

THE LOCAL

PALATE

FOOD CULTURE OF THE SOUTH

TRAVEL SOUTH

25+
TASTY
ESCAPES

A GUIDE TO COASTAL, MOUNTAIN,
& CITY GETAWAYS

The
GREY MARKET
SAVANNAH

The **GREY MARKET**

TAKE OUT

LUNCH COUNTER

GROCERIES

SUNDRIES

COFFEE

MASHAMA BAILEY and
JOHNO MORISANO of
THE GREY put Savannah
at the heart of their
new book.



SNAPSHOT: **BIRMINGHAM**
Birmingham

By Rebecca Lemelin Gann

Once known only as a destination for Southern comfort classics, like barbecue and meat-and-threes, in recent years **Birmingham** has become a hot spot for rising chefs, adventurous eaters, and an evolving craft beer scene. The Southern Foodways Alliance hosts one of its annual symposia here and *Food & Wine* now calls it home, turning Birmingham into a new culinary hub of the South. James Beard award winners and nominees have migrated to town to stake their claim on the city's quickly expanding offerings, and homegrown talents are stretching their repertoire with multicultural influences. The results? A city chock-full of chef-driven menus and upscale dining options, plus the Southern icons we've come to know and love.

GET ACQUAINTED

Park yourself at the **Elyton Hotel**, where hip meets historic, especially upstairs in the iconic rooftop bar. Once settled, head to **Railroad Park**, Birmingham's 19-acre greenspace, and stroll to **Good People Brewing Company** at the west end of the park. When you're ready for something stronger, look to **Queen's Park**, which features an extensive list of classic and Tiki cocktails from

award-winning bartender Laura Newman. You're also a quick walk to **Helen**, Rob McDaniel's new downtown restaurant, named after and inspired by his grandmother's kitchen. There, he serves up vegetable-forward sides and large-cut prime steaks and chops family-style. Don't skip his tomato pie, a spicy take on the Southern classic. To get to know one of the founders and first major influencers of fine-dining Southern cuisine,



from farmers, florists, artisans, bakers, and more. It's also home to one of Birmingham's culinary godfathers, Chris Hastings, whose newcomer **OvenBird** showcases a Southern take on the live fire and tapas traditions of Spain and South America. (Don't miss out on the notorious beef fat candle.) His original **Hot & Hot Fish Club**, just across the street, still brings him national acclaim. Post-market, walk a block to Adam Evan's **Automatic Seafood & Oysters** where you're transported to the coast with oysters and Alabama crab claws, as well as an

approachable wine list and frozen cocktails. For dinner, the octopus a la plancha and duck fat-poached fresh catch are not to be missed. Just a block away, local hangout **TrimTab Brewing Co.** specializes in fruited sours, dessert stouts, hazy IPAs, and experimental small batches.

END ON A HIGH NOTE

There's only one thing left to conquer: Sunday brunch. **The Essential** has you covered with a frosé 75, sous-vide steak and eggs, and salmon benedict—enough to keep you satisfied all the way home.

Birmingham has become a hot spot for rising chefs, adventurous eaters, and an evolving craft beer scene.



visit Frank Stitt's **Highlands Bar & Grill** where the chef melds French influence with Southern ingredients and flavors. Then, cap off the night at the **Atomic Bar & Lounge**, which pays homage to Birmingham-born icons and neighborhood regulars. Beware: Their famous "sex panther" is as deadly and delicious as it sounds. You can wear the garnish (a temporary tattoo) proudly for the rest of your visit.

DO A NEIGHBORHOOD DEEP DIVE

Start the day in historic Avondale, a block sprinkled with breweries and old-school eats, including **Saw's BBQ**. Next door at **Post Office Pies**, dig into a brick-oven pizza complete with perfectly charred crusts and high-quality ingredients, like the "wake n bake," a pie with a mornay base, bacon, sausage, and a fried egg. For dinner, there's

industry-hotspot **Shu Shop**, the city's only izakaya, specializing in handmade ramen and innovative small plates. One of the few late-night spots in town, it's a good place to linger and sip from their extensive list of sake and Japanese whiskies.

STOP AND SHOP

At **Pizitz Food Hall**, you'll find global fare, from Latin-inspired ramen to Alabama's first Ethiopian restaurant. Or, on Saturdays, the Lakeview Design District is buzzing, especially inside **the Market at Pepper Place**. Open in some form yearround, the market offers local goods



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: COURTESY OF OVENBIRD; CALLEB CHANCEY; COURTESY OF PIZITZ FOOD HALL; RACHAEL ROBERTS