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SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER 2017

O'YEAH

*Bobby Hebert interviews
LSU Head Coach Ed Orgeron*

We're Hungry For
FOOTBALL

*Tailgating with
LSU, OLE MISS,
AUBURN,
MISSISSIPPI STATE,
UL AND MORE*

HIDDEN JIMS

*In the Saints broadcast booth
with Jim Henderson*

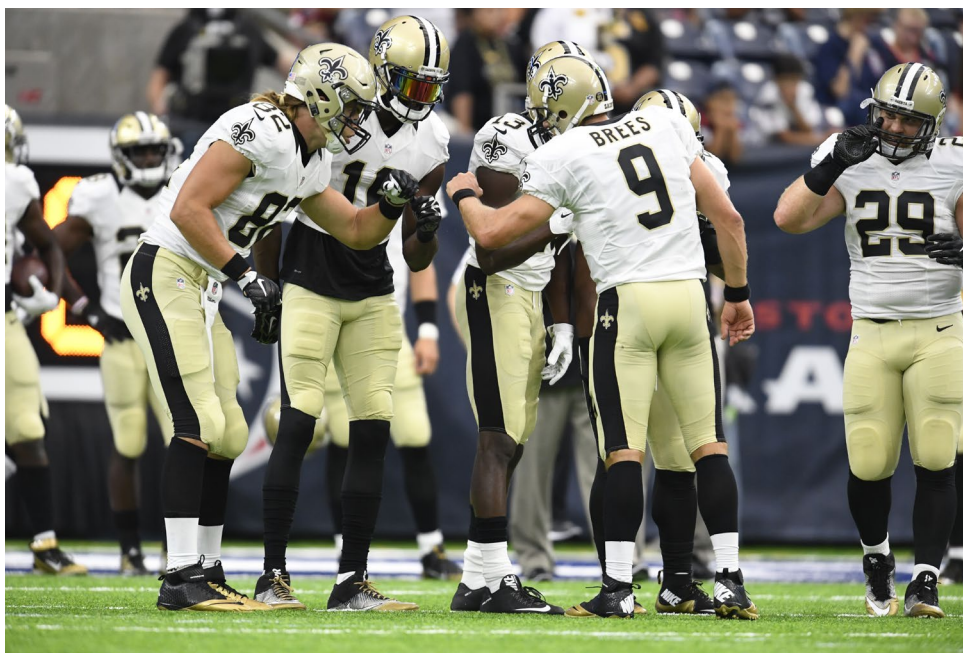
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I'm thrilled to let you know that we've teamed up with the New Orleans Saints!

If you're not from around here, it's hard to explain just how much the Saints mean to the Gulf Coast. The Saints are the only professional football franchise on the Gulf Coast. Pennsylvania, Ohio and Texas each have two teams. New York and Florida each have three. California has four — two of which play in Los Angeles.

On the Gulf Coast, we're just one team — the Saints.

Even in Baton Rouge and Tuscaloosa — where college football naturally dominates discussions — Sundays are reserved for the Saints. In cities and towns all across our region, from Houma to Lafayette and Gonzales to Gulf Shores, loyal Saints fans are glued to the TV set, and often tailgating outside the Dome, on gameday.

My family has always had season tickets to the Saints. I'm not ashamed to tell you I got goose bumps the first time I saw the team come out of the tunnel. As a lifelong fan and local business owner, I'm very proud to be an official sponsor.

And, we've come up with some exciting promotions to celebrate our sponsorship. Look for in-game contests and in-store sweepstakes — including the chance to win a fly away trip to Atlanta for the Saints vs. Atlanta Falcons game! We also have a variety of promotions from your favorite brands including the Coca-Cola Cash Catch, making it even more fun to root for the Black & Gold.

If you're in that number on gameday, our Downtown New Orleans store is right smack in the middle of all the excitement — literally blocks away from all the action in the Superdome. We're open 6am to midnight every day. So stop by to get hot food, cold beer and a pre-game Bloody Mary on gameday.

Here's to a great season!

Donny Rouse, CEO
3rd Generation

➤ On the Cover

Rouses Buffalo Chicken Wings pg. 44
Photo by Romney Caruso

• • •

HAIL MARYS

LSU TIGERS

It's easy to find a great Bloody Mary in Baton Rouge to get pumped up for the big game, with great spots to choose from like Mason's, The Chimes, Sammy's Grill, and Walk-On's.

Rouses is a Proud Partner LSU Athletics.

NICHOLLS STATE COLONELS

Coach Tim Rebowe is doing good things for the Colonels, and fans are showing their support on gameday. Stop at Spahr's Seafood, self-proclaimed home of "the best Bloody Mary," for a gallon to go, or hit up Peppers Pizzeria for a Bloody Boudreaux with Honey Baked Sauce (both have Downtown Thibodaux locations) before Colonels kickoff.

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UL RAGIN' CAJUNS

I'm a UL alum, and at least once a year my college friends and I head back to Lafayette to tailgate at Cajun Field, which is across the street from our market on Bertrand Drive. When I man the Bloody Mary bar, I stick with Zing Zang, vodka and ice. With Zing Zang, you don't need any extras.

Rouses is a Proud Sponsor UL Football.



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> **Mr. Benson is brewing up a winning season!**

The owner of the New Orleans Saints is bringing beloved Dixie back home to New Orleans and stocking up on it at Rouses. Cheers to Dixie Beer!

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—Esther, Rouses Registered Dietitian

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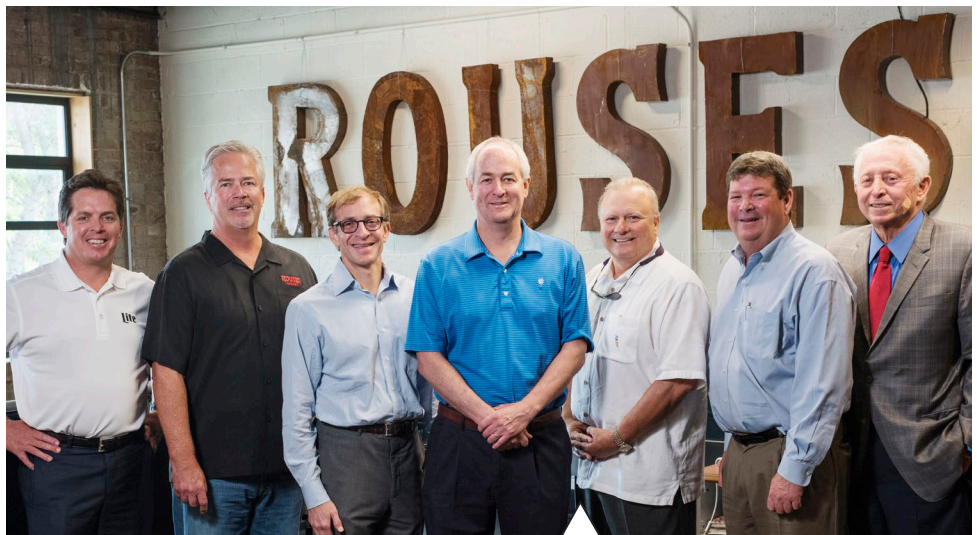
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(Left to Right) James Moffett, Jr., President & CEO, Crescent Crown Distributing; Steve Black, President & COO, Rouses Markets; Jeffrey Goldring, Director, Sazerac Company; Gavin Hattersley, CEO, MillerCoors; Donald Rouse, COB, Rouses Markets; Kevin Doyle, President, Sales and Distributor Operations, MillerCoors; Bill Goldring, COB, Sazerac Company. Photo by Ryan Hodgson-Rigsbee

When Chef Leah Chase says something, people pay attention. Last July, Henry Amato, a winemaker in Independence, Louisiana, read a profile of Ms. Chase in *My Rouses Everyday*, in which she mentioned her father's homemade white strawberry wine. Amato is famous for his dry, semi-sweet and sweet red strawberry wine, which Rouses sells. White strawberry wine is made with first-of-the-season strawberries that still have white centers. Amato smelled a challenge! Just over a year after the profile appeared, Amato presented Ms. Chase with two cases of white strawberry wine — the only two cases of it he produced. “Somebody stole my daddy's recipe,” Ms. Chase laughed after trying the wine. “I don't know how you got it, but you got it.” And that, says Amato, “is the biggest compliment I have ever received in my whole life.”

*Chef Leah Chase at Dooky Chase's.
Photo by Ryan Hodgson-Rigsbee*

In-Store Events

There's always something new and fun on our schedule, from classes and demos taught by our chefs to private dinners pairing food, wine and spirits. Visit our newly redesigned website at www.rouses.com to see what events are going on in your neighborhood.

Cooking Classes

In the September cooking classes Chef Nino shares his spin on a tailgate tradition. Pastalaya is like jambalaya but made with pasta instead of rice. For more information visit www.rouses.com/in-store/events/.

Kids Cooking Classes

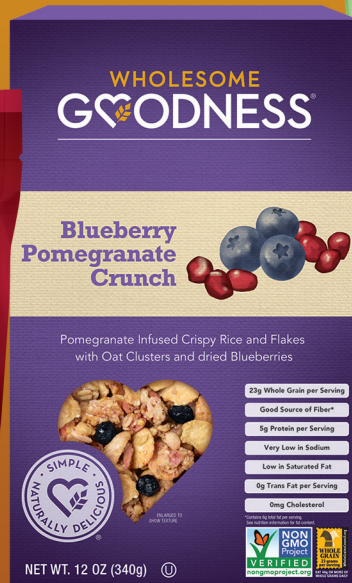
During September Rouses Chef Sally teaches your little chef how to make ham, turkey and veggie wraps with homemade hummus and fruit sushi. For more information and ticket purchase visit www.rouses.com/in-store/events/.

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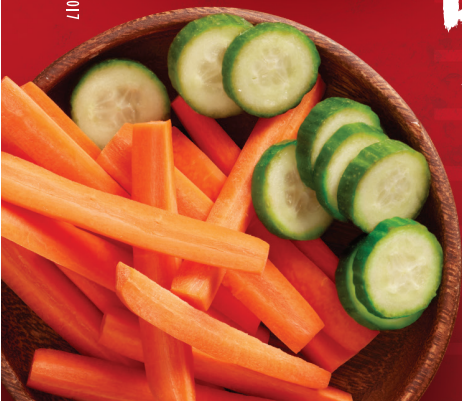
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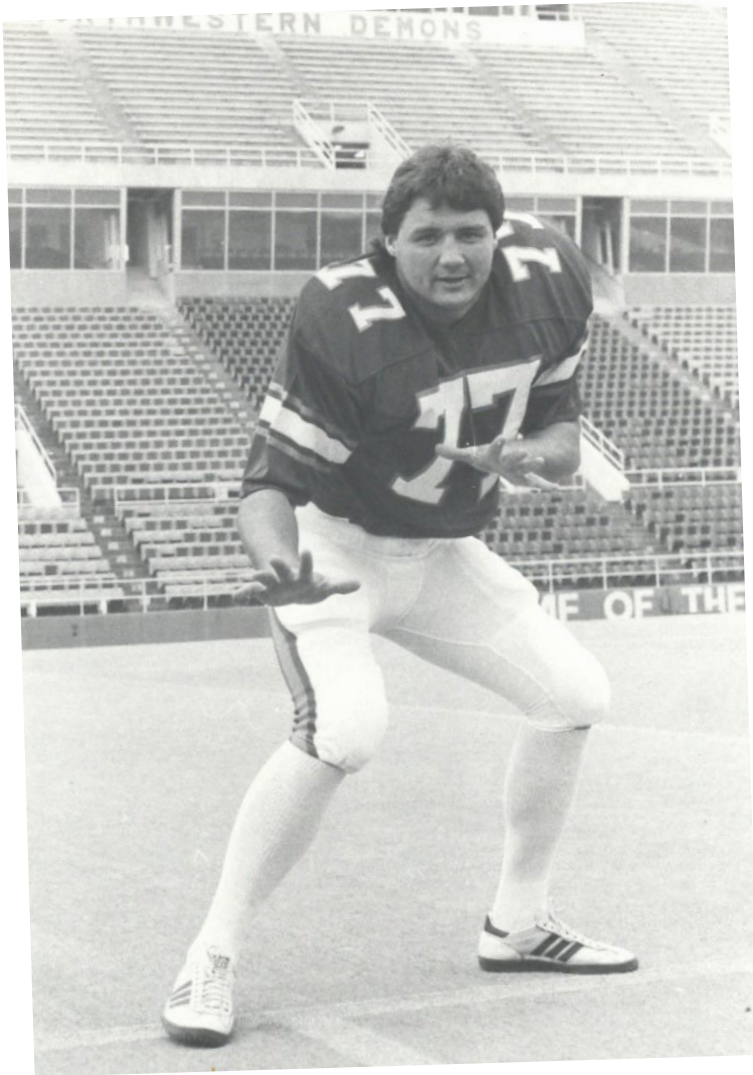
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O'Yeah

Former Saints Quarterback Bobby Hebert talks to LSU Head Coach Ed Orgeron

Bobby Hebert, the future Cajun Cannon, first played football with his friend Ed Orgeron in high school more than 40 years ago. Together, the pair brought home a state title for the South Lafourche High Tarpons in 1977. Later, they were teammates again, at Northwestern State in Natchitoches, LA, where they also roomed together. Hebert, of course, went on to play quarterback for the New Orleans Saints. After a long career in collegiate and professional football, including a stint as the Saints' defensive line coach, Orgeron was named Head Coach at LSU in 2016. Decades after the two veteran athletes first met, they got together to shoot the breeze about Cajun accents, Grandma's white beans with bell peppers, and a life's worth of lessons from the football field.



BOBBY: I gotta address one thing, first off: People say you have an accent. You're from Larose. I'm from Cut Off. I don't think you have an accent.

COACH O: I'm proud of this Cajun accent.

BOBBY: They think it's thick now, Bé Bé — they shoulda heard you back in the day!

COACH O: Both of our accents are *nothing* compared to what they were. You listen to someone from South Lafourche, it's like they're from another country.

BOBBY: I can't speak Cajun French, but you can.

COACH O: My parents taught me. I remember, when I went to college, I was going to take French. I thought, oh, *I know* French already. But Cajun French is not true French. It's a spoken language as opposed to something that's written down. Guys invent words. If this word sounds a little like a true French word, we think we're good.

BOBBY: When you go down the bayou you can hold conversations. You can talk to my dad in Cajun French.

COACH O: One thing about Cajuns, everyone has a nickname ... Bobby J. Your son is T-Bob. I'm Bé Bé.

BOBBY: I'm not sure people know we are cousins.

COACH O: My dad and your grandma were first cousins — down the bayou, you have a lot of cousins.

BOBBY: You think about where they grew up. Back then, you got maybe four or five choices for who you gonna marry. If it's not your first or second cousin, well then, alright.

BOBBY: We played on the same South Lafourche High School football team. We brought home a state title for the Tarpons in 1977. Bé Bé, what do you remember most about when we were in high school, the year we won the championship?

COACH O: The team. The character of the team and how we all came together. We had some tough players. We had great coaches. We had great assistant coaches. We had Coach Bourgeois and Gribbuoy — and Roland Boudreau, the offensive line coach.

BOBBY: He was actually married to my dad's sister.

COACH O: Playing for South Lafourche was an honor. Didn't you think so? It was a big deal to play for Coach Ralph Pere.

BOBBY: If you played for the Tarpons, you were expected to win District. Then it was, what can you do in the playoffs? Can you get past the Catholic league?

COACH O: Senior year was your first turn at quarterback. One thing about you — and I mention this to all of my quarterbacks — you did everything with a smile, but you could chew a guy's ass out if he wasn't blocking right. Everyone respected you.

BOBBY: State championship, it's 4th and 17 ...

COACH O: You threw it to Daryll Reynolds. Daryll tipped it, it hit a defender from Bonnabel, and Scott Bouzigard, he's on his knees in the end zone and he catches the ball. *HE CATCHES THE BALL.*

BOBBY: We're tied 20-20.



▲ [PAGE 8] No. 77 Ed Orgeron, Northwestern State [LEFT] LSU Head Coach Ed Orgeron – Photo credit Advocate photographer Hilary Scheinuk [RIGHT] Bobby Hebert

“When I walk into Tiger Stadium and I see that ‘Welcome to Death Valley,’ I feel connected to every person in that stadium. One team, one heartbeat. This is home. There’s a bigger responsibility. I want to represent the people of Louisiana the best way I can.”

