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NOVEMBER 2010
SKY CELEBRATES ATLANTA

[editorial]



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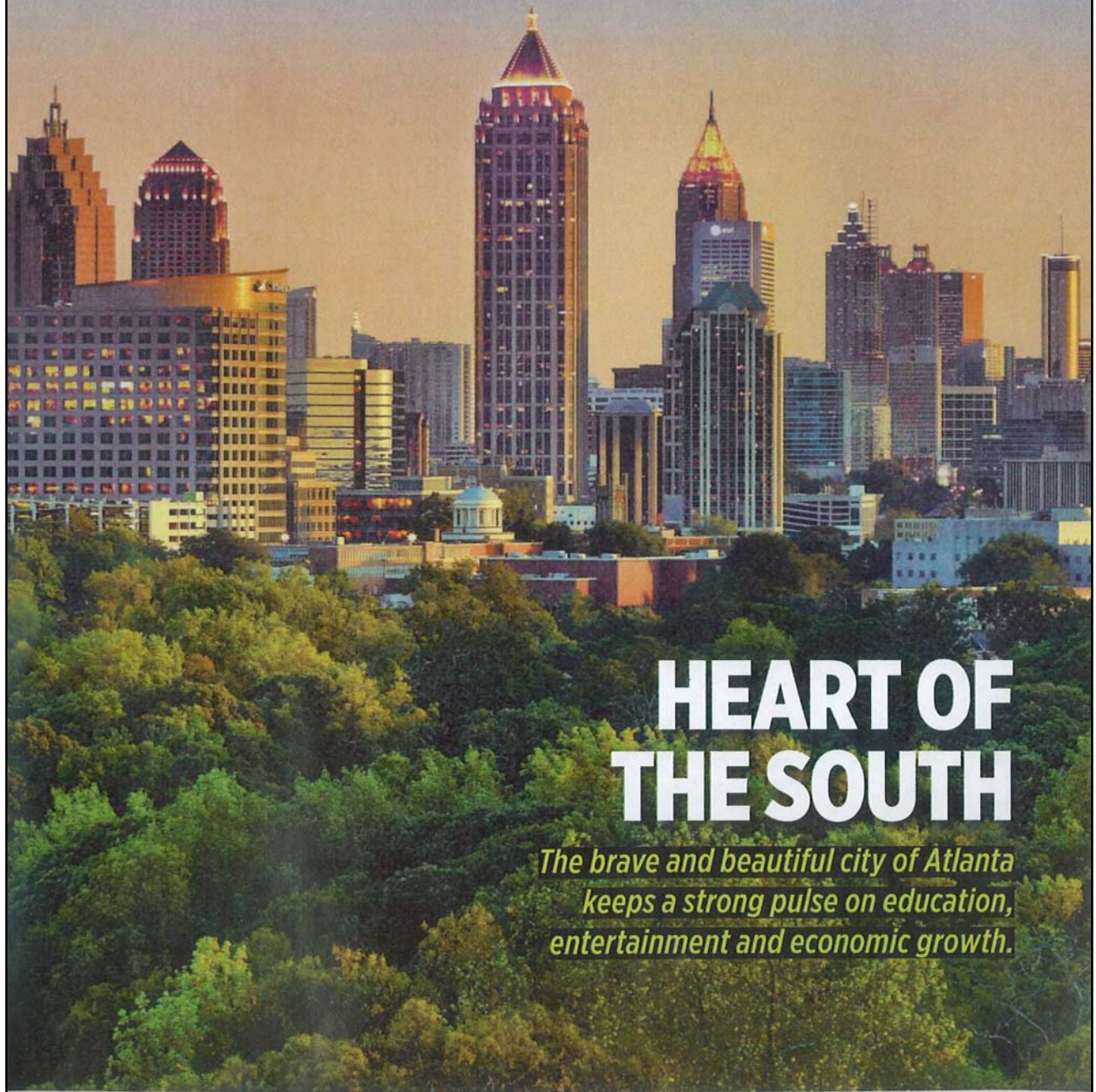
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PROFILE:

Atlanta



HEART OF THE SOUTH

*The brave and beautiful city of Atlanta
keeps a strong pulse on education,
entertainment and economic growth.*

[editorial]



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Miller Union

By Giannina Smith

As the organic food industry grows, Atlanta's Southern chefs are getting back to basics and putting a greater emphasis on quality farm-fresh fare. Working to get food straight from the farm to the restaurant and onto the table as quickly as possible, chefs and farmers are forging closer relationships.

"Talented chefs use skill to make dishes, but the ones who go above and beyond are sourcing food that is above and beyond as well," says Michael Wall of Georgia Organics, a non-profit group that promotes healthy, local, sustainable food. "It's not just about what is done in the kitchen; it's about what's done out in the field."

In the last five years, there has been a 608 percent increase in farmer's markets in Georgia. Georgia Organics' annual conference, where chefs mingle with organic farmers, also has grown from 150 attendees in 2004 to 1,300 in 2010. As a result, the restaurant scene is abounding with farm-to-table eateries, many which are gaining national acclaim.

