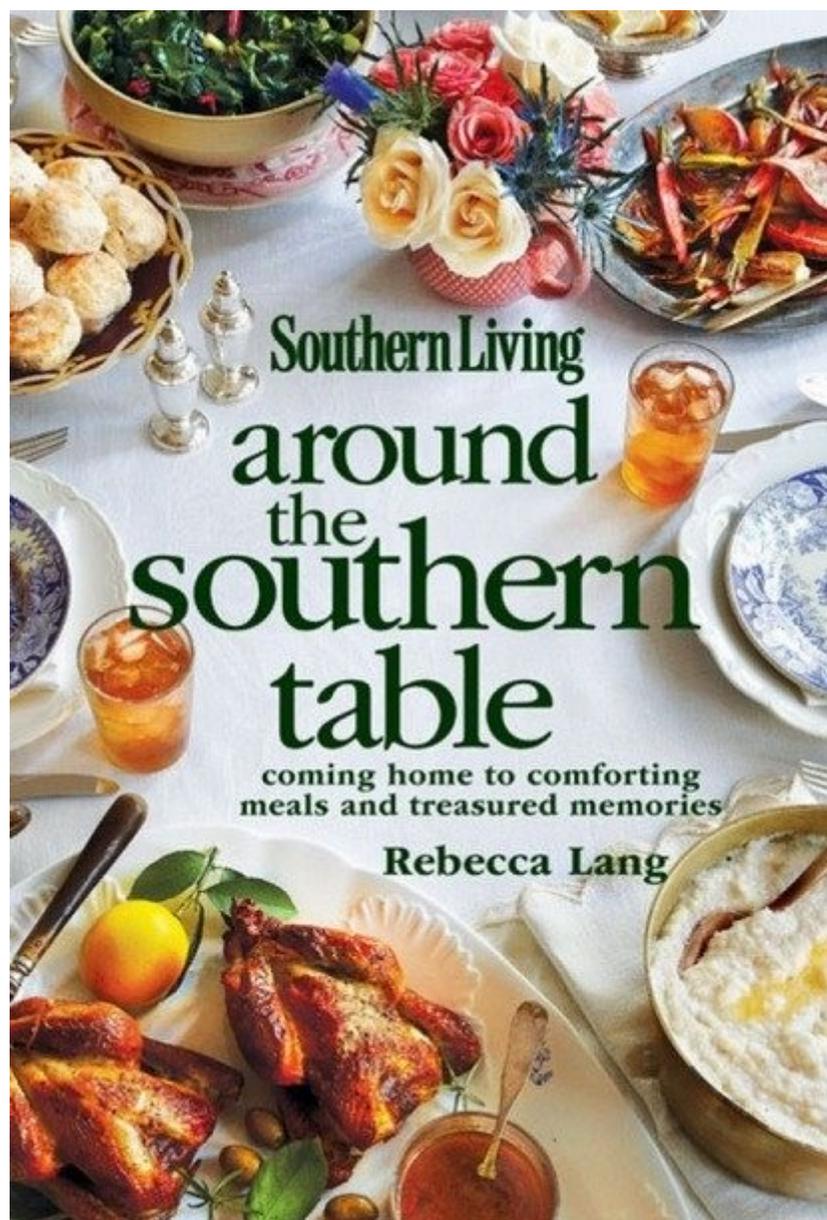


Cook the Book: 'Around the Southern Table'

KATE WILLIAMS



After watching folks like [Hugh Acheson](#) and [Sean Brock](#) nail chef-testants for improper bowls of grits and plates of fried chicken in the last few seasons of [Top Chef](#), it's safe to say that Southern food has hit the mainstream. Dishes (like grits) that were once viewed as the poor-man's version of polenta anywhere north of the Mason-Dixon line are now celebrated, reinterpreted, and chef-ified all over.

Sure, there are plenty of fried dishes in the Southern canon, but seasonal vegetables and local seafood also play a big part in the cuisine. More important than the food, however, is the act of gathering friends and family around a well-worn table for a generous meal. This is the driving force behind [Southern Living Magazine's](#) new cookbook, [Around the Southern Table](#), in which contributing editor [Rebecca Lang](#) wields her Southern expertise with ease.

Like the magazine, [Around the Southern Table](#) has a quaint feel, as if the photographs were shot through the Instagram Nashville lens. The recipes are solid, well-tested Southern classics. There are plenty of fried and bacon-

laced recipes—chicken, okra, and green tomatoes each take their turn in hot oil—but the rest of the book is made up of salads, pickles, preserves, and vegetable sides. It's a perfect guidebook for entertaining, everything from a raucous tailgate to an elegant holiday meal at home.

This week, we'll explore some good Southern eating, starting with **Cat-Head Biscuits with Tomato Gravy**, perfect for a leisurely brunch. Next we'll prepare a coastal feast featuring a **Lowcountry Boil**, **Carolina Gold Rice Salad**, and **Spicy Coleslaw**. We'll round out our time in Dixie with a sweetly elegant recipe for **Pine Nut Blondies**.

Win 'Around the Southern Table'

Thanks to the kind folks at Oxmoor House, we have five (5) copies of [*Around the Southern Table*](#) to give away this week. All you need to do to win is tell us about your **favorite Southern dish**--fried or otherwise--in the comments section below.