—Coach O

COACH O: Here comes “Big Foot” Keith Crosby ... I played right tackle, he came in as the tight end. Now look, this guy took a pirogue to school. His foot was as wide as it was long! I loved this guy. Well, Big Foot, he’s hooting and hollering, ‘Woooooh! We’re gonna win the game.’ I said, ‘Big Foot, step down!’ ‘Woooooh.’ I said, ‘Big Foot, step down!’ ‘Woooooh, we’re gonna win the game.’ He didn’t step down. Steve Deery steps over my leg and blocks the extra point. The ball rolls over the cross bar, and we win the game.

BOBBY: Two miracle plays.

BOBBY: When I was in 9th grade, I was 5 foot 8, 115 pounds. Then all of a sudden I’m like 6 foot 2, 190 in three years. Bé Bé, you were a man at 15 years old. You were starting on varsity for three years. You were the only 10th grader who played on varsity.

COACH O: I played offense and defense. I never got off the field.

BOBBY: You were recruited by LSU from Day One. Me, I was just trying to get a scholarship. I was lucky we won State and the recruiter from Northwestern saw me. So you go to LSU, and it doesn’t work out, and you end up with me at Northwestern.

COACH O: I was digging ditches for Latelco (Lafourche Telephone Company) when you called me. I went because I knew you’d show me the ropes.

BOBBY: We lived together in the football dorm. I was a great roommate. I used to wake you up for class.

COACH O: Your grandmother would come for these games and she’d bring us white beans with some bell peppers in it. Big chunks of bell peppers on some white beans. God, that was good!

BOBBY: That was my Grandma Birdie, my dad’s mom ... Your dad and Mangus Arceneaux would come and celebrate and have like a *boucherie* on campus at Northwestern. Everyone wanted to be a part of it.

COACH O: We brought South Louisiana to Natchitoches. They loved it.

BOBBY: Then, senior year, you break your arm.

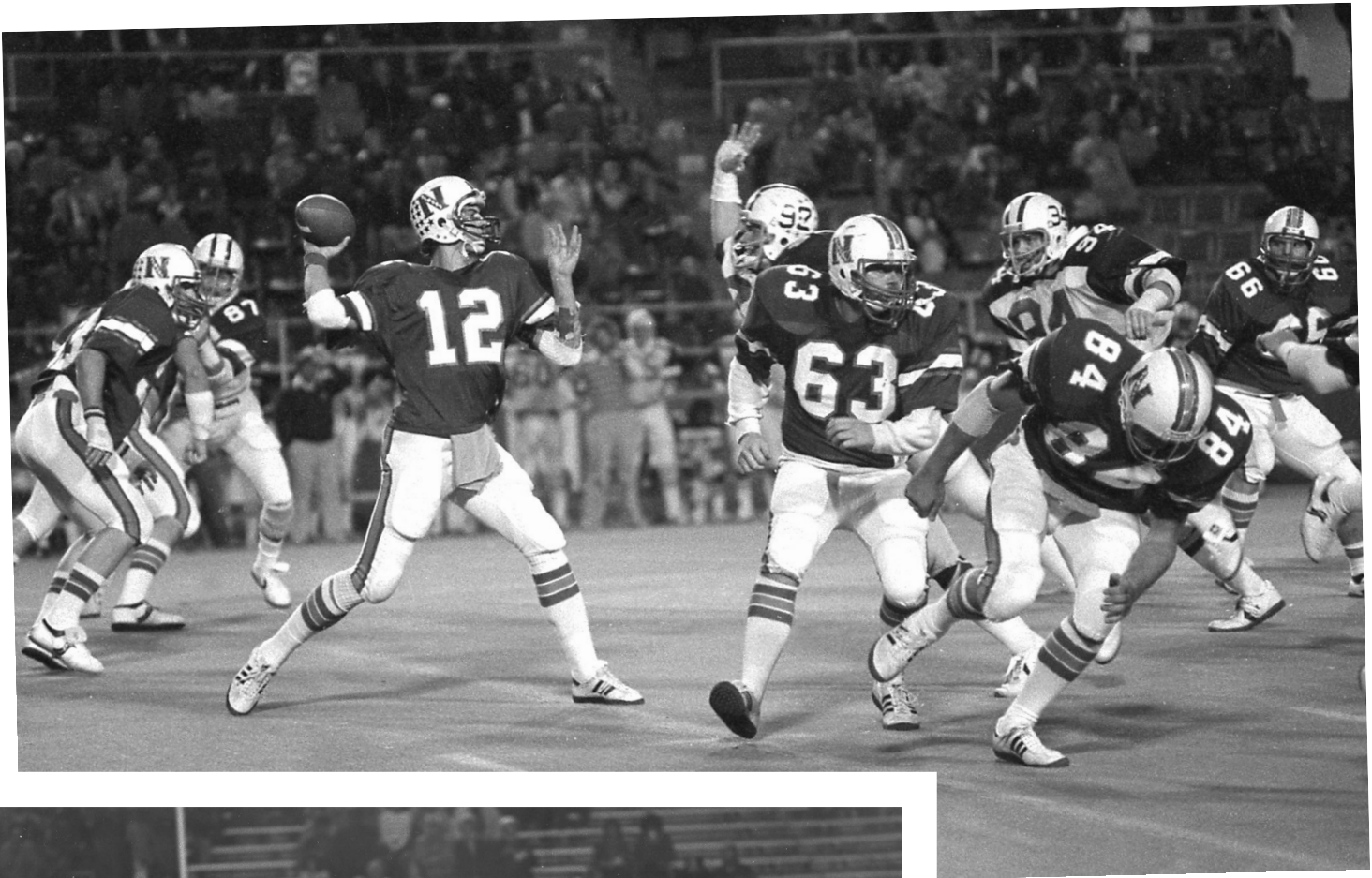
COACH O: The next day I became a graduate assistant coach.

BOBBY: After Northwestern, you went to McNeese State with Bill Johnson, who’d also been a GA at Northwestern. He was the defensive line coach at McNeese ...

COACH O: He was the defensive line coach for the Saints for eight years, too.

BOBBY: After you left McNeese, you went to Arkansas. There was a pause in there, though ...

COACH: I was actually shoveling shrimp in Grand Isle at Johnny’s Shrimp Shed and the phone rang. Someone yelled ‘Bé Bé, you got a call from Arkansas.’ It was Brad Scott, who I was GA with at Northwestern. He said, ‘Hey man, do you want the assistant strength coach job here at Arkansas?’ I said, ‘Hold on.’ I had my shrimp boots on. I had a shovel. Pshhhhh, I threw the shovel in the bayou. I said, ‘Hell yeah, I’m coming, man — just give me the directions!’ I lived in the dorm. I made \$25 every two weeks. The first time I went down to the cafeteria and saw white gravy, I said, ‘What’s that?’ and someone said, ‘Oh, that’s gravy.’ And I said, ‘No it’s not, gravy is brown.’ I was GA for a year. I coached the six technique. I coached Wayne Martin, who became All-Pro with the Saints.



▲ [TOP] No. 12 Bobby Hebert, Northwestern State
[LEFT] No. 77 Ed Orgeron, Northwestern State

‘speak to Bill?’ and he said, ‘Bill just got a job at Louisiana Tech.’ I said, ‘Y’all got a GA job open?’ He asked me if I wanted it and I said, ‘Hell yeah.’ I’d met him one time. He knew me through Bill. Pssssssh, down to Miami I went. How ’bout that?

BOBBY: How hard is the transition from assistant to head coach? Everybody wants to be a head coach. You should aspire to that. Now, sometimes, it doesn’t work out like that. You look at Wade Phillips; he’s Bums son, he’s an outstanding defensive coordinator, I think a Hall of Fame defensive coordinator, but maybe not a head coach. You got the head coach job at Ole Miss ...

BOBBY: How did you end up at Miami?

COACH O: Miami had just won the championship and I was home, getting ready to go back to Arkansas. I called somebody in Arkansas to pick me up, and they said, ‘Don’t come, it’s snowing.’ So I’m sitting around and I think, let me call Bill Johnson. So I called Miami. Tommy Tuberville answered the phone, and I said, ‘May I

COACH O: I learned this aggressive, get-after-it style of coaching at Miami. I brought that to USC and Pete Carroll loved it. And we had a lot of success with it. I was the hard-ass on the staff. Then I go to Ole Miss and I try it as head coach. You can’t do it as the head coach. You can’t coach the quarterback like I coached Warren Sapp. You can’t coach the wide receiver. But I did. And you can’t coach the staff like that. It’s just too hard.

BOBBY: What else did you learn from Ole Miss, and your time as head coach at USC?

COACH O: Two things: The players need to know you care about them. If they don't think you care about them and it's all about you, you don't stand a chance. So I wanted to make sure the players knew I cared about them. Second thing, I let the coaches coach their positions. If we have a big meeting tomorrow on how I expect you to coach your position, how I expect you to manage your position, that's the only time I'm going to discuss it; after that, I won't talk about it again.

BOBBY: In other words, have the confidence in their ability and delegate authority because you trust them.

COACH O: I thought when I went to Ole Miss I could hire coaches and I could develop them. But coaches in college, they feel like they've arrived and they're good at what they do, so you've got to let them do it.

BOBBY: You learned some of that from Sean Payton.

COACH O: I was with the Saints the year before they went to the Super Bowl. Sean Payton let us coach. Everyone was the manager of his position. And everyone was held accountable.

BOBBY: You're obviously considered one of the most successful recruiters of the past three decades. I know one thing: When you're talking to a family, you'd better convince that momma that you're looking out for her son.

COACH O: It's identifying the champion, and the champion is the decision maker. And I recruit them harder than I recruit the recruit. A lot of times, it's as you say — it's the momma. Other times, it's the trainer, or the dad, the coach, the uncle. I don't promise a bunch of stuff I can't deliver. I know what they want. They want education. They want the young men to be in good hands. They want them to play good football. They want them to have the chance to develop. I tell them: The way I take care of my three boys, that's the way I'll take care of yours.

BOBBY: Your momma, CoCo, is still taking care of you.

COACH O: My momma comes to my house and cooks a bunch. I'll say, 'Momma, make me a gumbo' — I love gumbo, I love anything with rice. The étouffées and the fricassées. Momma will say, 'I'll make a gumbo on Saturday and bring it to you on Sunday.' I'll walk in the kitchen, and it smells so good. She's got a gumbo, and all this other food, and she's baking some chicken in the oven. She'll say 'I just want you to have something to eat for the week.'

BOBBY: You cook pretty good.

COACH O: I try to emulate my mother, but I can't catch up. And you know she ain't gonna write down a recipe.

BOBBY: Tell me about your recipe for LSU. You overhauled the practice schedule during training camp, eliminating two-a-days.

COACH O: Two-a-days can crush a player like a soda can. Then that's what you're playing with. Me, I'm starting with shiny new cans. We meet, we have walk-throughs, the players go home and rest, then we have a full practice, then we watch the film after. We do that every day.

BOBBY: I remember training camp in Hammond; when it was over, we felt like we'd already played the season. Coach Mora now acknowledges that was a mistake.

COACH O: Two-a-days were invented to get players into shape. Now players train year-round. They start out in shape. There's no need.

BOBBY: You also shortened practices during the season.

COACH O: We went from three-hour practices to an hour-forty, maybe two hours. That's the way they practice in the NFL. And we move faster, too. There's no wasted time.

BOBBY: And every day has a theme.

COACH O: I learned that from Pete Carroll at USC. Monday is 'tell the truth Monday.' We look at the film. Here's what we've done. Here's what we need to do.

BOBBY: The big eye in the sky don't lie.

COACH O: Tuesday is 'competition Tuesday.' There's more individual work. We put our first-team offensive linemen up against our first-team defensive linemen. Wednesday is 'no turnovers for offense, turnovers for defense.' The emphasis is on the ball. Thursday is 'no repeats.' Friday is 'focus Friday.' Think about this: You're coaching 18- to 22-year-old young men. They've got a lot of things on their minds ... big games, tickets, girlfriends. I learned this from Pete Carroll. We have a meeting on Fridays, everybody's suited up. We have a walk-through, first. Then I get the drum. Everybody leans in a little and we beat a drum. It's the heartbeat. I let it go for about a minute. Everybody focuses in on the drum. We're together. I say, 'This is going to be the start of a great weekend for the LSU Tigers ... Special teams, ready? Defense, ready?'

BOBBY: We're both from Louisiana. We know what LSU means to the state.

COACH O: I know the way the LSU Tigers go, the way the Saints go, is the mood of the whole state on Monday morning.

BOBBY: Here you're from Louisiana and you know what LSU means to the state. Are you feeling the pressure or embracing the circumstances?

COACH O: I love it. I love the competition. I understand the expectations. You and I were born in Louisiana. We understand the expectations. You're expected to win. I've got the same expectation of myself.

BOBBY: I played in Michigan, I played in California, I played in Atlanta ... No matter what, there's nothing like playing for the Saints. I'm representing my community, not only yourself and your family!

COACH O: When I walk down that Tiger Walk, I feel connected. I didn't feel that at other schools. When I walk into Tiger Stadium, and I see that 'Welcome to Death Valley,' I feel connected to every person in that stadium. One team, one heartbeat. This is home. There's a bigger responsibility. I want to represent the people of Louisiana the best way I can. ■

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Chef John Currence

REBEL WITHOUT A PAUSE

by Pableaux Johnson

Chef John Currence loves a good party as much as anyone — maybe a little more — but when SEC Saturdays roll around, he's all about the game.

Home-game weekends in Oxford, Mississippi are renowned for their extravagance and fashion-forward fandom. High-dollar, pre-game parties sprout up in the University of Mississippi's picturesque quad known as The Grove. Late Friday nights, a small army of dedicated fans and specialized catering crews swarm the area and set up elaborate tent parties — complete with wide-screen TVs, full bars and chandeliers — under The Grove's towering oaks. Come morning, the area is packed with students, alumni and gawkers, all eager to see the fancy-dress gameday rituals and social events associated with the Ole Miss Rebels tailgate scene.

Currence — a New Orleans native, James

Beard Award-winning chef and dedicated fan of Ole Miss football — spends most of his time running his City Grocery Restaurant Group — four local restaurants, an event company, and an expanding network of Big Bad Breakfast (BBB) joints with locations in Birmingham and on Florida's Emerald Coast in addition to the Oxford BBB. In his spare time, he writes cookbooks (*Pickles, Pigs & Whiskey* and *Big Bad Breakfast*), has appeared on *Top Chef Masters*, and spearheads political activities in his adopted state.

But when he's watching *any* football game, he's focused on the field, and he believes that simplicity is the key to any tailgate, porch party or pre-game gathering.

It's clear you grew up as a football fan, but did you tailgate as a kid?

When I was growing up in New Orleans, Tulane Stadium was in the middle of my neighborhood. We didn't tailgate per se, but everybody who lived close to the stadium had house parties, so prior to the Saints or Tulane games we went to our neighbors' houses.

Oddly, though, my fondest memories of these parties were white cardboard cake boxes full of crustless finger sandwiches. There was a caterer who made these excellent chicken salad sandwiches, cucumber sandwiches and roast beef sandwiches. I would eat myself sick on those. Of course, guys fired up the grill and cooked hot dogs and burgers before the game as well. But I never forgot those finger sandwiches.

My first true tailgating exposure was in Virginia, when I went to a little school called Hampden-Sydney. It was a Division III school, so the majority of the seating for games wasn't even in stands. The football stadium was situated in a dell, and folks would park their cars on the road right next to the field, up at the top of the hill,

and literally drop the tailgates to their station wagons and just roll out their spreads. It was almost like a Norman Rockwell scene. These old, wood-sided station wagons with Igloo® coolers filled with beer, fried chicken, sandwiches and dishes like macaroni salad. That was my first real "tailgating" experience.

The Ole Miss tailgates are legendary in the SEC. Has it always been that way?

My very first memory of The Grove (years ago) is of folks still actually driving cars up to tailgate. They had places where they'd park year in and year out. You just had *your* tree that you'd park next to or under. Then there was a movement to remove the cars from The Grove because they were threatening the roots of the oaks. That's when people started setting up tents.

These days on a game Saturday there's easily 1,500 different parties out there. It's 14 acres of packed space. The Grove is just elbow to elbow; it's like Fat Harry's used to get in New Orleans on a Friday night.

The Grove can also be pretty overwhelming at times. When they march the band and the football team through The Grove, they have to block all the streets. Everything gets locked down.

It's gotten so crowded that it's spreading out from The Grove proper. Folks are setting up a little bit farther out from The Grove; you get to where there are green spaces available, like a quarter of a mile down the road. Folks are setting up by the baseball field or behind classroom buildings and dorms a little closer to the stadium. Just little small sorts of plots — 12 or 15, maybe 20 tents. It's a little more personal and intimate.

