DINING

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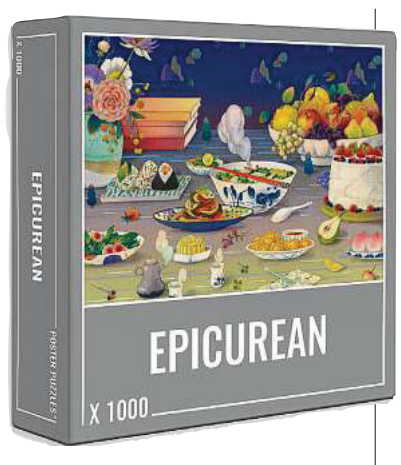
HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE IN THE KITCHEN AND ON YOUR PLATE

Gifts for discerning tastes

Washington Post

For the weekend bakers, home cooks and dinner party hosts in your life, consider these sweet gift ideas – edible and otherwise.



Cloudberries: Epicurean Jigsaw Puzzle

■ If you want to give someone a good after-dinner activity, try a 1,000-piece puzzle featuring food scenes that are almost as beautiful as the meal they just prepared. Made from recycled materials.
$20.33 at cloudberries.co.uk

Kuhn Rikon: Swiss Easy Clean Peeler

■ Every home cook needs a vegetable peeler in their arsenal, but good ones are tough to find. This one is lightweight, sharp, durable and includes a brush to clean the blade. An America's Test Kitchen Pick.
$7 at kuhnrikon.com

Cereria Introna: Ricotta Candle

■ This candle looks good enough to eat. It's a quirky tablescape addition for anyone in your life who loves to entertain and has a soft spot for cheese.
$34 at gohar.world

Cornishware: Blue Egg Cups

■ These quintessentially British blue-and-white-striped egg cups will make your recipient's breakfast feel like a special occasion every morning. **$34.99** (set of four) at joannehudson.com

Instant Pot: Vortex Plus 6-Quart 6-in-1 Air Fryer Oven

■ The versatile Vortex Plus is several appliances in one: Use it to air fry, roast, broil, bake, reheat or dehydrate your food and still have counter space to spare.
$129.99 at bestbuy.com

Burlap & Barrel: Spice Club annual subscription

■ Spice up someone's life with this subscription that includes four seasonal shipments of four full-size single-origin spices, such as toasted onion, herbes de Provence and black lime.
$180 at burlapandbarrel.com

MADE IN GEORGIA

Despite name, Bundt-ish all about pound cakes

Couple thriving with business founded during pandemic.

By C.W. Cameron
For the AJC

Those who come to Bundt-ish expecting Bundt cakes baked in pans with fluted sides instead will find pound cakes in almost a dozen varieties, made by hand, baked in simple tube pans and decorated prettily.

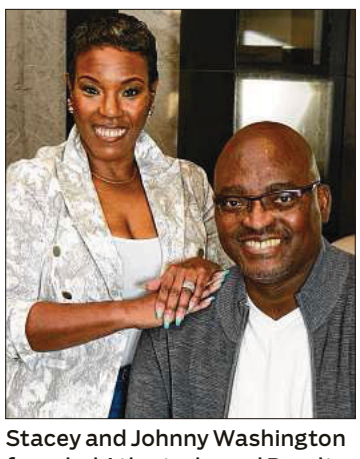
The Atlanta business was founded in October 2021 by Johnny Washington and his wife, Stacey. Washington said the idea began when they were searching for a delivered pound cake during the early days of the pandemic. Not finding one, they recognized a niche they could fill.

Originally, they thought they would be making Bundt cakes – hence, the name. But, the more they experimented with recipes, the more they were drawn to cakes baked in the simple tube pans that reminded them of what their grandmothers made.

Washington fell in love with pound cakes as a child. "Eating a pound cake is like time travel for me," he said. "My grandmother would bribe me to go to church by telling me there was a pound cake waiting for me at the end of the service. And Stacey's grandmother would send pound cakes from Orangeburg, South Carolina, to Stacey at Morris Brown College. Everybody in her building would rush to her room when the package arrived."

Johnny Washington, the CEO of Bundt-ish, is a Mercer University graduate with a master's in business administration. Stacey Washington is the president, responsible for the creative side of the business. With her grandmother's recipes not available, she spent a year developing recipes and doing much of the baking herself. The couple wanted a cake that was dense but moist, overcoming the objection they heard so often, that pound cakes are too dry.

