



blackberry bliss

*A CELEBRATED
CHEF TAMES
A SOUTHERN
FAVORITE*

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Thoughtful consideration of each ingredient sparks inspiration for Chef Steven Satterfield's ever-fresh menu.



GEORGIA QUAIL IS A PERFECT PAIRING FOR A BLACKBERRY-STREWN SALAD. BOTH QUAIL AND BLACKBERRIES THRIVE IN THE GEORGIA HEAT.





THIS MONTH—ALONG FENCEROWS AND HIGHWAYS, vacant lots and backyards—miles of brambles are bearing small, wild rose-like flowers and green clusters of not-yet-ripe blackberries. While the fruit won't be ready for a month or so, now is the time to buy jars and lids, to collect pails and buckets, to obtain some gloves—really long, thick gloves. Picking blackberries is an adventure and one should be prepared to swat at bees, scale chain-link fences or navigate through barbed wire.

Blackberries grow prolifically in temperate parts of the United States; they seem to like the poor soil conditions and thrive under the hot Southern sun, soaking it up and making the fruit special—sweet with a hint of sour, and undeniably wild. But a wild food source is much more than a free product. Food that's foraged carries with it the taste of its specific soil, and personally gathering it somehow imparts flavor. Compared to cultivated produce, the fruit might not look as appealing, but there are flavor profiles and a "mouth-feel" in wild fruit that is lost



Ingredients for a blackberry cordial recipe are *mise en place*, awaiting preparation. Satterfield has been experimenting with a newly developed idea for a blackberry, goat cheese and leek tart.





in breeding and cultivation.

Steven Satterfield, the chef/co-owner of Miller Union, devotes himself to pursuing flavor. Chef Satterfield doesn't just toss ingredients into a dish; he knows that when working with seasonal ingredients from multiple sources, whether wild or farmed, the flavors will vary. So he tastes and adjusts, then repeats. Committed to changing his menu often, Satterfield pours over books and reaches into his own past to coax flavors out of ingredients and onto the plate. The resulting dishes are at once traditional and modern, and definitively Southern.

A native of Savannah, Satterfield moved to Atlanta to attend Georgia Tech, where he studied architecture. But at the same time, the talented musician and songwriter was nurturing a budding music career. He supported himself by working at a couple of humble-but-good restaurants before landing a job in the kitchen of Decatur's Watershed Restaurant, where he had the opportunity to cook with treasured Southern chef Scott Peacock. What's more, Edna Lewis—the Grand Dame of Southern Cooking and Chef Peacock's mentor—was still living at the time, and occasional visits with her greatly impacted Satterfield, resulting in some true kitchen wisdom. After working as a cook for nearly a decade and eventually being named executive sous chef at Watershed, Satterfield left to open Miller Union with co-owner Neal McCarthy in the vibrant Westside neighborhood.

Last summer, Satterfield conducted an exploration of blackberries, both wild and cultivated, coming up with recipes that celebrate the fruit while highlighting the berry's little pops of flavor. Some traditional uses resulted, such as a dessert topping, and the placement of the fruit alongside quail married two wild Georgia flavors, allowing them to play together in a natural way. Chef Satterfield also tossed the berries onto a tart with ribbons of leeks and fresh goat cheese. And, obsessed with pickling and preserving, he packed blackberries in a jar with vinegar and herbs, yielding orbs of bursting fruit and tangy juice that brought an untamed element to a structured salad. There's even a nod to Edna Lewis and Chef Peacock at the Miller Union bar, where the blackberry cordial recipe from *The Gift of Southern Cooking* (the celebrated book co-authored by Lewis and Peacock) is the base for many summer cocktails.

The berries are green, just turning pink and red now, but they'll be ready before you know it. And, one last time: Prepare yourself. Block out a weekend, gather the kids, get some snake boots and slather on sunscreen because the wild world of blackberry foraging awaits you. For Satterfield's recipes featured in this story, visit atlantahomesmag.com/blackberries



Tart blackberries are the perfect foil to the sweetness of crème caramel. For the baking of the blackberry, goat cheese and leek tart, work the dough onto the back of a sheet pan. It conducts the proper amount of heat in the oven and helps keep the rectangular shape of the tart intact.

SATTERFIELD LOVES PICKLING. THESE PICKLED BLACKBERRIES ARE THE BEAUTIFUL RESULT OF A BUMPER CROP.