It's really taken on a bigger life. There's also so much fire control regulation in The Grove these days — you can't have any live-fire cooking, so the guys are finding other places they can go to pull their smokers up or set their grills out.

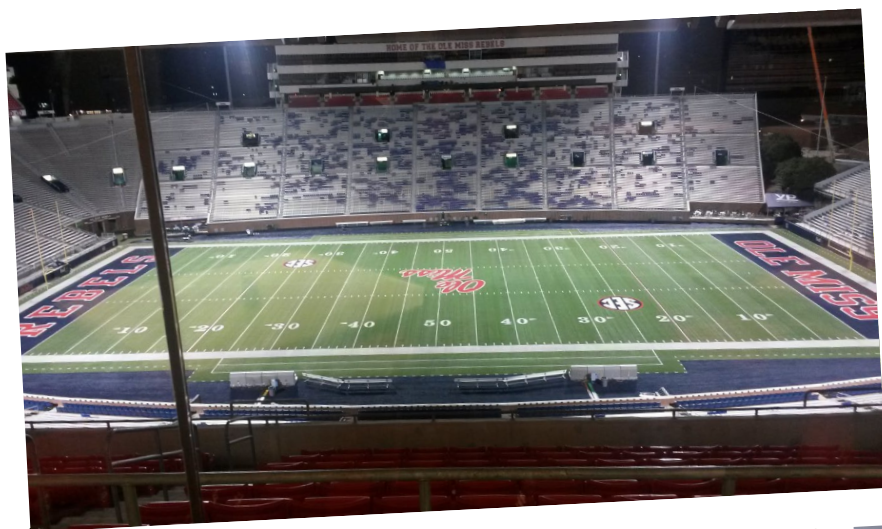
The tailgating scene at The Grove seems to have taken on a life of its own.

The Grove is such a spectacle that lots of times it's difficult to pry folks away from it. It's a very comfortable environment. It's filled with TV sets now. It's a very appealing sort of grotto to hunker down in.

There's an interesting tension between The Grove and the game. Ole Miss football has traditionally had a problem getting their fans



▲ Chef John Currence — Photo by Pableaux Johnson



out of The Grove and into the stands before the game starts. The stadium sort of fills up during the first quarter.

I've always been a firm believer that, in Oxford, we spend too much time focused on the party and not enough time focused on the game. I'm way too competitive to really enjoy The Grove, because all I'm doing is thinking about the game. It's not a social event, for me. All I do is talk about the game.

I think about it like that scene in *Braveheart*, where they're feasting before the battle. I'm like, "We've got to put on our battle gear. This isn't about smiling and being nice. We've got to fill our hearts with hate for the next three hours."

Do you like to cook on gameday?

I've traditionally been more of a guest. I've been involved in a couple of tent groups in the past, but I work the mornings of football games, so it's tough to do that *and* be a host

in a tent. I make it to every game, so I need to allow for that.

Over the years, we've started doing informal porch parties with our close friends and neighbors. If folks want to stop by, great. They can stop by and have a drink, grab something to eat, and then we lock the house and go to the game, and worry about everything else later.

Given a choice, do you cook fancy or simple?

I tried to approach it as a chef early on, but I realized that people want what people want, and they want it simple. People want pimiento cheese, and they want fried chicken tenders, and they want seven-layer dip.

There are a couple of nontraditional things folks like. My mom used to make sausage balls. You know, biscuit mix and sausage and cheese that you bake. We quite literally can't make 'em fast enough. People love

the muffalattas. We do a roasted pork loin slider that's just roasted sliced pork with caramelized onions, and they just fly out the door. But for the most part, it's "chicken tenders, chicken tenders, chicken tenders."

What would you cook for a porch party at your house?

I love jambalaya, étouffée, gumbo, grillades & grits. All those simple things that will stick to your ribs, fill you up. You can just grab a bowl, eat with just a spoon in your hand.

The beautiful thing about tailgating is, it ends up being a potluck and people develop their own crowd favorites, and that's what they bring to the table.

I cook red beans & rice for everything. The other night, someone asked me "What's your favorite thing to eat?" I was like, "It's my favorite thing to cook, too. Red beans & rice." I mean, it's just that simple. ■



Photo by Ed Anderson

“I have a primal weakness for the combination of sweet and salty flavors. I still remember the first time I combined some of my granddad’s spicy breakfast sausage with pancakes and Karo syrup on my fork and took them down in one bite. I was a very young child, but I became a devout believer in the combination, immediately. Cinnamon rolls have been a special that has floated in and out of our repertoire for years, and one day it dawned on me that adding sausage to them might induce the same euphoric reaction I remember as a youngster.”

—Chef John Currence

Sausage Cinnamon Rolls

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

DOUGH

- 1 (¼-ounce) package active dry yeast
- 1 cup warm whole milk (100°F)
- 4½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ⅓ cup unsalted butter, melted
- 2 eggs, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup unsalted butter, at room temperature

FILLING

- 1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1 cup cooked breakfast sausage, crumbled
- ¼ cup unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 2½ tablespoons ground cinnamon

ICING

- 1½ cups confectioners’ sugar
- 3 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
- ¼ cup unsalted butter, at room temperature
- ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- ⅓ teaspoon salt

HOW TO PREP

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

To make the dough, in the bowl of a stand mixer, dissolve the yeast in the warm milk and whisk together well. Allow to stand in the bowl for 5 to 7 minutes, or until the mixture begins to look a little foamy on top. Add the flour, granulated sugar, butter, eggs, and salt. Attach the dough hook and knead the dough on low to medium speed until it begins to come together, about 2 minutes.

Transfer the dough to a floured surface. Dust your hands lightly with flour and then knead the dough for 3 to 4 minutes until it’s smooth and elastic. Form the dough into a large ball.

Transfer the dough to a medium bowl that is coated with cooking spray. Cover the bowl tightly with plastic wrap and let the dough rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour. (At Big Bad Breakfast, we set the bowl on the stove top above a warmed oven. The radiant heat helps the dough to rise.) To test if the dough is ready, poke it with your fingertip. If the indentation remains, it’s ready.

Once your dough has risen, make the filling: In a small bowl, stir together the brown sugar, sausage, butter, and cinnamon. Set aside.

To make the icing, in a stand mixer with the paddle attachment, beat together the confectioners’ sugar, cream cheese, butter, vanilla, and salt on medium speed until combined. Set aside.

To assemble the rolls, turn out the dough onto a floured surface and roll it into a 21 by 16-inch rectangle that’s about ¼ inch thick. Spread the ¼ cup butter over the dough, then evenly sprinkle with the sausage filling. With the long side facing you, roll the dough into a tight log.

Using a sharp knife, cut crosswise into 14 slices (if you prefer smaller rolls, cut more slices). Place the cinnamon rolls in a lightly greased 15- by 11-inch glass baking dish. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and let rise, again in a warm place, until nearly doubled, about 30 minutes.

Once your cinnamon rolls have risen, bake them until golden brown, 18 to 20 minutes. The rolls should be brown on top with a light crust.

Take the rolls out of the oven and allow to cool for 8 to 10 minutes. With an offset spatula or icing paddle, spread the icing on them while they’re still warm. The frosting should melt into the cinnamon rolls, but not run off completely. Serve immediately.

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MORE COWBELL

by Hank Allen



▲ Photo credit Megan Bean / Mississippi State University

“You wouldn’t even know the original Little Dooley was a restaurant — it looks like an old house — but that only adds to the mystique. It has fried tomatoes, fried catfish, fried everything. I always get some chicken and brisket. The texture of the meat is amazing — it’s so well cooked. And they have a homemade hot sauce, called Dooley sauce, that I love. Whenever we’re in town I stop in.”

—Kirk Herbstreit, college football analyst and cohost of ESPN College GameDay

Starkville, Mississippi, offers the chance to experience two of the South’s great traditions: football and barbecue.

When I first started school at Mississippi State University in 1999, there were maybe 15,000 students. There wasn’t much of a tailgating presence on campus, other than a few parking lots for fans with large motor homes. Most weeks my friends and I just took a small grill out to the dorm parking lot and cooked burgers. The Bulldogs made it to number seven in the polls that year, but by the time I graduated in 2003 the team was in the midst of a six-year span that never saw more than three wins a season.

Fast-forward around 15 years since I graduated. Enrollment at MSU is now at 26,000. The campus has renovated buildings, new dorms, new roads and a new student union. In 2007 a confusing cluster of roads on campus known as Malfunction Junction was removed in favor of green space and sidewalks specifically designed with tailgating in mind. Quarterback guru Dan Mullen was hired as head coach in 2009, and MSU made its first appearance at number one in the polls in 2014. State fans celebrate those Bulldog victories with the distinctive sound of ringing cowbells, a tradition that dates back to the late 1930s.

Tailgating has become an all-day — sometimes two-day — affair, too. Die-hard fans start setting up maroon and white tailgating tents on Fridays before home games. Saturdays, the campus is covered in canopies as far as the eye can see. You can smell the excitement — and the barbecue. I’ve pulled a few all-nighters, but we usually don’t get to our spot until early Saturday morning. That’s



when we put the meat on the smoker, enjoy the day and the food, then head into the stadium at 6pm for the game. When the game is over, we load it all back up and head home till the next tailgate.

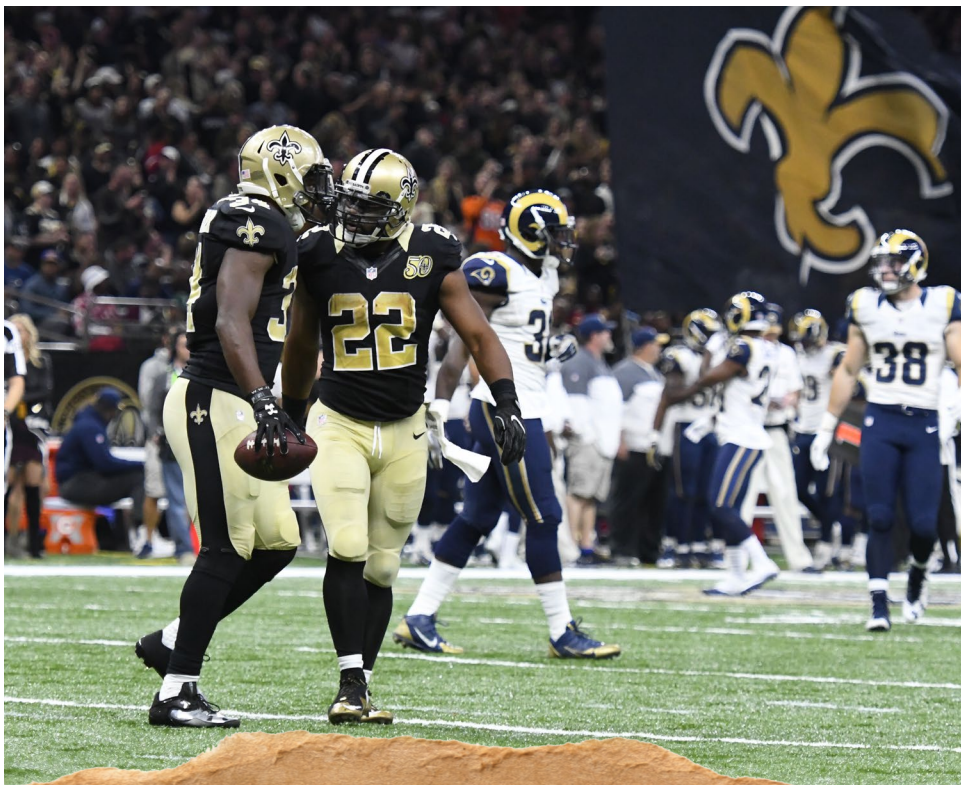
Every time I go I discover new bars and restaurants in Starkville, but I *always* go back to The Little Dooley.

Owners Barry and Margaret Ann Wood opened The Dooley, as locals call it, in 1985. I can still remember my first visit as a freshman. The walls were lined with pictures of country singers, celebrities, sportscasters — all autographed with well wishes, and paper pigs that kids had colored over the years. The Little Dooley was little — just a couple of rooms of seating inside and a screened-in porch on the side of the building. But the food was good, the employees were friendly, and the camaraderie of the patrons was palpable.

For years Kirk Herbstreit listed The Little Dooley as one of the top places for barbecue in college football in his annual “Herbie Awards.” Pulled pork is a fan favorite, as are the beef brisket, fried catfish and fried green tomatoes. Sweet tea is a must.

The Little Dooley has grown right along with Starkville and MSU. There’s a lot more seating now. That screened-in porch has been enclosed, a back deck has been turned into another seating room, and you can find a line out the door every weekend. But the food and the feeling you get when you’re in there are still just as good.

Football is finally here. I’m ready for more cowbell — and barbecue! ■



Mark OF A CHAMPION

Interview with Mark Ingram
Photo is used with permission of the New Orleans Saints.

Saints running back Mark Ingram played college football for the Crimson Tide, won the Heisman Trophy, and was a member of the national championship team when Alabama beat Texas to win its 13th national title. He was named Offensive MVP of that game after rushing for 116 yards and scoring two touchdowns on 22 carries.

You bucked family tradition when you picked Alabama over Michigan State, where your father and grandfather both played. Nick Saban is one of the greatest recruiters in college football history, but why did you ultimately choose Alabama?

It was a situation where I made the best decision for *me*. I had the support of my family, who attended Michigan State. We just felt like, going to Alabama with Coach Saban, I could maximize my full potential. I had the support of friends and family, and I prayed on it. God made it an easy decision.

You were the first Alabama player to win the Heisman and at the time, the youngest player ever. The results are announced live. What's it like leading up to the ceremony? Can you relax and enjoy the experience?

It's kind of nerve-racking. You try to be with your family and just enjoy the great experience in New York City. I didn't win anything at the College Football Awards so I didn't think I was going to win the Heisman trophy. It was just a special moment, especially

with all the great players that had come through Alabama. Even with all the All-Americans and all the championships, there had *never* been a Heisman trophy winner from Alabama at that point. It's still surreal to me when I think about it.

How did you celebrate?

I rode around the city in a limo with my mom, my grandparents and a couple of media people from Alabama. We saw the Statue of Liberty, went to Ground Zero, grabbed a slice of New York style pizza and just enjoyed the night.

As a past winner you get to help decide who takes home the trophy every year. I don't think people know that you get to vote for first, second and third choice. How does the voting process work?

It's pretty much just submitting a ballot online with your first, second and third choice, or you can call the head man for the Heisman and tell him your choices. That's pretty much how it goes. You watch it, you see who you like. Then you list one, two, and three — or you can just list one.

Nick Saban is one of the best — and most feared — college coaches in history. What's it like to play for him?

He demands perfection every day. If you're doing your job and getting after it, you're not going to hear from him too much. If

you're slipping, if he thinks you're slacking off, or if he feels like you're not working to your max, then he is going to be on you. He's a perfectionist. That's what makes him great.

Now you're playing for another great coach, Sean Payton. How is the relationship between a coach and athlete different between college and the pros?

When you're in college, you're young, and they're trying to help develop you into a man. It's similar when you get to the NFL, but a lot of players already have a family and kids. *I* have a family and kids; so does Coach Payton. It's grown men dealing with grown men. It's just a strong business relationship. We all want the same things: to do well, to perform well and to win a championship. I feel like, in college, it's about developing young men into grown men. The pros *are* grown men having strong working relationships and working together towards a common goal.

You had the best season of your NFL career last year. Here's to another one. But one final question ... who plays Alabama for the BCS championship this season?

I know Alabama is going to be in it again. I don't know who the opponent will be, but I'm taking Alabama again. We're going to bounce back strong after last year. ■

THE IRON BOWL

Interview with Chef David Bancroft

David Bancroft is the chef and owner of Acre Restaurant in the historic downtown district of Auburn, Alabama. His daily changing menu features meat and seafood raised and caught in Alabama, and heirloom vegetables and fruit grown, harvested and prepared directly on site.

You're a hardcore Auburn Tigers fan. The Kick Six in the last second of the 2013 Iron Bowl is one the most unlikely plays in college football — some sports writers have called it the single greatest moment in college football history.

Man, that was a good day. The best part was that, after the game, I had a private dining room set up for my very good friend and mentor, Chef Chris Hastings of Birmingham's Hot and Hot Fish Club. Chris and his family arrived at Acre decked out in crimson & white. I tried so very hard not to gloat about our victory, but inside I was squealing like a teenager!

Food is almost as important as football on gameday. Fried green tomatoes with pimiento cheese and Gulf blue crab are the restaurant's gameday specialty. What's the Southern secret to fried green tomatoes?