The Best Lemon Pound Cake Ever was one of the original five flavors when Stacey and Johnny Washington launched Bundt-ish. Gradually, they increased the line to 11 varieties. ELEA VESELOVA FOOD PHOTOGRAPHY



Stacey and Johnny Washington founded Atlanta-based Bundt-ish in October 2021. KIM EVANS KO PHOTOGRAPHY

"We went through what seemed like a thousand recipes," Johnny Washington said. "A lot of our friends gained weight. Our friends' friends gained weight. We got those cakes into the hands of people who would give us an honest assessment. Would they buy this cake?"

They searched for packaging that would be different from the traditional pink, brown or white bakery boxes. "When we found someone with this blue-green box," he said, "we knew it was the color that would set us apart, and we knew those boxes had to be wrapped and presented with a big white bow."

The couple launched the business with five varieties, including Church Lady Classic and Best Lemon Pound Cake Ever. Gradually, they increased the line to 11 varieties, including lemon-blueberry pound cake, a celebration pound cake (with colorful sprinkles inside and out), and a chocolate cookie crunch pound cake that has chocolate-filled cookie chunks baked inside and crumbled on top of the vanilla glaze. All are available for delivery anywhere in the continental U.S.

The Washingtons also have partnered with Macon-based Z Beans Coffee. "While we were in the development process," Washington said, "a lot of people would say, 'Man, this cake goes so well with my coffee in the morning.' With that feedback, we knew we wanted our own brand of coffee."

That partnership resulted from a Mercer University feature article about Washington being an alumnus, which led to him connecting with Max Burke of Z Beans Coffee, the son of another alum. Together, they created a special blend, and Bundt-ish began selling it in July.

More cake varieties are in the pipeline, but the couple also are looking at other items that complement cake, such as homemade toppings, and they plan to offer local pickup and delivery in 2023.

Washington said the biggest challenge is one that faces all business owners: remembering to focus on what's right in front of you.

"When you get caught up in planning for six months from now, you lose sight of what's important in this moment," he said. "Take things one step at a time. I call it my 'crawl, walk, run' theory. It's a process, and you have to go through it."
Bundt-ish, A Pound Cakery. bundtish.com

DINING RECAP
PISCO LATIN KITCHEN
Look for the latest restaurant review every Friday in our Go Guide section.

Pisco Latin Kitchen's Cuban sandwich is notable for its bread, which is crusty, but light. HENRI HOLLIS/HENRI.HOLLIS@AJC.COM

By Henri Hollis
henri.hollis@ajc.com

Three ceviches are offered at Pisco Latin Kitchen, but you can't go wrong with the tradicionale. While the menu says only that it's a fish ceviche, that fish typically is grouper. Each time we tried it, the grouper was mild, clean-tasting and toothsome, with an almost velvety texture after soaking in the restaurant's signature leche de tigre, the citrus marinade that cures the fish.

Lomo saltado, a steak stir-fry dish usually prepared in a wok, is the national dish of Peru. The savory stir-fry is served with rice and also, ingeniously, on top of a bed of french fries, to soak up the extra sauce.

All of the ceviches and wok dishes are served in very generous portions, and at reasonable prices.

Pisco has lighter fare, as well. The guacamole is good, and the Cuban sandwich is excellent, highlighted by fabulous crusty bread. Hidden in the soup and salad section of the menu is an excellent chowder called chupe, made with your choice of fish or shrimp in a hearty, creamy broth.

PISCO LATIN KITCHEN
5975 Roswell Road, Sandy Springs. 404-205-5750, piscolk.com

DISH OF THE WEEK

Beef jerky at So So Fed pop-up which has residency at Grant Park's Full Commission Sunday through Tuesdays. ANGELA HANSBERGER FOR THE ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION

BEEF JERKY AT SO SO FED

By Angela Hansberger
For the AJC

It came as no surprise when I learned the name for Laotian beef jerky, "seen savanh," translates to "meat heaven." After a visit to So So Fed, I fully understood the nomenclature as I unabashedly licked my fingers.

At the Laotian-style pop-up, with residency Sundays through Tuesdays at Grant Park's Full Commission, Molli Voraotsady cooks her family recipes, which feature bold, fermented flavors; herbs; fish sauce; and sticky rice.

Her beef jerky is not the tough stuff you might know from hiking trips. This is not merely fuel; it's a destination dish.

The beef is sliced thin, marinated and dried. Flash-fried before serving, the exterior has a caramelized glaze, with any bit of fat beautifully rendered, and the meat extremely tender. It's sweet and savory, packed with spices, including ginger, sesame seed and chile flakes — simple ingredients with maximum flavor.

It's so tender and flavor-packed, that I barely dipped into the spicy, sour habanero jeow dipping sauce.

SO SO FED
519 Memorial Drive SE, Atlanta. 770-750-2578, sosofed.com