark keepsake—the letter to myself firmly sealed inside—I walked out into the summer night feeling satiated, happy and hopeful.

atlfoodandwinefestival.com

Curry Leaf Pickled Shrimp

Recipe by Cheetie Kumar, Chef/Owner, Garland Restaurant

Yield: 4-6 appetizer/ hors d'oeuvres servings

- 2 tablespoons plus 1/3 cup red wine vinegar, divided
salt as needed
- 2 medium local/organic carrots, peeled and julienned in long strands
- 1 stalk celery, julienned on bias
- 2 pounds fresh domestic shrimp, unpeeled
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin coconut oil
- 1/4 cup canola or grapeseed oil
- 1 sprig fresh curry leaves, removed from stem (about 6 leaves)
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 3 wide strips lemon zest (no white pith)
- cilantro leaves to taste for garnish
- crusty bread or any crunchy chip for serving

Assemble all ingredients before beginning. In a non-reactive stainless pot, bring 2 to 3 quarts water to a boil. Add 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar and pinch of salt to water. Add carrots and cook for about 1 minute. Add celery and immediately strain vegetables and put in a mixing bowl, reserving hot water used to blanch

vegetables. Put water back in pot and bring back up to boil. Add shrimp and cook for about 2 minutes until just pink, not cooked all the way through. Strain shrimp and discard water.

Peel and devein shrimp while still warm (but cool enough to handle) and put in a separate mixing bowl. In a small saute pan, heat oils and once hot, add curry leaves, being careful to tilt pan away from you as leaves will splatter. After about 20 to 30 seconds, add cayenne pepper and immediately add lemon juice, zest and remaining 1/3 cup vinegar. Bring to a quick simmer and take off heat. Let cool for about 15 minutes and strain, discarding solids. Pour enough marinade over shrimp to just cover and remainder over vegetables in mixing bowl. Stir contents of both bowls. Let shrimp marinate for 10 to 15 minutes maximum or until "cooked through" (they will be opaque). Let carrots and celery continue to marinate.

This dish is best shortly after it's made, served at room temperature. Combine shrimp and vegetables and garnish with cilantro. Serve with crusty bread or any crunchy chip of your choice.



PHOTO: RAFTERMEN/AFWE

Maggie Huff, Cheetie Kumar, Alba Huerta, Dominique Love, Cappie Peete, Brittanny Anderson and Misti Norris pose after a successful dinner.

CELEBRATING CHEFS AND SERVERS

ATLANTA'S 30TH ANNUAL TASTE OF THE NATION FOR NO KID HUNGRY

More than 1,400 of Atlanta's well-heeled residents gathered to feast for a cause at the Cobb Galleria Centre. Guests noshed on dishes prepared by more than 50 of the city's top culinary talents, bid on silent and live beverage auctions, sampled wines and enjoyed live entertainment (including performances by aerialists and a bubble dancer!). All proceeds from the night went toward No Kid Hungry's efforts to end childhood hunger locally and nationwide. Local beneficiaries included Atlanta Community Food Bank, Our House, Inc. and Open Hand Atlanta. The night raised money to provide more than eight million meals to children in need.

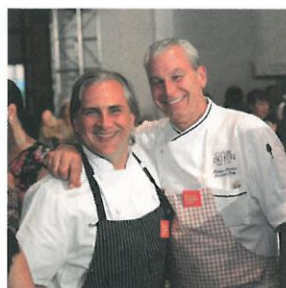
Leading this year's event were No Kid Hungry founding chairman Pano Karatassos, founder and CEO of Buckhead Life Restaurant Group, and co-chairman George McKerrow, president and CEO of Ted's Montana Grill. Alton Brown served as the event's honorary chef and Jenn Hobby, Jeff Dauler and Christine Pullara emceed the event. Learn more about this annual event at nokidhungry.org.



John Metz; Debbie Shore; and Pano, Niko and Pano I. Karatassos celebrate another successful fundraiser for No Kid Hungry.



(above) Justin Anthony, Philippe Haddad, Scott Strumlauf and Mitch Flowers pose for a quick pic; (above right) award-winning chefs Pano I. Karatassos and Philippe Haddad were among the night's all-star lineup; (right) Jim Newton, Christine Pullara and Michael Dellaporta at Taste of the Nation.