Definitely a few musts here. The best cornmeal available. Nice, firm green tomatoes. Peanut oil. But, the real secret is using a well-seasoned cast-iron skillet!

Pimiento cheese is popular all over the South, but Alabama has a unique love affair with the stuff. What's your technique for getting the right balance of flavor and texture?

Alabamians know that you cannot cheat at pimiento cheese by using pre-shredded cheese. Pre-shredded cheese typically contains cornstarch and other ingredients to prevent caking, so you want to use 100 percent cheese that you shred yourself. We also know that it is all about the mayo. I use very high-quality English white cheddar and Duke's® Real Mayonnaise. The rest is a dab of this and a dab of that, but with good cheese plus good mayo, it's hard to screw up the rest.

Do you default to chips and dip when you tailgate at Jordan-Hare Stadium, or go with something special?

I am all about some smoked chicken wings

with Alabama white barbecue sauce. Of course, I'm always ready to throw down a Low Country boil. Always.

Finally, the big football question — who wins the Iron Bowl this year: Auburn or Alabama?

What kind of fan would I be if I didn't claim the orange & blue?! Alabama is never — and will never — be an easy matchup. The Iron Bowl is sacred for this very reason. Alabama is expected to win every year. The best part is that, if Auburn pulls the upset, the *whole* nation celebrates the Auburn Tigers! ■

Fried Green Tomatoes

Serves 4

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- 12 slices fresh green tomato
- Buttermilk
- Cornmeal
- Peanut oil, for frying
- 8 ounces Marinated Crabmeat (*recipe below*)
- 8 ounces pimiento cheese
- 4 ounces Crystal Remoulade (*recipe below*)
- 4 basil leaves
- On Each Individual Plate:**
- 2 1-ounce spoonfuls of pimiento cheese
- 2 ounces Marinated Crabmeat
- 3 fried green tomatoes
- 1 ounce Crystal Remoulade
- Basil garnish

HOW TO PREP

Dip three tomato slices in buttermilk, then bread them with cornmeal. Drop tomatoes in peanut oil heated to 350 degrees. Fry about 2 minutes or until they are golden brown. Drain on paper towels and keep warm; repeat twice more, until all tomato slices are fried. (Add additional oil between batches if needed, allowing temperature to come back up to 350 degrees each time.) Spread an ounce of the Crystal Remoulade sauce on the bottom of each plate. Rest 1 fried tomato slice over the remoulade on each. Spoon 1 ounce of pimiento cheese on top and stack another tomato over the cheese. Repeat 1 more layer. Place the 2 ounces of Marinated Crabmeat on the top layer of tomatoes on each plate. Garnish with fresh-cut basil.

Marinated Crabmeat

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- 1 pound fresh, picked gulf crabmeat
- 1 jalapeño, seeded and minced
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- Juice and zest of one lime
- 1 tablespoon chopped cilantro
- Dash Crystal® Hot Sauce
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

HOW TO PREP

Place all ingredients into a small mixing bowl. Gently toss crabmeat mixture until evenly combined. Be careful not to break up crabmeat too much.

Crystal Remoulade

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- ⅓ cup Creole mustard
- Juice of 1 lemon
- ½ tablespoon Crystal Hot Sauce
- 1 tablespoon Creole seasoning
- 1 finely minced Wickles Wicked Pickle Chip
- 1 tablespoon water

HOW TO PREP

Mix all ingredients together thoroughly in a small mixing bowl. Keep chilled.



▲ David Bancroft, chef & owner of Acre Restaurant

Beef & Onion Kabobs

Easy, delicious and fun to make, the smoky finish on these kabobs will make your meal shine! Terrific for cookouts, picnics or any kind of fun get together!

1 lb. Beef, cubed
1/2 lb. Melissa's Gold Boiler Onions
1 pint Button Mushrooms
1 Organic Red Bell Pepper, stems and seeds removed; large dice
1/2 lb. Melissa's Red Boiler Onions
1 Organic Yellow Bell Pepper, stems and seeds removed; large dice
12 Melissa's Dutch Yellow® Potatoes
12 Melissa's Purple Creamers
24 Melissa's Baby Heirloom Tomatoes
Garlic Salt & Freshly Ground Pepper, to taste
12 Metal Skewers
Cooking Spray

Trim stem end from onions. Place in a microwave-safe bowl and cover with water. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and place in microwave. Heat on high for 2 minutes. Remove and uncover. With a paring knife, cut the root end $\frac{3}{4}$ through and peel towards stem end. Peel the rest with your hands. Continue for remaining onions. Place potatoes in a microwave-safe bowl and cover with plastic wrap. Microwave for 1-2 minutes or until just fork tender.

Prepare a hot grill. Using 1 skewer, thread the following in this order: 1 beef cube, 1 gold boiler onion, 1 mushroom, 1 piece of red bell pepper, 1 red boiler onion, 1 piece yellow bell pepper, 1 yellow potato, 1 purple potato, 2 tomatoes, 1 beef cube. Repeat for the rest of the skewers. Season with salt and pepper and spray with cooking spray. Place on grill and cook for 15 minutes or to your desired doneness, turning often.
Makes 12 skewers.



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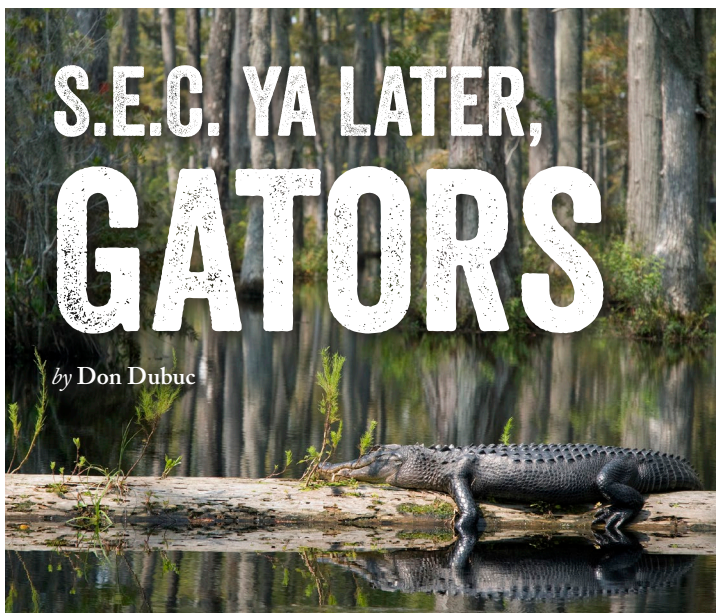


Jumbo JAMBALAYAS

On Saturdays, most every tailgate site — whether SEC, Sun Belt or NCAA — is cooking jambalaya. The game dictates the meat. For Florida it's alligator; for Arkansas, pork.

Making jambalaya for a tailgate or any large gathering is not as easy as just doubling or tripling your recipe. You have to take into account a variety of things, including the size of your pot (as the pot gets bigger, the ratio of liquid to rice gets smaller). Jay Grush — with help from his friends on the Food and Drink board on tigerdroppings.com, which includes a Gonzales jambalaya expert — developed an

interactive jambalaya calculator that shows you how to adjust your recipe according to particular criteria, including the size of the pot, number of servings, amount of rice and amount of meat. There's even a pastalaya tab if you're using pasta instead of rice. It's available for Android on the Google Play Store. You can also download a free Excel spreadsheet at jambalayacalculator.com.



Certain species that share planet Earth with us humans get more attention than others. In Louisiana the all-time champ has to be one that has managed to survive the longest. From its huge, scaly tail to its stubby, too-short-for-its-body legs, right down to that massive skull full of teeth, the alligator gets more attention worldwide than any other Bayou State critter.

Hasn't always been that way, though. I remember back in the early 1970s — that was probably when the Louisiana gator was at its lowest population point — it wasn't so easy to find one. For a number of reasons — including indiscriminate, illegal hunting — the alligator was listed as an endangered species. That's hard to believe today, with the population estimated now as close to 2 million in the wild, with another 300,000 on commercial farms.

That's a lot of hides, teeth and meat that goes to good use worldwide. If there ever was a brought-back-from-the-brink-of-extinction success story, it's the tale of the gator. The raw meat and hide values to Louisiana, estimated at \$57 million annually, are just the start of the associated industries of tanning and products like belts, shoes and handbags, as well as tourism and farming operations.

It's hard to quantify what alligators bring to the state tourism-wise, but ask any out-of-state visitor, and most will say seeing a gator is a high priority. Tasting one? Not so much, but the “*El Lagarto*,” as the early Spanish explorers called these huge “lizards,” is becoming more popular on menus in and out of Louisiana. Blackened tail and Tong Cho sauce on alligator shoulder are my personal favorites. But the versatility of gator meat hardly stops there, with new and creative dishes appearing on menus — from gator sausage po'boys at the smallest neighborhood diners to sauce piquante at the most exquisite chefs' tables.

Controlled alligator hunting is also increasingly popular. There are a few ways to become the next *Swamp People* wannabes. The alligator hunting seasons are tightly regulated and divided into two zones. The East Zone runs from the last Wednesday of August for 30 days, and the West Zone goes from the first Wednesday of September for 30 days.

A resident can purchase a license for \$25 but every alligator taken must have a tag attached. Tags are issued to property owners who own wetlands classified as suitable habitats for harvesting gators. The number of tags depends on the acreage. Those tags can be transferred to individual hunters. The only other way for someone to hunt alligators is to hunt with a guide who has access to tags or be lucky enough to have their name drawn from a random lottery the Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries (LDWF) conducts to use tags on public lands.

Maybe it's a matter of ignorance, frustration with technical regulations, a desire to experience the thrill of hunting and eating one of nature's most fascinating reptiles, or maybe a combination of the three, but alligator-hunting violations are common, although they do seem to be slightly down from a few short years ago, based on LDWF Enforcement records. Each week on my *Outdoors Guy* radio program, I give a “Bad Boys of the Outdoors” report. There was a period when I saw a steady rise in alligator cases. Not surprisingly, I noticed that it directly coincided with the popularity of reality TV shows featuring and glorifying Louisiana alligator hunting. But don't take my word for it; citations rose from 60 in 2008 to over 100 in 2012. While cases still occur frequently, it seems the trend of imitating “Amos Moses” is finally starting to fade.

A couple of interesting alligator peculiarities — I'm not alone in noting a marked change in gator behavior. While gators a few decades ago had a natural fear of man and would vanish on sight, today — probably due to more human contact and handling — alligators will come unnervingly close to man in search of food of some sort. The other oddity is the creatures' built-in survival mechanism that keeps gender numbers equal. Alligator egg incubation temperatures below 86 degrees from days seven to 21 after laying result in all female alligators. Temperatures above 93 degrees from days seven to 21 after laying cause all the young to be males. Temperatures between these two result in batches of both genders. Think gators are big dumb critters? Think again — these peculiarities are just part of why they are our most fascinating animal. ■

> **You can find Louisiana alligator in our seafood department year-round. The LSU Tigers take on the Florida Gators on October 7th.**





Hog Wild

by Judy Walker

Charlie Munford may be the only person *ever* who went to graduate school pulling a trailer of 25 sheep, a donkey and a couple of dogs. He went back to his alma mater, Yale, for an environmental science degree, and wanted to do the science study portion on grazing.

Munford uses the terms “wacky” and “eccentric” to describe his academic and career paths. His latest enterprise has him standing in supermarkets, handing out sausage samples that help Louisiana fight an invasive pest.

Munford admits that his path from the Ivy League to sausage-making is unconventional, but it all comes out of his determination to help the environment.

Munford introduced Charlie’s Smoked Sausage of Wild Boar & Pork less than two years ago, and it’s a big seller at Rouses Markets. It is composed of 30 percent pork from feral hogs and 70 percent domestic pork. To get the smoke flavor just right, it’s produced in a stainless steel slaughterhouse adapted to replicate the conditions of a traditional Cajun smokehouse, with oak logs burning on a dirt floor beneath sausage loops from the rafters.

Feral pigs are much more destructive than nutria in Louisiana, uprooting rice and cane fields, soybeans, corn and other crops. They destroy levees at the waterline and wreck irrigation systems. Wild pigs kill baby deer, eat bird eggs and disrupt wildlife in other ways. State Agriculture & Forestry Commissioner Mike Strain estimated these feral pigs number 600,000 in state and cause \$40 million to \$60 million in crop damages annually.

“The population really exploded in the last ten years,” Munford said. “They reached critical mass and began to overpopulate. Part of the reason the agriculture department was interested in it is because they get so many complaints.

“They root up golf courses and peoples’ yards, and farmers have a nonstop battle. After they plant corn, pigs will come behind the planter and eat every single kernel, rooting along the furrow. The farmer’s waiting for the corn to come up, and then he has to replant a month later.

“They’re really annoying, not to mention smart and adaptable. They’ll avoid an area, waiting until pressure slacks off, if they learn there’s trapping or shooting. A trap can be wide open, and they will dig underneath it and eat the corn. I think they communicate with each other in a more sophisticated way than we can imagine,” Munford said.

In July an Alabama man shot a whopper, an 820-pound wild boar, in his front yard. That’s four times more pig than Munford can take into his plant. Under the strict regulations mandated by the state, the company may accept live ones between 50 and 200 pounds, which must pass inspection in order to be slaughtered and sold. Munford buys them from trappers and farmers.

In 2015, Louisiana started a program to harvest feral swine for food as part of a multipronged control effort. The Department of Agriculture & Forestry asked Munford to run the first plant in the state to harvest wild boar, and the department allowed him to sell the meat to chefs and restaurants. The program took about a year to set up.

“We had already been playing with the idea [of selling wild boar as part of the meat program],” Munford said. “We learned it was another wasted resource, that farmers were paying guys to trap wild boars, and most of the time the trappers would shoot the animals and leave them in the woods. Wouldn’t that be great for chefs and restaurants?”

Harvesting wild boar for food in Louisiana is based on a similar, successful Texas program, with registered transporters, holding facilities, testing and safeguards. After setting up the operation, Munford started delivering the meat of wild hogs to chefs.

Back in Mississippi after graduate school, Munford had raised sheep and goats to graze on the understory of loblolly pine plantations. That idea was hampered by a lack of capital, so he sold the animals instead. And that was the beginning of Two Run Farm, which sells grass-raised beef, lamb and goat to New Orleans chefs. Several of Emeril’s restaurants have been customers; John Besh has had a big standing order. The name “Two Run Farm” has been on menus all over town.

These days, Munford still sells meat to chefs, but mostly primal cuts of wild boar and beef. It was difficult to make a living in restaurant

supply only, Munford found. He wanted a product where he could connect to the end user, and he had already thought of sausage.

Munford had spent months rigging a smoker in his facility, which is between Hammond and Gonzales, in a business partnership with Wayne Jacobs Smokehouse and Restaurant, a state-inspected facility in LaPlace.

It took a long time for Two Run Farm Executive Chef Via Fortier and Munford to come up with the recipe for their own smoked sausage. If you've ever had homemade sausage made exclusively with wild boar, you may know it can be gamy. The 30-70 mixture with domestic pork gives it a smoother taste, Munford says. It comes in Original, Green Onion and Wild versions.

Munford admits he has mixed feelings about wild boar. His dear friend as a child was his pet potbellied pig, Mr. T. Munford's Mr. T had the Mohawk hairdo and bad attitude of the TV character.

Munford grew up in Jackson, Mississippi. His grandfather lived not far away, and young Charlie spent weekends with him on his farm, learning to love the outdoors, fishing, farming and hunting. As he got older, he sought educational outdoor experiences, including a transformative semester at The Mountain School in Vermont and a lengthy Canadian canoe trip.

After high school, Munford went to Deep Springs College, a tiny liberal arts college set on a cattle ranch in the Eastern Sierra desert in California. The all-male school typically has a student body of only 24 to 30 students.

Students hire and fire faculty, make admissions decisions, and maintain the facilities and vehicles. They also are responsible for cleaning, cooking, and farm and ranch work. Munford loved it.

"I probably wouldn't have gotten into Yale if I hadn't gone to Deep Springs," Munford says. He spent three years on scholarship in New Haven, and received a stipend for his independent study of organic farming in Cuba. At the time, it was difficult to enter the communist country, but because then-president George W. Bush was an alum, Yale students had a special loophole to facilitate their study in Cuba.

"At the time, (Cuba) was untouched by tourism," Munford said. "The economy was so distorted by the economic system. They were rich in knowledge but deprived of fossil fuels and agricultural chemicals, so their organic farming system is well developed."

Munford's love of horses landed him on the varsity polo team, traveling to Oxford and Cambridge for matches.