Miller Union, recently named one of the "10 Best New Restaurants in America" by *Bon Appétit*, is a prime example. Executive chef and COO Steven Satterfield creates his menu based on what is in season and available for harvest: Items pay homage to their farms of origin, such as a farm egg baked in Johnston Family Dairy Farm's fresh cream or Fudge Family Farms' heritage pork, house-made sausages, terrines and pork belly. In addition to individual growers, almost all of Miller Union's produce is supplied by green markets, farm co-ops, employee home gardens and even the

restaurant's patio planters.

"Southern cooking seems to be experiencing a renaissance right now with the farm-to-table movement," says Satterfield. "Chefs and consumers are replacing factory-farmed foods that are still currently available to everyone every day with local foods that have character and meaning to them."

A long-time champion of fresh, seasonal fare is chef-owner Anne Quatrano, whose six Atlanta restaurants get many ingredients from her own Summerland Farm in Cartersville, Georgia. The changing menus at Bacchanalia and Quinones at Bacchanalia are based on using ingredients at the peak of the season, and new restaurant Abattoir ensures it doesn't waste any part of the animal by freshly butchering whole fowl, fish, beef and pork to provide "nose-to-tail" dining.

"Abattoir features dishes redolent of head cheese, [offal], feet and tongue," Quatrano says. "Our tripe

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Farm to Cart

Our Food Cart Fave: Westside Creamery's truck (westsidecreamery.com) frequents the Piedmont Park Green Market and occasional festivals, churning up ice creams and sorbets with local ingredients and milk from Georgia cows. Salted butter caramel, mint sweet tea and other flavors are scooped into a cup or cone or stuffed between homemade cookies, satisfying the ice cream lover and tree hugger all in one.

stew, potted chicken liver and chicharrones are all popular dishes that emphasize sustainability."

Quatrano's Star Provisions market also helps patrons take the farm-to-table concept home, offering organic grass-fed beef, free-range cold-processed poultry and Georgia grown organic produce.

"We need to be aware of where our food comes from and how it is grown, produced and raised," Quatrano says. "Not only does a ripe tomato picked at its peak of freshness taste better than one that was picked too early then shipped a thousand miles, but buying local foods helps our farmers who are using organic methods instead of covering their fields with pesticides we then ingest. For me, it is not a task—it is just the right thing to do—procure the best ingredients at the peak of their goodness and

serve it to our guests."

Jay Swift, chef-owner of 4th & Swift, says the flavors and textures of fresh food can be compromised between harvest and mealtime, due to long-distance transportation and chemical treatments. As a result, he spends about 60 to 80 percent of his restaurant's meat and produce budget buying goods from local farms. 4th & Swift also has a small organic herb and vegetable garden on-site and uses seafood caught wild from Georgia, Florida and the Carolina coasts.

"The essence of the farm-to-table movement is to bring food in its most perfect and pristine state from its origin to the marketplace or restaurant," Swift says.

Bringing together select produce from 20 different farms, Woodfire Grill often gets daily deliveries to ensure the finished meal is as newly picked as pos-

sible. The restaurant even sources wild salmon from the Quinault Indian tribe. "It comes direct from Native American fishermen known for their stewardship of the land," says chef Kevin Gillespie.

For many of these restaurants, the idea of sustainability goes beyond the food served. Judith Winfrey, director of hospitality and fruition at Restaurant Eugene and manager of the East Atlanta Village Farmers Market, says responsibility to the community is a big part of the puzzle. "We are a sustainable restaurant, because we are constantly working on creating and improving the systems that strengthen our community," Winfrey says. "Part of that community is our community of farms. Nearly all of our produce and our proteins come directly from the hands of a farmer we know." *

FIVE TO TRY

Here are five noteworthy restaurants where you can sample some tasty, locally grown fare.

4th & Swift



4th & Swift

What to order: The salad of local heirloom tomatoes from Dillwood Farms in Loganville, Georgia, topped off with Sweet Grass Dairy goat cheese from Thomasville and microgreens from Ashland Farms in Conyers. 4thandswift.com

Bacchanalia

What to order: Wood-grilled Georgia white shrimp with heirloom tomato, local cucumber, crème fraîche and Summerland Farm lemon thyme. starprovisions.com

Miller Union

What to order: Darby Farms pastured chicken griddled with olive oil and served with seasonal vegetables. millerunion.com



Restaurant Eugene

Restaurant Eugene

What to order: Lamb from Border Springs Farm in Virginia and the vegetable plate, featuring glazed turnips, roasted potatoes, cherry tomatoes, sweet-and-sour eggplant, creamed peas, roasted peppers and more. restauranteugene.com

Woodfire Grill

What to order: Berkshire pork loin, served with seasonal vegetables such as roasted African squash, roasted okra, black lentils and cucumber raita. woodfiregrill.com

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