Henry Calderon, Devika Rao and Jennifer Bodnar take a break among the Tasting Tents at the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival.

ATLANTA FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL

Throngs of foodies and award-winning chefs gathered in Midtown the last weekend of May for the eighth annual Atlanta Food & Wine Festival. Among the festival's highlights were 70 food, beverage and cooking classes; book signings; 10 dinners and events at locations citywide (read about the Powerful & Delicious dinner on page 48); more than 200 food and beverage stars; and the Southern tasting smorgasbord held at the Tasting Tents at Piedmont Park's Greensward Promenade.

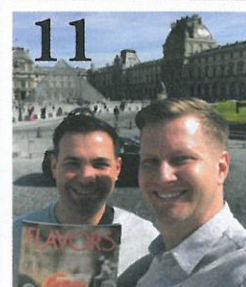
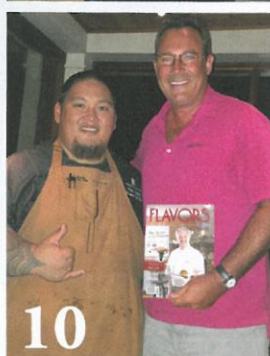
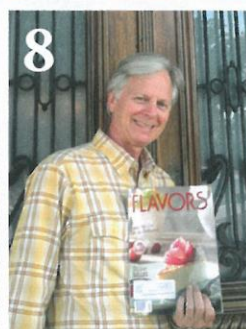
The festival kicked off with the Destination Delicious party on Thursday night at the Stave Room at American Spirit Works featuring live music, food and drink from 12 regional states. By Friday, heavy rain descended on Atlanta, turning the Greensward Promenade muddy. Despite less than ideal weather, it didn't deter festivalgoers—or visiting chefs—from enjoying the festivities. With many clad in rain boots, visitors explored 94 exhibitor booths as well as a cocktail garden, a Connoisseur Tent and a Southern Marketplace (selling goods and homeware).

The Atlanta Food & Wine Festival was launched in 2010 by Dominique Love and Elizabeth Feichter to put an international focus on the rich heritage of food and beverage in the southern United States. Recently, the festival introduced an all-female advisory council populated with 60 award-winning culinary talents from across the South.

Learn more about this annual event and plan for 2019 at atlfoodandwinefestival.com.

SHOW US YOUR FLAVORS

FLAVORS HAS TRAVELED ALL OVER THE WORLD. OUR READERS SHOW US THAT READING FLAVORS IS ALWAYS IN GOOD TASTE.



1. Colman and Nancy Goodrich, Caitlin Virgil and Garrett Mutz enjoy dinner with a side of *Flavors* at Obica restaurant in New York City.
2. Food writer Jennifer Bradley Franklin and Chef Abraham Salum (featured in the summer issue of *Flavors*) pose in front of his eponymous restaurant in Dallas.
3. At the opening of Flower Child restaurant at The Shops Around Lenox, Tracy McGinnis, director of marketing, takes time to read *Flavors*.
4. Decatur residents Krista and Liesel Gilliam (and their dog, Bear) lounge with *Flavors* on Ontario's Georgian Bay.
5. Eno, Kaden and Mackenzie Powell pose with *Flavors* in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.
6. Kevin and Trish Powell take a break from the tasting tents at the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival.
7. Chip Colson reads *Flavors* while vacationing in Manasota Key, Florida.
8. Jeff S. Barganier returned home to find the new issue of *Flavors* after a trip to Cumberland Island.
9. John Wilkins III, of Cafe Lily, posed with the summer issue after winning the second annual Waiters' Race Atlanta.
10. Maui Chef of the Year Alvin Savella and Steve Gibson show us their *Flavors* at The Banyan Tree restaurant at The Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua.
11. *Flavors* traveled with Henry Calderon and Don Bodnar outside of the Louvre Museum in Paris.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Send us a picture of yourself holding an issue of *Flavors* during your travel for possible publication in the magazine. For print submission, email your high resolution images (jpegs) to info@flavorsmagazine.com. Be sure to include your name, contact info and a brief description with your submission. Join in the fun on Instagram by tagging us in your photos with @flavorsmagazine and using the hashtag #ShowUsYourFlavors. Happy reading and safe travels!