"You could play polo for \$150 a semester, so this not-wealthy kid from Mississippi was able to play polo on these fancy thoroughbreds, so fast and good, so well-trained," Munford said. "I was able to pay it off by mucking out stalls. It was a lot of fun."

Munford doesn't get to play polo these days, but he has a new traditional role in life. He is, in his own words, a besotted new dad.

His daughter "may be the cutest thing in the whole world," Munford said. ■

> **Holla 'Backs**

Alabama, Auburn and Ole Miss take on the Arkansas Razorbacks in October. LSU and Mississippi State play them in November. Using wild boar sausage in your jambalaya is a tasty way to make sure we eat the enemy.



▲ Charlie Munford, Charlie's Smoked Sausage of Wild Boar & Pork

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Fall Wild Blend® Rice Salad

TIME	SERVES	GLUTEN FREE	VEGETARIAN
2 HOURS	6	RECIPE	RECIPE

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 cup Organic Wild Blend® Rice | 2 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil |
| 1 orange, zested, peeled and diced | 1/3 cup toasted almond slices |
| 1/3 cup dried sweetened cranberries | 1/3 cup goat cheese, crumbled |
| 1 Tbsp. Dijon mustard | 2 cups kale, coarsely chopped |
| 1 Tbsp. maple syrup | Salt and pepper to taste |
| 3 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar | |

Prepare Wild Blend rice according to package directions. Meanwhile, combine orange zest, Dijon mustard, maple syrup, and vinegar in a medium size salad bowl. Add olive oil, salt and pepper, mix thoroughly. Add cooked rice and remaining ingredients. Toss and season with additional salt and pepper to taste. Chill for at least 1 hour before serving.

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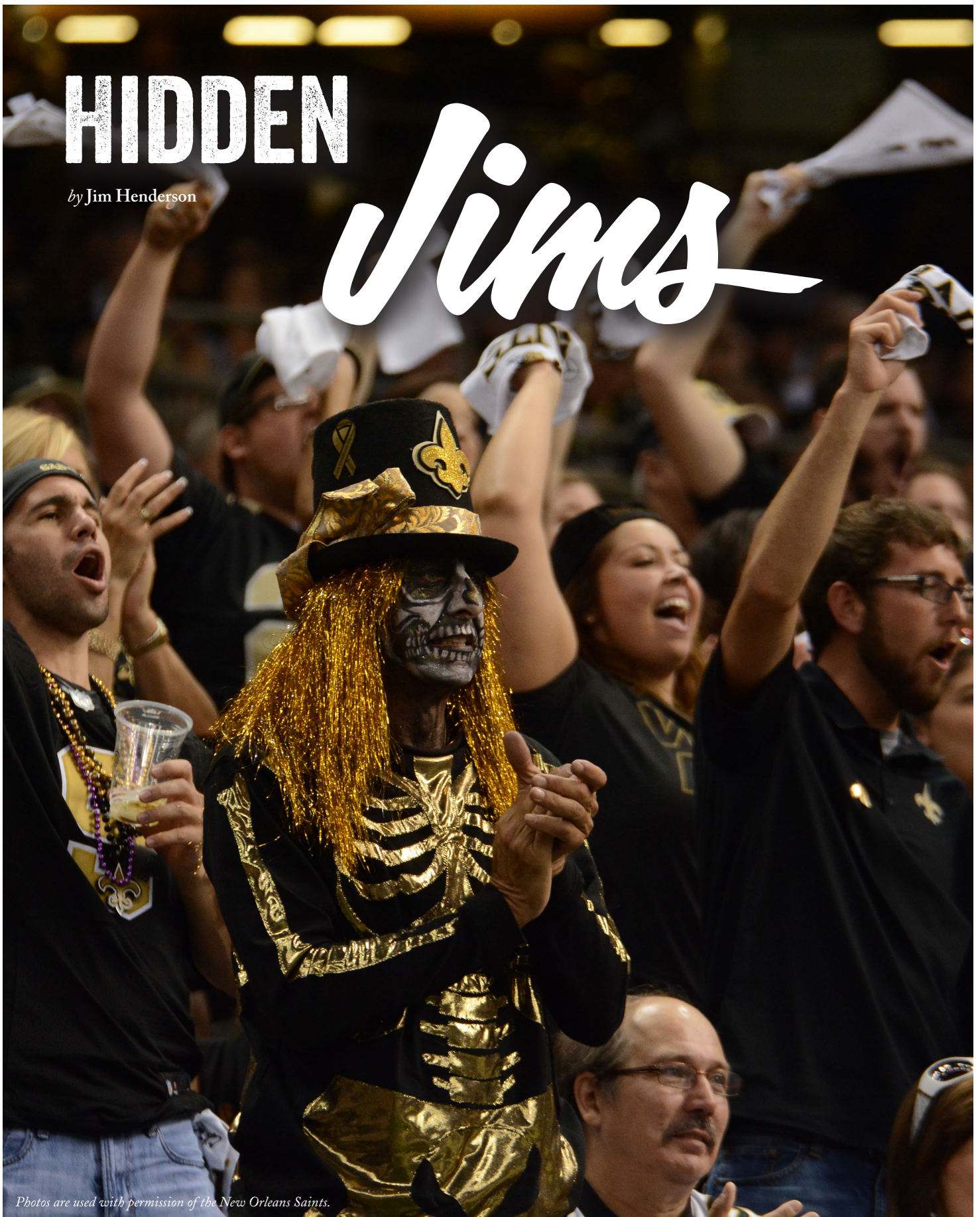
Make Game Time CRUNCH TIME



HIDDEN

by Jim Henderson

Views



Photos are used with permission of the New Orleans Saints.

Hi down there, Saints fans. It's me, Jim. Jim Henderson. High atop the Mercedes-Benz Superdome playing field, getting ready for my 30th season as the play-by-play voice of the Black & Gold on the Saints Radio Network.

Locate the Saints sideline. Then look to the highest possible seating in the direction of the Poydras Street end zone. See the WWL 870 AM banner? That's our broadcast position, right behind it. Here's a behind-the-scenes look at how we get there and what we deal with for at least 10 games each season.

I try to arrive at the Dome two-and-a-half hours before kickoff to beat the traffic to the parking garage and get ahead of the logjam of reporters, concessionaires, fans, NFL officials, and the visiting radio team (with their equipment) — all of whom are trying to make their way to their respective positions before kickoff. Complicating that effort is the fact that the press box elevator can only comfortably accommodate about five people at a time; it's surprisingly small for such a large stadium!

Most veteran reporters arrive early and leave their seats in the press box well before the end of the game, in order to beat the throng of media trying to get down to field level to cover the post-game press conferences and open locker rooms. Some correspondents have been known to scramble down the steps — 700 in all — of an adjacent stairwell in a panic after encountering the very long line of people waiting their turn to ride to ground level. It's not a job for the faint of heart, friends.

To the early arrivals the Dome offers a pre-game buffet. To put it kindly, Breakfast at Brennan's it ain't. It's hard to complain about free food — “free” being one of the media's favorite four-letter words. But served to out-of-town visitors in what we like to regard as the culinary capital of the United States, well ... it can be a bit of a letdown, especially if said out-of-towners have been spending their spare time at one of the many fine eateries New Orleans has to offer.

But we are there to do a job, not to act like pampered foodies. However, doing your job in a press box has its own unique challenges, and the Dome is no exception. After Katrina, the press box was moved all the way to the top of the building to make way for revenue-producing suites and seats — the old press

box site was prime real estate, so it shouldn't have come as a surprise. In fact, that nosebleed seating is the typical vantage point where most stadiums house the press box.

But the remote vantage point is hardly the only unique challenge the New Orleans press box presents. Unless you are in the first row as a reporter or broadcaster, the seats are too low and the workspace in front of you too high to have a comfortable line of sight to see the Saints sideline, without sitting uncomfortably erect on the edge of your seat and leaning forward for close to three hours to see as much as possible of the playing field and sideline below. Some press boxes are named after a veteran hometown journalist. I've always thought, as I rub my neck on the way out after a game, that I'd like to name the Dome's press box after my chiropractor.

And folks, that's just the beginning. You might not be surprised to hear that the air-conditioning ducts in that box in the sky where I ply my trade hang right overhead, set to a temperature that's appropriate for hanging meat. Perhaps to make a statement (but more likely, in an attempt to prevent frostbite), a number of veteran reporters have taken to wearing sweaters, mittens and stocking caps, as one might reasonably do at an open-air stadium in the NFC North rather than an enclosed one in the NFC South. And it's not unheard of for reporters to find a warm corner outside the press box to thaw out their fingers so they can type up their notes. Seriously, that frigid air is intense; it can hit with enough force to blow away all your statistical notes, into the seats below, if they're not properly secured beneath laptops — which make excellent paperweights! You're welcome.

Peculiar to our broadcast position is a sound system that sits directly in front of us, blaring out music and public address exhortations at rock concert decibel levels. You depart the Dome with a headache that makes you feel like you imbibed about five of the Dome's famous Bloody Marys — sometimes, you wish you had!

I know this sounds picky, and I'm sure you can see that I'm a very easygoing fellow who's really not that picky at all, but another challenge for me in calling the game is that the scoreboard clock that I work off to my left has a font type that — to these aging eyes — makes a “6” look like an “8.” I try to remember to

check elsewhere for the time whenever it includes the number “6” or “8” to make sure I'm not calling it wrong. But to be perfectly honest, my personal over/under for seeing it wrongly is probably three times a game.

So why should you — the Saint fans way down below — care about the travails of the working journalists and broadcasters above? Truly, you don't have to care one bit. We are there not as paying customers enduring ever-increasing prices for tickets, food and drink, but as a fortunate few who are being paid, no matter what that pay might be, to sit in free seats, to ingest delicious, free food and drink — okay, to ingest free food and drink ... not exactly delicious but the price is right, as they say. How many of you would trade places with us, even if there was no pay at all? I'd bet more than a few ...

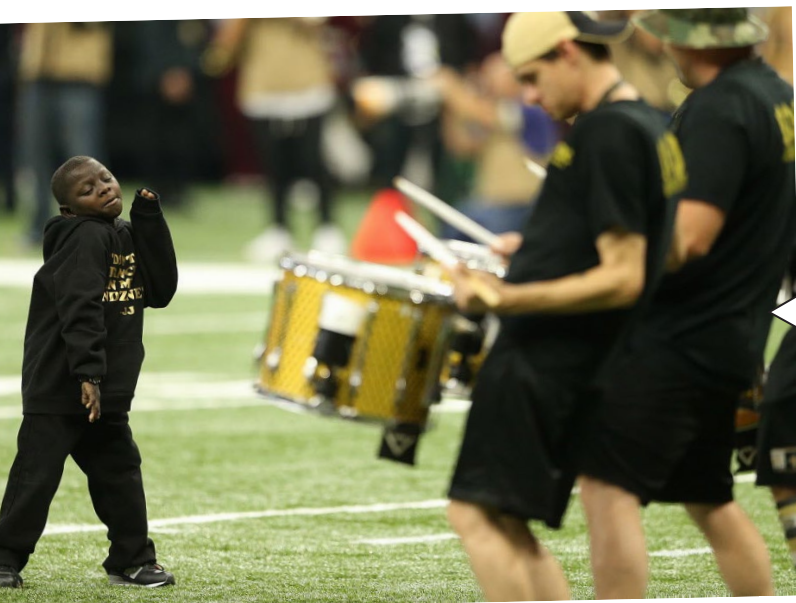
I love to read books by fellow broadcasters for the wisdom and perspective they offer. In one of his books, CBS lead announcer Jim Nantz says that, no matter how hectic and pressure-packed his job seems before the telecast begins, he always attempts to find a moment of solitude to appreciate where he is and to ponder what he's asked to endure to be there. It is to count his blessings, which should greatly surpass his complaints. I know mine do ... they always have ... Hopefully, they always will. ■





by Alison Fensterstock

Photo is used with permission of the New Orleans Saints.



Saints superfan **Jarrius "JJ" Robertson** is almost as much a part of the team as Drew Brees; he even has his own Saints football card. Lil JJ was diagnosed at six months with biliary atresia, a chronic childhood liver disease. His first transplant, at the age of one, left him in a coma. He underwent a successful liver transplant surgery at Ochsner Hospital for Children in April. In July, the 15-year-old shared his platform of organ donation awareness with a national audience when he received the Jimmy V Award for Perseverance at the 2017 ESPYs. Lil JJ was all over the field at NFL training camp this summer. Look for him on the sideline this season; he's the unofficial 54th man on the Saints roster.

Photo by Michael DeMocker, courtesy NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune

Rouge ... and we have a couple that marched at Northwestern State, a couple that marched at University of Louisiana at Lafayette."

Most of his corps is made up of "nine-to-five guys and gals that just kind of felt the need to keep playing," he said. "There's not really an outlet for that once you get kind of old, you know."

"We have some people that are just old band geeks," he said. "And we have some that just love playing drums. We had two or three guys that played [drum] set very well, but had never marched in their lives, so I was able to teach them how to get from playing drum set to playing a marching drum. We had people who were big Saints fans, but then we had people who couldn't care less. And really, that healthy mix is what keeps us going. It's those band geeks that keep us focused on the music, and those die-hard fans that keep us focused on the Saints."

You don't have to be a football fan to play in the FCDC, but it helps — especially during the season when Sutherland came back home and joined up. That, of course, was the one leading up to Super Bowl XLIV, the Saints' first — and long yearned-for — win.

"It was weird. It was surreal. You never thought it would actually happen," said Sutherland. After years away from home, particularly during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, when he had wondered if he'd ever live in New Orleans again, it was especially poignant for him to return and jump right into the thick of such unexpected triumph.

"That season was magical," he said. "And you could feel it. People would just gravitate toward the Dome without even having tickets, and they'd follow us around."

Tailgating fans loved it when the raucous FCDC rattled and boomed down Poydras Street and Loyola Avenue. They cheered and shared the contents of their coolers. And soon, even the team noticed.

"It was around 2012, '13. We knew someone who worked on gameday operations for the Saints," Sutherland said. "And he said, 'Let's see if we can do something to get you on the field.'" Now, fans can see FCDC in Champions Square for about the last half-hour before kickoff and on the field at the two-minute warning. Eventually, they'd like to travel to an away game, maybe even do something in partnership with another drumline, something that more and more NFL teams now have.

"There's 32 teams, and I think about 25 have lines now," said Sutherland. "So it's interesting to see how far that's come in general."

Other cities' teams may have drumlines, but only New Orleans has the FCDC's other performance outlet. For the past three years, they've also marched with the Krewe of Iris during Carnival, and they plan to add one or two more parades in 2018 — which will take some training.

"Not all of us are spring chickens," he said. "So it takes a lot of preparation and exercise to get into shape to walk eight miles with a drum strapped to you." ■

When Tiger Band snare drummer Eddie Sutherland graduated from LSU he thought, reasonably, that his marching days were behind him. (After all, there aren't a lot of marching bands for adults.) He moved to Chicago in 2002 and became an accountant. "I felt like I might keep playing drums in bands and things," he said, "but that aspect of my life [marching] was over."

Back in his hometown of New Orleans, though, a few of his old buddies and bandmates were thinking differently. Paul Guidry, a professional soundman who worked at a drum shop in Kenner, had been buying and restoring old marching-band drums on eBay along with another friend and drum aficionado, Woody Dantagnan. When Sutherland found a job that moved him back home in 2009, they called him up.

"They said, 'Do you live here now? Are you here for good?'" said Sutherland. "I said, 'Yeah, you know I do.' And they said, 'We built a drumline.' And I said, 'What are you talking about?'"

In 2004, Guidry and Dantagnan had formed the Fat City Drum Corps, a marching-style drumline for players like themselves: former high school and college marching-band members, hobbyists and professional drummers who wanted to hang out, have fun and make some noise. The aftermath of Hurricane Katrina had put the brakes on the project briefly, but by 2006, the FCDC — whose logo is a tribute to the Australian hard rock band, with a fleur-de-lis where AC/DC has a lightning bolt — had rallied. They had started gathering outside the Superdome before Saints home games to get tailgating fans hyped up, and they were having a blast. It didn't take much persuasion for Sutherland, who became the group's director this year, to strap his snare back on and step into line.

Including alternates, the Fat City Drum Corps is now made up of close to 50 players. It's a pretty diverse group, Sutherland says. Dantagnan, who plays in the local cover band PaperChase, is the only actual working drummer; other players are paramedics, electricians, linemen for Entergy, high-school student prodigies. One is a band director at a private school.

"But most of the guys come from marching backgrounds," said Sutherland. "We called people that we had met marching at LSU, and then it kind of grew from there through word of mouth. We have just about half LSU people, about five or six that marched at Southern Mississippi, two or three that marched at Southern University in Baton



◀ **Sista Soul**

Ninth Ward native Sista Soul was prompted to costume by her husband Soul Saint.

“I’ve spent the last 10 years taking photos from the sidelines of the New Orleans Saints games. The thousands of fans who watch the games from home, and even many who are in the stadium, have no idea that there are so many fans who have spent hundreds of dollars and hours of their time to make these fantastic costumes. Their stories are as unique as their costumes.”

—photographer Ron Calamia

*Get your copy of Calamia’s new book **Fantastic Saints** online at fantasticsaints.com and at Garden District Bookstore and The Who Dat Shoppe in Slidell.*

FanTASTIC SAINTS

photos credit Ron Calamia

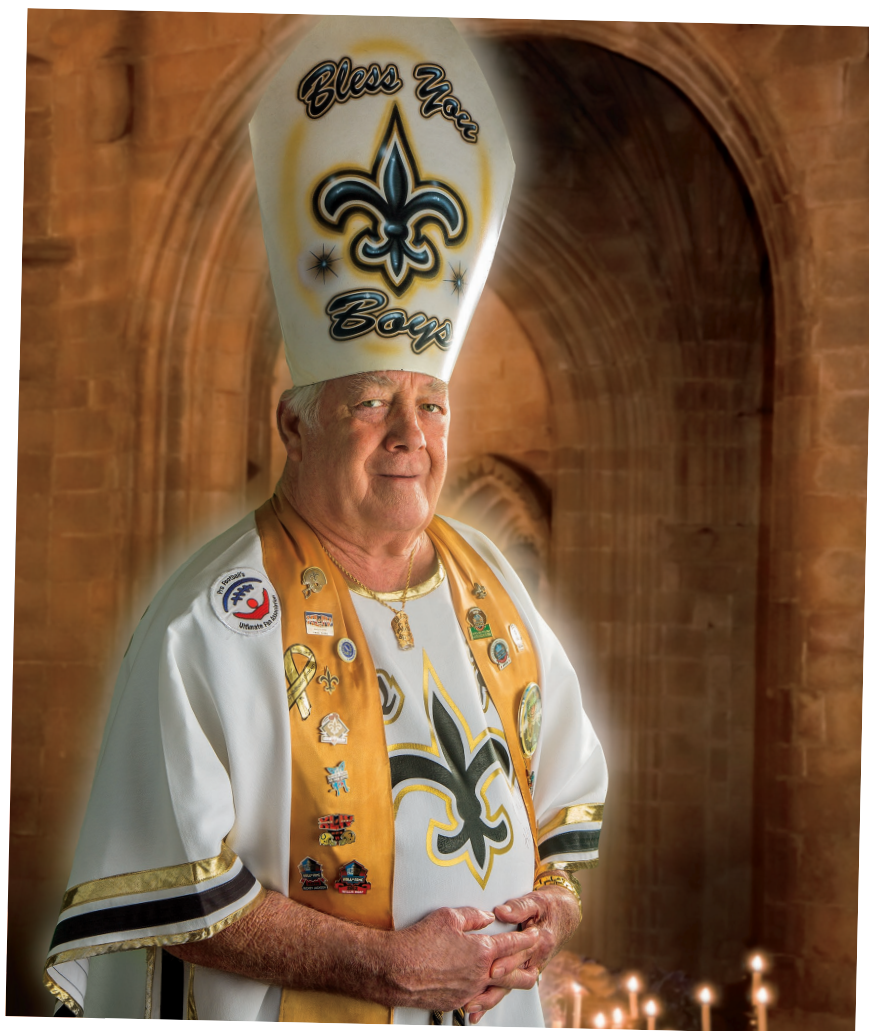


< Sergeant Saint

Dean Matherne's Sergeant Saint get up includes a Saints bazooka and Who Dat jeep.

Da Pope >

Lionel Alphonso, Sr. has been dressing as Da Pope since 1987.



▲ Dat Fireman

Dat Fireman Barry Matherne is a real-life firefighter.

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In a mixing bowl, combine the chicken and both cheeses, mix well. Lay 4 tortillas out and spread the beef and cheese mixture evenly between all 4 tortillas. Place one of the each remaining tortillas on top to form the quesadilla.

Preheat a non-stick skillet over medium high heat, spray with pan release. Place the assembled quesadilla in the pan and allow to cook for 2 minutes on each side, or until golden brown, and the cheese is melted throughout. Repeat for the remaining 3 quesadillas. Allow to rest for 2 minutes before serving. Serve.

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Directions: 6 tbsp. olive oil, 1.5 tbsp. fresh lemon juice, 1 tbsp. red wine vinegar, 2 minced garlic cloves, 1 tsp. dried oregano, salt and pepper to taste. (Makes 6 servings)



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THE *Human* JUKEBOX

by Alison Fensterstock + photo courtesy of SU Marching Band

Tens of thousands of students, alumni and other fans converge on the Mercedes-Benz Superdome each Thanksgiving week for the Bayou Classic, one of the Southeast's great annual college football games. And the gridiron battle between the longtime rivals — the Southern University Jaguars and the Grambling State University Tigers — is only part of the show. For many, the school's marching bands, Grambling's Tiger Marching Band and Southern's Human Jukebox, are at least as mighty as the teams that have been meeting on the field each November since 1932.

Lawrence Rawlins, a 1994 Southern graduate and the band director for McDonogh 35 High School in New Orleans, comes from a band family. His older brother, Wilbert Rawlins Jr., who also attended Southern and marched with the Human Jukebox, directs the marching band at L.B. Landry-O. Perry Walker College and Career Preparatory High School; sometimes the brothers will lead their separate bands down St. Charles Avenue in the same Mardi Gras parade. Their love of marching bands comes partly from their musical home — their father, Wilbert Rawlins Sr., played drums for soul singer Irma Thomas for 27 years — and partly from time marching in their own middle-school and high school bands, said Lawrence Rawlins, who played mellophone and French horn.

“When you're real, real small, you think maybe you'll be a police officer, an astronaut,” he said. “But by the time I was in junior high I realized I wanted to be a band director.”

That dedication and drive was focused even more by his time in the Human Jukebox band, and the lessons he learned there still help him in his classroom today. “It's the discipline,” he said. “One of our mottoes was ‘Be in the right place at the right time with the right equipment, ready to work.’ And ‘If you're early, you're on time. If you're on time, you're late.’ And the culture. We had some brilliant, brilliant instructors and upperclassmen keeping it in line. It's like a fraternity.”

By the time classes start for normal Southern students, band members will already have been on campus for two weeks of “grueling, all-day rehearsals,” said Nathan Haymer, today's Southern University band director. “That's how we get in shape,” he said. It doesn't end with band camp; members must also attend practice for about three-and-a-half hours daily, he said, while maintaining at least a 2.0 GPA with a full course load and also being available to travel on the band's

busy schedule. That's not just for college ballgames; the Human Jukebox regularly gets invited to appear at NFL games and other special events, including three presidential inaugurations, five Super Bowls and in two Spike Lee films over the years, plus international appearances like a 2011 trip to Morocco and Nigeria.

The Human Jukebox's rigorous work ethic and vibrant culture have made it one of the most celebrated university marching bands in the world. At the beginning of 2014, the National Collegiate Athletic

Association ranked it at number two in the country, behind only Ohio State University. A few years before that, the group's hyped-up, high-energy marching choreography was praised in a long feature story by the *New York Times'* dance critic. The band played the NFC Championship game that, in 2010, sent the Saints on to the Super Bowl; perhaps more poignantly, they played at the Superdome in 2006, when the Saints returned for the first time since Hurricane Katrina. The Human Jukebox appeared prominently in a 2013 music video by the pop trio the Jonas Brothers, and was billed alongside legendary DJ Mannie Fresh for a 2017 NBA All-Star Weekend party thrown by Solange Knowles' Saint Heron brand, in partnership with Nike and artist Brandan "BMike" Odums. On social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook and SoundCloud, they have tens of thousands of followers — more than some rock stars.

And indeed, they play like rock stars, with a repertoire befitting their name. The staff keeps up with popular hits, listening to the radio and consulting with students to choose hot, current songs to add to their roster along with the classics. (A video of the band playing Adele's "Hello" garnered over one million views on YouTube; tributes to Prince and Michael Jackson have also gone viral online.)

"It's nothing for us to play the latest rap tune and turn around and play 'Bohemian Rhapsody' by Queen," Haymer said. "And then some Earth, Wind and Fire, and then a gospel tune, all in one setting."

"We play it all," said Haymer. "That's why it's called the Human Jukebox."

Haymer took the reins of the band officially in 2014 after eight years as assistant director, having studied with and worked with both Dr. Isaac Gregg and Lawrence Jackson, former directors who are credited with shaping the band's unique, electric style and image. He'd studied at Southern himself — and played in the band — as part of a long-held goal.

"My goal since I was seven years old was to be the band director at Southern University," he said. His peewee soccer team practiced on Southern's campus, he explained, on a field right next to where the band rehearsed.

"My coach had to keep running over [to the band] to grab me and bring me back to the soccer field," he said, laughing.

Now, leading a staff of all-Southern alumni, Haymer's dream has come true. Even after all the preparation, he said, nothing quite prepares you for stepping into the role.

"The job fell on my shoulders with its full weight," he said. "The legacy is so rich, and so strong." It was almost overwhelming. But then he realized that, just like when he was marching in the 200-member ensemble, he wasn't alone. He had his team, and the words of his mentors, and the institution's long and storied history to bear him up.

"It's like I'm standing on their shoulders," he said. ■



> The Human Jukebox

For many, the school's marching bands, Grambling's Tiger Marching Band and Southern's Human Jukebox, are at least as mighty as the teams.



Tailgreads

by Mike Bass with contributions by Erin Z. Bass
photos by Travis Gauthier

It's 8 a.m. on gameday, and David Dugas is fiddling with the laptop/dual speaker PA system that acts as his DJ station. Above his head a banner reads: "WELCOME TO RAGIN' CAJUN TAILGATING A TRADITION OF JOIE DE VIVRE WHERE THE ROADKILL MEETS THE ROUX AT THE HANDS OF THE KREWE DE CHEW." This slogan embodies what one of UL Lafayette's oldest tailgating groups is all about: good times and good eats.

Before the day is over, thousands of fans will walk by the krewe's spot on Reinhardt Drive. Many will stop in to dance to Cajun music, grab a plate of BBQ and visit for a while. On any given gameday, the krewe feeds around 125 people, and rival teams usually receive an invitation to stop by for a bite.

"Visiting fans say, 'We've never seen anything like this before,'" says Dugas, who serves as pitmaster along with his DJ duties. It's his job to cook the BBQ chicken and

pork ribs for the first game of the season, when it's still too warm for gumbo. A UL Lafayette alum and oilfield executive, Dugas tows his large pit behind his truck and slathers his ribs with a concoction of Sweet Baby Ray's® BBQ Sauce, brown sugar and several secret ingredients.

While Krewe de Chew members meet weeks before the opening game to discuss the season's menu — home-cooked appetizers, entrees, sides and desserts — this group of about 15 couples is just as well-known for its unleashed revelry. Co-founder Randy Monceaux remembers how one of their most popular traditions began.

"The rooster dance started at my house when we had a supper one night," he says. "We played the song and everybody started dancing with their arms." The song Monceaux refers to is "You Can't Rooster Like You Used To" by Zydeco Joe. The "rooster" grew into a dance party every time the song was played at their tailgating spot.

"It got so popular," says Dugas, "everyone would stop by and ask 'When are you doing the roosta dance?'" Now Krewe de Chew posts a "Rooster Call" schedule so other tailgaters will know when they can see the show. Twice on gamedays, the DJ plays the signature song. Krewe members don rooster masks, flap their arms and throw Mardi Gras beads to visiting fans brave enough to shake their tail feathers.

The camaraderie of this party is what attracts fans to the 20-plus-year-old krewe's shindig. "We invite everyone," says Monceaux, a retired alum. "Cheerleaders come chicken dance with us, and everybody in the Sunbelt Conference loves to come to our tent."

"We have a few folks from other conference teams that we've gotten to know," says Dugas. "They say, 'If you're gonna make one away game, UL is the place to come.'"

Since that first Cajun BBQ spread, the krewe's menu has ranged from Boston butt, gumbo and red beans & rice to jambalaya



and cochon de lait. Monceaux is known for his hen & tasso sauce piquante, which contains a can of spicy Rotel®, smoked sausage, tasso and a whole hen. The krewé prides itself on making most dishes from scratch, but if a member can't cook, they can at least bring the boudin.

A big part of tailgating is the food, but regulars also enjoy catching up with each other each year — and making new friends.

Alum Monica Hebert always stops by the Krewe de Chew tent to say hello before setting up with her Woo Hoo Crew. "It's like a little community," she says. "You have tailgating neighbors you get to know, and we help each other out."

Known for her taco soup and fleur-de-lis carved Halloween pumpkins, Hebert's been part of her crew for the past 10 years. The Woo Hoos also often have brisket and gumbo on the menu, with a potluck for weekday games. The 20-25 members all share cooking and tent setup and teardown responsibilities.

"We're there to support the university and football team," says Hebert, "and spend time with friends and family you don't get to see all year long, and enjoy the day with good food, good conversation and good company."

Ronnie Louviere is no stranger to hosting and feeding a crowd. Members of his Ragin' Crazies group flock to his RV for shelter, bathroom facilities and his sauce piquante. Known as "Cajun Santa," Louviere is recognizable to tailgating children and parents alike for his long white beard and jolly demeanor. He bought his RV in 2005 after retiring and has held UL season tickets ever since.

"I pull in Friday at 3:30 or 4:00, and they [other RV spot holders] come in until after dark," he says. "If there's somebody coming in next to me, we drink a beer and talk. On Sunday, we wake up, drink our coffee, go to Mel's for breakfast, and come back and start packing up."

He takes his cooking turn the first game so he can socialize for the remainder of the season. "I talk so much, it's hard for me to cook and talk at the same time," he explains. His crowd-pleasing sauce piquante is made using a tomato sauce that's cooked for 18 hours and blended with a roux, onion, garlic, Cajun seasoning and two lemons. He brings boudin to away games; he says it's the best thing for making friends in states like Texas and Alabama.

As opening gameday approaches, members of these crews prepare their menus, shine their pits and get their tents in order. To them, tailgating is as vital a sport as the game itself.

"My dad had season tickets in McNaspy Stadium. I remember going to games back then," Dugas says. "A lot of us have ties that go way back. We've been die-hards for many, many years and are just trying to continue to support the program."

Monceaux remembers there being only 40 tailgating spots when the Krewe de Chew group first organized. "I think we started what real tailgating was all about," he says. "Whether it was bad years or good, we stayed there. We bring our kids and grandkids, because this is what creates future Ragin' Cajuns down the road." ■

Randy Monceaux's Hen and Tasso Sauce Piquante

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- ¼ cup oil
- Water
- 2 large onions
- 1 bell pepper
- 1 can Rotel Diced Tomatoes & Green Chilies
- ½ can cream of mushroom soup
- ½ can tomato sauce
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1 hen (cut into small serving sizes)
- ½ pound smoked sausage (cut into bite-size pieces)
- ½ pound tasso (cut into bite-size pieces)
- 1 cup of green onion tops, chopped
- Seasoning (red pepper, salt, etc.)
- White rice (cooked)

HOW TO PREP

Season hen pieces. Place in refrigerator overnight. Dice onions and bell pepper. In a large black pot with a cover, add oil (should cover bottom of pot). Heat oil on medium-high heat (be careful not to burn the oil). Brown hen pieces and remove from pot. Add tasso and sausage to pot. Brown (about five minutes) and remove from pot. Add onions and bell pepper; sauté until wilted. Remove from pot.

Add Rotel and cook until reduced. Add small amount of water if the Rotel starts to stick. Cook for 10 minutes. Add garlic to the pot; sauté. Return onion and bell pepper to the pot. Stir. Add hen pieces, tasso and sausage. Add enough to cover the meat. Cook on high heat for one hour. Add small amounts of water to cover the meat as the mixture cooks down. Season to taste.

Lower heat and continue cooking for another half hour. Add mushroom soup and tomato sauce. Add water if necessary. Check hen pieces for tenderness. Add chopped onion tops when sauce piquante is done.

Serve over fluffy Louisiana white rice.





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The Rouses Test Kitchen

by Rouses Chef Marc Ardion
photo by Romney Caruso





Our chefs test recipes and new products every day. Sometimes the recipes are for our delis and cafes, sometimes for stories in this magazine or to go up on our newly redesigned website. Spearheading the testing is Rouses Corporate Chef Marc Ardoin. Here are some easy yet tasty recipes Chef Marc recommends this season.

Football means food, and wings are a classic. I like bone-in wings rather than boneless, which are usually just chicken breast meat or tenders. Traditional wings are plain fried, with no breading or batter, and that's what we serve at Rouses on our hot bar during tailgate season.

When you're frying at home you can use vegetable oil or canola oil, because they both have a higher smoke point (usually around 450° F) and a neutral flavor. Vegetable oil contains trans fats, so use canola oil if you are trying to avoid excess fat. The trick to getting a crispy, crunchy crust rather than a chewy one is keeping that oil at the right temperature and frying in small batches. Use a thermometer, and remember to let your oil come back up to temperature between each batch. If you try to fry too much at one time, you won't get that delicious crunch.

The real crust challenge comes with baking. Wings have a higher ratio of skin to meat than other pieces of chicken. To get a crispy crust when baking, you need to dehydrate the skin, which will help the batter cling to the chicken and render out some of the fat. Let the wings rest in the refrigerator for at least half an hour — even overnight — before baking.

We toss our wings in an ever-changing variety of sauces. This football season we're serving Buffalo, BBQ, Thai Chili, Teriyaki

and General Tso's, which is a sweet and spicy Chinese-American sauce. Our chefs and cooks prepare the sauces every evening, Monday through Friday, and lunch and dinner Saturday and Sunday. We also have a variety of pre-packed wings available in our deli case every day. ■

Thai Chili Wings

For this sweet, spicy, sticky Thai version, we made a nam jim, or dipping sauce, with sweet chilies, fish sauce, rice vinegar and sherry. Cornstarch acts as a thickener and helps keep the red chili flakes suspended, which looks pretty.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 4 tablespoons water
- ½ cup rice vinegar
- ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons white sugar
- 3 tablespoons fish sauce
- 2 tablespoons sherry
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons dried crushed chili
- 3 pounds of chicken wings, cut into drumettes and flats

Peanut oil for frying
Sesame seeds for serving
Green onion tops for serving
Red chili flakes for serving

HOW TO PREP

Combine the cornstarch and 4 tablespoons water to make a slurry.

Place the vinegar, white sugar, remaining water, fish sauce, sherry, garlic and chili in a small saucepan over medium-high heat. Stir to combine. Bring the mixture to a boil, reduce the heat to medium, and continue boiling until reduced by half, about 10 minutes. Reduce heat to low and stir in the cornstarch mixture. Continue stirring occasionally until the sauce thickens, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside.

Preheat oven to 200 degrees. Fill a 12-inch, cast-iron skillet with 1 inch of peanut (or vegetable) oil. Bring the oil to 375 degrees over medium-high heat. Place half of the wings in the oil and fry until golden brown on the first side, then flip and continue to fry until the second side is browned, 5-7 minutes per side. Transfer the wings to a paper towel-lined plate, then place in the oven to stay warm. Repeat with the second batch of wings.

Place all of the wings in a large bowl. Pour in the reserved sauce and toss to coat. Transfer to a platter. Garnish with sesame seeds, green onion tops and red chili flakes.



◀ Rouses Corporate Chef, Marc Ardoin
Photo by Ryan Hodgson-Rigsbee

Buffalo Chicken Wings

On The Cover

The first Buffalo wings were served at the Anchor Bar in Buffalo, New York in 1964. Those wings were made with Frank's RedHot® sauce, a classic vinegar hot sauce. For our recipe, we substituted another tangy cayenne sauce, Crystal®, which is a famed local brand. We chose a traditional Danish blue for the dipping sauce. It's a semi-soft, creamy cheese made from cow's milk. We sell a range of blue cheeses from mild to strong, so feel free to experiment. Rogue Creamery in the Pacific Northwest makes some of the best blues in the country. Its Smokey Blue, which is cold-smoked over shells from Oregon hazelnuts, is the first of its kind in the world, according to Rogue.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

FOR THE DIP

- ½ cup sour cream
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- 1 small garlic clove, minced
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1-2 tablespoons milk
- ½ cup crumbled blue cheese
- Kosher salt, to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

FOR THE WINGS

- Vegetable or peanut oil, for frying
- 3 pounds chicken wings, split at the joints, tips removed
- 1 cup Crystal hot sauce
- 1 stick unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons honey
- Celery sticks, for serving

HOW TO PREP

In a bowl, combine the sour cream, mayonnaise, garlic, Worcestershire sauce and lemon juice. Stir in the milk, one tablespoon at a time, until desired consistency is reached. Stir in the blue cheese, and season to taste with salt and pepper. Cover and let sit in the refrigerator until ready to serve.

Set a rack on a rimmed baking sheet lined with paper towels. Heat 1 inch of vegetable (or peanut) oil in a large, deep skillet over high heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 375 degrees. Fry the wings in batches, turning as needed, until cooked through, about 15 minutes. (Return the oil to 375 degrees between batches.) Remove with tongs and transfer to the rack to drain.

In a medium saucepan, heat the hot sauce, butter and honey, and cook until the butter melts. Continue to cook, stirring, until the sauce thickens slightly, about 10 minutes. Add the cooked wings to the pot and toss to coat. Serve with the blue cheese dip and celery sticks.



▲ Coconut, Key Lime & Curry Baked Chicken Wings – Photo by Romney Caruso

“If you’re watching what you eat, baking or grilling rather than frying cuts down the calories and fat, and a no-oil sauce like this one from Chef Tory McPhail adds flavor without unnecessary calories, fat or sugar.”

—Esther, Rouses Registered Dietitian

Picklebacks

Pickle juice is an easy bottle brine for chicken or pork. But don't use the juice just for cooking. Add a tablespoon or two to your favorite light beer. There's something about the taste of salty, tangy dill pickles and classic light beers like Coors and Miller that just works – maybe because they are all fermented foods.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- 3 pounds chicken wings, tips removed, drumettes and flats separated
- 1 cup dill pickle juice
- Kosher salt, to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 tablespoons chopped dill
- 1 cup sliced pickles

HOW TO PREP

In a large bowl, combine wings and pickle juice. Cover bowl and refrigerate for at least 1 hour and up to 4 hours. Drain wings and pat dry. Remember to dehydrate the skin in the refrigerator to help get that crispy crust.

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Set a wire rack inside a large rimmed baking sheet. Transfer wings to the prepared baking sheet. Season wings with salt and pepper. Bake until crispy, about 50 minutes.

Transfer baked wings to a serving plate and sprinkle dill on top. Serve with sliced pickles.

Coconut, Key Lime & Curry Baked Chicken Wings

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- ¼ cup cornstarch
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- 2 pounds chicken wings, tips removed, drumettes and flats separated
- Chef Tory McPhail's Coconut, Key Lime & Curry sauce, marinade and dressing (available at all Rouses Markets)

HOW TO PREP

Line a large rimmed baking sheet with foil.

Place salt, cornstarch and baking powder in a large bowl; add wings and toss to coat the skin and break down the proteins within. Spread wings in a single layer on prepared baking sheet. Refrigerate for at least half an hour.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Set a wire rack inside a large rimmed baking sheet. Transfer wings to prepared rack. Bake wings for 10 minutes to render the fat. Brush with Coconut, Key Lime & Curry sauce. Return baking sheet to oven and cook 10-15 minutes.

Turn the wings and brush with sauce. Bake until glaze is glossy and lightly caramelized, 8-10 minutes.

TEAM *Spirit*

by Nora D. McGunnigle



There are three things that Louisianians are well-known for: a love of beer; a love of tailgating; and a love of their local alma maters, especially their sports teams.

Over the past two years, four Louisiana breweries have partnered with local universities to brew beer that not only helps the school financially, but cements a true collaboration between knowledge and brewing. And since these beers are all found on the shelves at Rouses, it's something we can all enjoy.

This summer, two collaborations — a Tulane-NOLA Brewing one and a Southeastern-Gnarly Barley one — were released in time for the start of the school year and college football season.

The Green Wave of Tulane now has an officially licensed beer, the result of a collaboration between Tulane University Athletics and NOLA Brewing Company. Green Wave Beer is a refreshing kristalweizen style, which is a filtered version of the better known German hefeweizen style that features a clean, soft taste.

NOLA Brewing founder Kirk Coco says that Tulane reached out about a year ago, looking to create a partnership similar to those enjoyed by Bayou Teche Brewing and University of Louisiana at Lafayette and Tin Roof Brewing and LSU in Baton Rouge.

“We thought an easy-drinking kristalweizen would be a great beer to drink at the game,” Coco says. “It took a while to get all the paperwork in order with the NCAA and SEC, though.”

In Hammond, Cari and Zac Caramonta, founders of Gnarly Barley Brewing, were recently crowned as 2016's Southeastern Louisiana University Young Alumni of the Year. The two met while attending college at Southeastern and have been very active and visible alumni since graduating.

“They've been asking about doing a collaboration for a long time,” Zac says. “But we wanted to wait until our canning line was up and running first.”

Lion Up, a light American wheat ale with plenty of hop flavor, will only be available in stores and bars on the North Shore, including Rouses. The plan is to roll out the first batch in Hammond, then start distributing in Mandeville, Covington, Slidell and the rest of the area for the duration of football season.

Bayou Teche Brewing was the first brewery to go down this path in 2015, when it created Ragin' Cajuns Genuine Louisiana Ale to benefit the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. In the past, UL-Lafayette provided advice on building the Arnaudville brewery's water recycling crawfish pond, as well as other technical and scientific issues.



The Ragin' Cajuns beer, a light kölsch style brew made with Louisiana rice, found instant popularity not only at the school's sporting events, but also among the general public. The increased demand caused Bayou Teche to undergo significant expansion in 2017 in order to keep up.

Baton Rouge's Tin Roof Brewing was co-founded by Louisiana State University alumnus William McGehee and has a connection with the school that dates back to the brewery's opening, according to Charles D'Agostino, Executive Director of LSU's Innovation Park.

“William [asked us] for assistance in business planning, marketing, raising capital, networking and other aspects necessary to start a business. We linked him with his distributor and the LSU AgCenter for technical assistance with things like fermentation, raw materials, processes and equipment.”

In return, the unofficial brewery of LSU became official with an LSU-branded beer called Bayou Bengal, released just in time for the 2016 tailgate season. It's an American-style pale lager chosen by a panel of local, beer-loving volunteers.

These beers provide a delicious and easy way for university alumni and the local general public to support these Louisiana institutions.

“Not everybody can write a \$10,000 check to their alumni association, but *anyone* can pick up a six-pack of beer,” Kirk Coco says.

It's also about creating a relationship with the wider community, says Karlos Knott, president of Bayou Teche Brewing.

“If they had designed the packaging [by slapping] football helmets and mascots on the box with the school's logo, they still would have sold a lot of beer. But by designing the packaging and the marketing more as a beer celebrating the wider Cajun and Creole community in South Louisiana, leaving the only mentions of the school to the bottom of the six-pack carrier, they have ensured that the beer sells well year-round, not just during football and baseball seasons. Folks here are proud of their shared heritage.” ■

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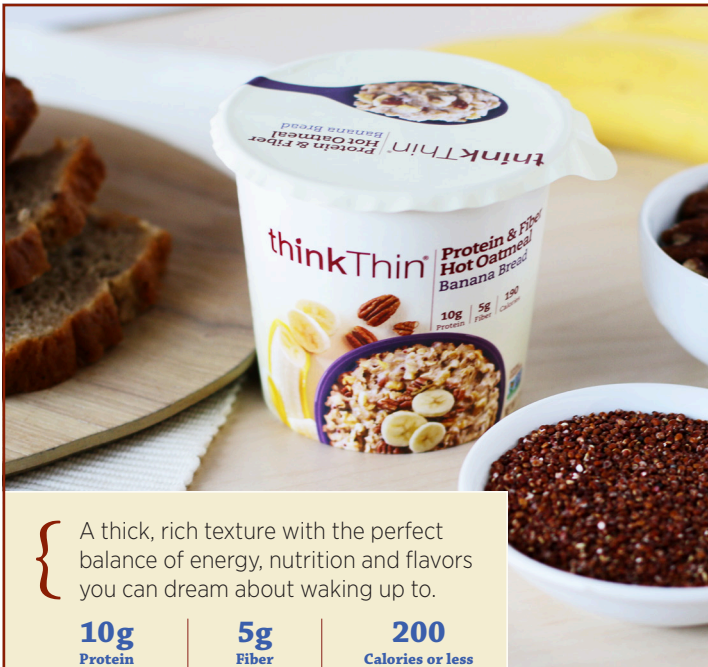
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RIPE FOR THE PICKIN'

by Crescent Dragonwagon

Avocados are having a moment. From fantastical, photographic, hashtagged caprices on Instagram to the springing up of “avocado toast” on menus coast to coast and appearances on countless “top ten nutritional superfoods” lists; from moving past guacamole to being the featured ingredient in such dishes as soup (chilled, mostly, but occasionally hot), salads, bowls, sandwiches galore, smoothies, green drinks and milkshakes, even dessert — puddings! pies! ice cream! — the avocado is right smack dab in the middle of its 15 minutes of fame.

If you want proof, go to Brooklyn, New York, the borough felt by many (certainly its residents) to be the epicenter of hip,

where the Avocaderia, “the world’s first avocado bar ... for your indulgence, for your well-being,” is located. You can start with a “Chill out” (avocado on multigrain bread, with chili flakes), groove to “Beets & blue” (an avocado mash salad with beets, arugula, blue cheese and arugula), have a smoked salmon “Avoburger” for your main course, and conclude with an Avocado “chocolate mousse.” Who could ask for more ... except those who might like a little less.

And yet, if avocados are having a moment, one is tempted to ask, what’s time to an avocado? After all, remains found in what is modern-day Peru carbon-date the avocado to nearly 15,000 years of age. At that point, avocados were wild, gathered

by our forebears in frost-free, subtropical climates throughout Central America and into present-day California. But after about 10,000 years of gathering avocados (which are, by the way, members of the laurel family, which also contains such culinary stars as bay leaf and cinnamon), human beings said, “Enough is enough,” and started growing the fruit themselves.

Either way, that’s an awfully long time and distinguished history for something that’s ending up in the preciously named “Quinoa & friends” (another Avocaderia offering, with fashionable ingredients *du jour*: avocados with kale, fennel and quinoa — cooked *and* puffed quinoa, no less).

Surely avocados deserve less trendiness.



But there is one way that the avocado embodies the essence of timeliness. That is in the fruit's silky ripeness. Creamy, buttery-smooth, tender, unctuous, a pale yet vivid and seductive shade of green; whether you eat it sweet or savory; smooth or chunked; in salad, soup, sandwich or smoothie; there is no mistaking a ripe avocado's rich, one-of-a-kind perfection.

With avocados, ripeness is everything. And the moment between unripe and overripe, the window of time in which avocado perfection is reached but not yet gone, is brief, as was well-stated in a sign I once saw by a bin of avocados: not yet, not yet, not yet, not yet, now, too late — the Avocados

Let us consider these three phases:

The Not Yet Avocado: Unready

How to Identify It: Place the avocado in your palm and squeeze the fruit gently. Avocado in this phase is rock-hard; throw one at someone's head and you could cause serious damage. If it is a Hass, the most common commercial avocado variety, you'll also get a visual clue: the unripe avocado's slightly pebbly skin is a dark but recognizable green.

What It's Like: An unripe avocado is difficult to cut open and resists being separated from its peel or having its pit removed. Which is just as well; the under-ripe avocado's texture is hard, unyielding and very disappointing in flavor — the characteristic creamy avocado taste is faint, replaced by a mild but unpleasant bitterness.

What to Do About It: If you have a hard avocado, do not cut it open. Wait! It will ripen, depending on how hard it is, in two to four days. If you need to speed up the ripening process, place hard avocados in a paper or canvas bag (something that does not let in light) with a couple of bananas and/or apples. The ethylene gas the fruits emit will speed the ripening remarkably, cutting the wait in half.

The Now Avocado: Ready

How to Identify It: Place the avocado in your palm and squeeze the fruit gently. If the avocado is in this phase, it will give, just a little, yielding gracefully to pressure. Ah! This is what you want. Again, if it is a Hass, you'll have a visual: The ripe avocado's skin is no longer bright green but a very purplish-black, with green undertones.

What It's Like: Here is the creamy, tender, platonic ideal. The texture is like butter when it's barely at room temperature, the flavor incomparable: a nutty-buttery, savory-sweet taste. Sure, you can fancy it up in a million ways, but with a sprinkle of coarse salt and spritz of lime or lemon, it is scrumptious eaten straight from the skin (minus the pit, of course) with a spoon.

What to Do About It: Score the peel vertically, pressing the knife in until it reaches the pit and rotating it in your hand. Then, take the avocado in two hands and twist lightly. The two halves will come apart smoothly (you can't do this maneuver if it's underripe). Remove the pit. Slide your thumb (or a spoon) along one end, between the skin and the flesh, and push forward. Out will come that nice, perfectly ripe avocado half. Prepare in any way you like.

The Too Late Avocado: Non-Negotiably Past Its Prime; You Blew It

How to Identify It: Place the avocado in your palm and ... well, you won't even have to squeeze; these avocados are soft and mushy. Again, with a Hass, you can verify this visually: the skin, loose in places and not nicely plumped out, is now black, not purplish-black.

What It's Like: Such avocados, sadly, are mushy, not creamy; the satiny green smoothness that was (for what seemed a fleeting moment) ripened perfection has given way to a stringy-textured, brownish-red-veined flesh that is fibrous, unpleasant texturally, and with little or none of the characteristic creamy flavor. There may also be brown "gooshy."

What to Do About It: Maybe, just maybe, if the avocado is only a tiny bit beyond its prime, you can cut out the brown spots and salvage some of the rest. But forget it if you see any of the veins. Know that, next time, you need to remember that that avocado, though the process was not visible, was doing what it was supposed to do — ripening right there in the bag with the bananas and apples.

The avocado is, like Goldilocks' three bears, a triad where only one choice is "just right." But unlike in Goldilocks, where perfection was relative ("too big" and "too small" and "just right" being sized to her), avocados are more instructive in their lesson: underripe, ripe or overripe. "Strike when the iron is hot," we say, though few of us forge iron — and if we did, we would know that the iron could be reheated, if necessary. But with an avocado, there is no do-over, and ripe is not a relative condition.

Thus, though the avocado may be having its moment in the sun, it is always both timeless and timely. It will generously bring forth its fruit in tropical places, for as long as we have a world. Yet each of those fruits will have one particular moment, a moment perhaps 12 hours long, in which its perfect ripeness speaks to and satisfies our cravings perfectly.

In this, an avocado tells us: Don't wait. Be here now. *Carpe diem*. An avocado tells us: I am ready. An avocado says: Please eat me.

May we listen (and not only where avocados are concerned). May we squeeze gently, and know ripeness when we see, feel and taste it. ■



by Brad Gottsegen



As I recall, my first taste of alcohol was around 1977, when I was age 10 or so. It was a sip of Tanqueray and tonic stolen from my mother's unsupervised tumbler while she concentrated on a particularly intense game of gin rummy at the beach. My second taste was most likely a swallow of Dixie Beer on my dad's sailboat, though this one was not only allowed, but encouraged. Dad was kind of a beer snob way before there was such a thing as a beer snob or people drinking it out of brandy snifters — the only bottles I remember being in our refrigerator had that instantly recognizable, green-and-white Dixie label. In high school, the cool guys (I was most certainly not a cool guy) wore Dixie trucker hats to The Butterfly and whatever bars were lenient enough with their age policy (we called it “getting carded”) to allow 16-year-olds in. And no man of discriminating taste would ever gorge on a Domilise's shrimp or oyster po-boy without a frozen schooner of Dixie to wash that deliciousness down.

Locals are fiercely passionate about hometown brands. Along with Barq's root beer, Dixie was *the* iconic New Orleans beverage. And then Katrina came and literally washed it away. Joseph and Kendra Bruno had owned Dixie since 1985. When the legendary Dixie plant on Tulane Avenue was heavily damaged by the flood, they continued manufacturing, but at a commissary brewery in Wisconsin.

But soon, Dixie will be coming home, with the help of another beloved local institution: the New Orleans Saints. In July, just in time for the 110th anniversary of the company, Saints and Pelicans owner Tom Benson and his wife Gayle announced that they had purchased a majority stake in the organization. And although operations are currently based in Memphis, Tennessee, as part of the ownership agreement, the Bensons have committed to building a new Dixie Brewery in Orleans Parish within the next two years. Like a phoenix rising from the ashes, the original 1907 recipe Dixie, *our* Dixie, is back and currently available in retail outlets across the area including, of course, your neighborhood Rouses Market. And for sports fans around here (let's face it — who in South Louisiana *isn't* a sports fan?), Dixie will be sold at upcoming Saints and Pelicans games. For the weight-conscious folks and dark beer lovers among us, the new Dixie Light and craft Dixie Blackened Voodoo Lager are also part of the refreshed lineup of offerings.

Like many other cities across the country, New Orleans has experienced an explosion of craft breweries over the last 10-15 years, with a new one seemingly popping up every few months. There are lots of witty names and interesting ingredients among them. The Bensons have made it clear that one of their goals in bringing Dixie back to New Orleans is not to saturate the craft beer scene even further, but to help it continue in its growth. With their resources, typically unavailable to the smaller players, they plan to create apprenticeships, educational programs and increased visibility for the industry as a whole so that, in the long run, a supply of knowledgeable and experienced workers will be available to all of the local breweries, a critical element to any business's sustainability plan.

New Orleans is a city that thrives and survives in large part on nostalgia. For better or worse (mostly for better), we have a hard time letting go of certain things that have defined us for generations. Yet it's often not until those things are gone that we realize how important they actually were to us, and how they, in some large or small way, helped create our character. For those of us that recognize and appreciate the importance of the old, and how it helps shape the new, the old Dixie is almost home and coming to stay. For that reason alone, go out to Rouses Market and pick up a six-pack — or the next time you go to a ballgame at the Dome or the Smoothie King Center, order up an icy Dixie on draft. You'll be glad you did. ■

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On gamedays at LSU, the Parade Grounds and the rest of the campus surrounding Tiger Stadium become the sixth-largest city by population in the state.

Over two-thirds of Tiger fans tailgate for at least five hours before every game. The tents are usually up by dawn, and sometimes as early as 5pm the day before. Food offerings are elaborate and involve grills, smokers, frying cookers and cast-iron jambalaya pots.

Everybody should have an opportunity to experience an LSU tailgate at least once in their lifetime. As a longtime season ticket holder, John Cruse has been to his fair share. Drinks, he says, have always been an essential part of the equation.

“For years, our setup was not much fancier than a folding-table bar with a lineup of bottles, plus a well-stocked cooler of beer,” says John. “Trying to find a mixer, juice or garnish for a drink was harder than getting a win against Alabama.”

Some tailgaters don’t want anything more complicated than a cold beer, but Cruse is a founding member of a cocktail club and appreciates a well-made cocktail. “One day it occurred to me that it is possible to tailgate and have a quality cocktail, even if it is served in a plastic Solo cup.”

The cocktails change with the season — and the game.

Cruse and his wife Melissa make the drinks in batches the morning of the game, then put them in large sealed containers or sealable pitchers for travel to Tiger Stadium. “You can make the simple syrup in advance — it needs to sit anyway — but you don’t want to make the drinks the night before, especially if they contain fruit juice — the taste changes too much over time.”

Fresh ice, for serving, is critical. “Don’t just grab ice out of the beer cooler,” John says. “We keep an ice chest that’s dedicated to just fresh, clean ice.”

At LSU, anyone and everyone is invited to join the tailgate, even fans of the opposing team. “Once the word gets out that you are serving craft cocktails at your tailgate, you can expect a line as long as the bathrooms in the North End.” ■

Tiger Tai *Serves 16*

Classic tiki drinks like mai tais are made with fresh fruit juices and rum. During the often hot and sultry months of September and October, they’re just the ticket for keeping cool at tailgates. This version uses Old New Orleans Amber Rum, which is a blend of rums aged at least 3 years. It’s a good rum for mixing.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- 32 ounces (4 cups) Appleton Estate Rum, or any Jamaican dark rum
- 32 ounces (4 cups) Old New Orleans Amber Rum
- 26 ounces (3 cups, 2 ounces) fresh squeezed lime juice
- 8 ounces (1 cup) simple syrup
- 10 ounces (1 cup, 2 ounces) Orgeat (almond syrup)
- 16 ounces (2 cups) orange curaçao
- Mint for garnish

HOW TO PREP

Make the simple syrup the night before. The morning of the tailgate, pour all ingredients into a large, sealable container and stir well. Add 8 cups of ice and stir again. Before serving, shake or stir again. Pour over a cup of ice. Garnish with mint and a purple & gold umbrella.

Bayou Tiger Shark *Serves 16*

When my buddy Vico comes to an LSU game with us, he always brings a big batch of tiki cocktails, like this “mai tai meets rum runner” concoction. I’ve substituted the rums in his recipe for local ones made with fresh sugarcane to add a bit of the bayou. Bayou White Rum is made in Lacassine, Louisiana. Rougaroux Full Moon Dark Rum is distilled in Thibodaux.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- 21 ounces (2 cups, 6 ounces) New Orleans Amber Rum
- 21 ounces (2 cups, 6 ounces) Bayou White Rum
- 21 ounces (2 cups, 6 ounces) Rougaroux Full Moon Dark Rum
- 21 ounces (2 cups, 6 ounces) fresh squeezed lime juice
- 21 ounces (2 cups, 6 ounces) unsweetened pineapple juice
- 20 ounces (2 cups, 5 ounces) simple syrup
- Lime wheels for garnish

HOW TO PREP

Make the simple syrup the night before. The morning of the tailgate, pour all ingredients into a large, sealable container and stir well. Add 8 cups of ice and stir again. Before serving, shake or stir again. Pour over a cup of ice. Garnish with a lime wheel and plastic tiger.

Simple Syrup

Use a 1:1 ratio of water to sugar or agave nectar. Adjust according to your needs, making more for larger batches of cocktails.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- 1 cup water
- 1 cup sugar (or agave nectar)

HOW TO PREP

In a small saucepan, heat the water (don’t boil it) and stir in the sugar until it is dissolved, about 3 minutes. Remove from the heat and let cool completely. The syrup can be refrigerated in a glass jar for up to 1 month.

Margarita *Serves 16*

It’s hard to beat this classic margarita on gameday. It’s made with 100% agave tequila (mixed tequilas only have to have a minimum of 51% blue agave). No pre-bottled mixer here — this is a scratch batch. Without a doubt, it is our most in-demand tailgate cocktail.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- 56 ounces (7 cups) “100% agave” silver tequila
- 24 ounces (3 cups) agave simple syrup
- 16 ounces (2 cups) fresh squeezed lime juice
- 16 ounces (2 cups) fresh squeezed lemon juice
- 14 ounces (1 cup, 6 ounces) Agavero Orange Liqueur
- Lime wheels for garnish
- Yellow Solo cups
- Purple margarita salt (recipe below)

HOW TO PREP

Make your agave simple syrup the night before. The morning of the tailgate, pour all ingredients into a large, sealable container and stir well. Add 4 cups of ice and stir. Before serving, shake or stir again. Rim a cup with purple salt and fill with ice. Pour in margarita. Garnish with a lime wheel.

Purple Margarita Salt

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- Blue food coloring
- Red food coloring
- 6 tablespoons margarita salt

HOW TO PREP

Pour 2 drops of blue food coloring and 2 drops of red food coloring into a small plastic bag. Seal the bag and shake to combine. Pour 6 tablespoons margarita salt into the plastic bag. Seal the bag and give it a good shake. If the color is not dark enough, add more food coloring, one drop at a time.



IN THE POCKET

words and photo by Bobby Childs

It's gameday. You show up at a tailgate. Your best friends are there, decked out in team colors. Fold-out tables groan under the weight of wings, dogs, barbecue. You'll be stuffing your face soon. But first, you want a sip of something. You walk over to the makeshift bar with anticipation. And your heart sinks, because all you see are no-name whiskies, vodkas and other spirits — the kind of stuff you drank back when you couldn't afford to buy anything halfway decent. It's not that you've become a snob, but you've moved past the age when you're willing to settle for second-best, especially where your spirit of choice is concerned.

I have an easy solution for next time: Bring a flask.

Look, you know what you like to drink. Why take a chance? Bring it with you. Think of it as an insurance policy: You can't guarantee who'll win the game, but you know *you'll* win the tailgate.

Hip flasks are nothing new; they've been around for ages. The earliest were made from leather, then silver and glass. Their heyday was during prohibition, but nowadays, they're making a strong comeback.

I own flasks — both vintage and new — in a variety of shapes and sizes. These days, flasks are typically composed of stainless steel, often sporting a stylish leather exterior. You can also find practical, utilitarian plastic models. There are thin, discreet flasks that hold a couple of ounces, and larger sizes that will hold a few bottles worth of liquor. To be clear, those jumbo flasks are designed for sharing.

The main function of a flask is to hold a distilled spirit for just a short period of time — for a few days at most. It's not a permanent storage solution. I'd probably dump whatever's leftover after three or four days if I didn't finish it at the game. Really, don't keep your whiskey in there for months. Spirits last almost forever, but they're designed to “live” in the glass bottle they came in, not a temporary vessel that might alter the taste of them over time. Where tailgating is concerned, the portability of the pocket flask makes it pretty indispensable, since you might have to hike to the tailgate area, possibly carrying chairs, picnic baskets, coolers and all the other necessities of this football season ritual.

As far as what to put in your flask, well, that's up to you, as long as it is a distilled spirit. I carry bourbon or a single malt, but you can do rum, brandy, vodka, gin — whatever you're in the mood for. Fill it with one of your favorites, because no one is going to judge you on what you're drinking. But be forewarned — if you tell them, they may want a sip.

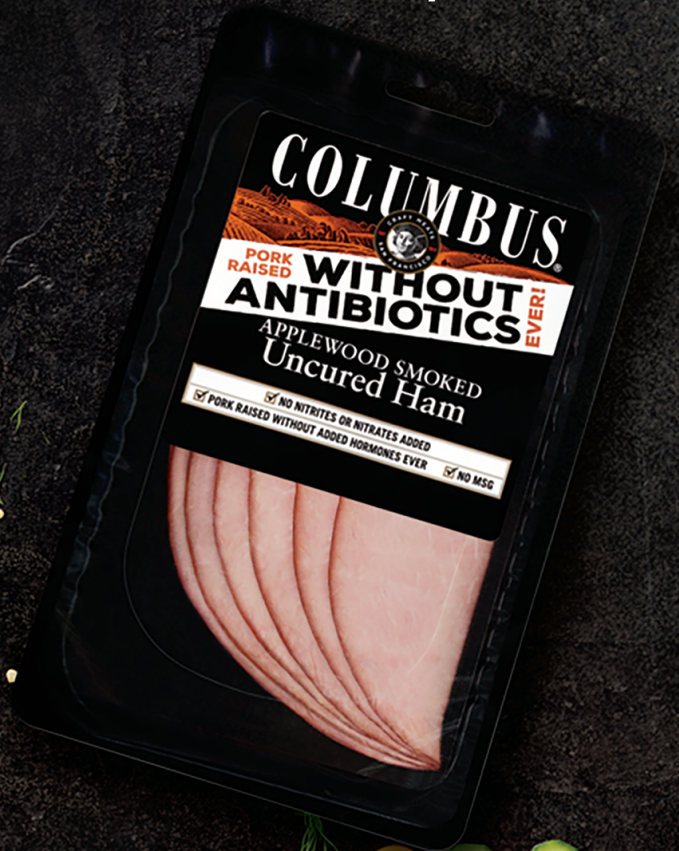
Lastly, flask care is really easy. Just rinse it with warm water and a drop of soap when you get home. Make sure it's completely rinsed clean. Shake out any excess water when you're done, then turn it upside down on a drainboard and let it air dry. One more tip: When I go to press my flask into service and it's been a while since I last used it, I always give it a good rinse before filling with my spirit of choice. That way, my drink tastes clean and fresh, no matter what's happening on the field. ■

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SPAGHETTI with
creamy sun-dried tomato
& goat cheese pasta sauce

Ingredients:

- 1 (1-lb.) pkg. DeLallo Spaghetti
- 1 (6.7-oz.) jar sun-dried tomatoes
- 1/4 cup pine nuts
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- 1/3 cup DeLallo Grated Romano
- 2 tbsp. chopped fresh basil
- 1 tbsp. DeLallo Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1 tsp. fine sea salt
- 5 oz. soft goat cheese
- 1/2 cup heavy cream

Directions:

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil for pasta. Cook according to package directions.

Pulse tomatoes, pine nuts, garlic and Romano in a food processor until just roughly chopped. Add basil leaves, olive oil and salt, then pulse to smooth pesto consistency.

In a large saucepan, combine tomato pesto mixture, goat cheese and cream. Stir over low heat until incorporated. Toss hot pasta with sauce and cook together for another 2 minutes to coat.

• We love this served with meatballs.

Visit DeLallo.com for more recipes.