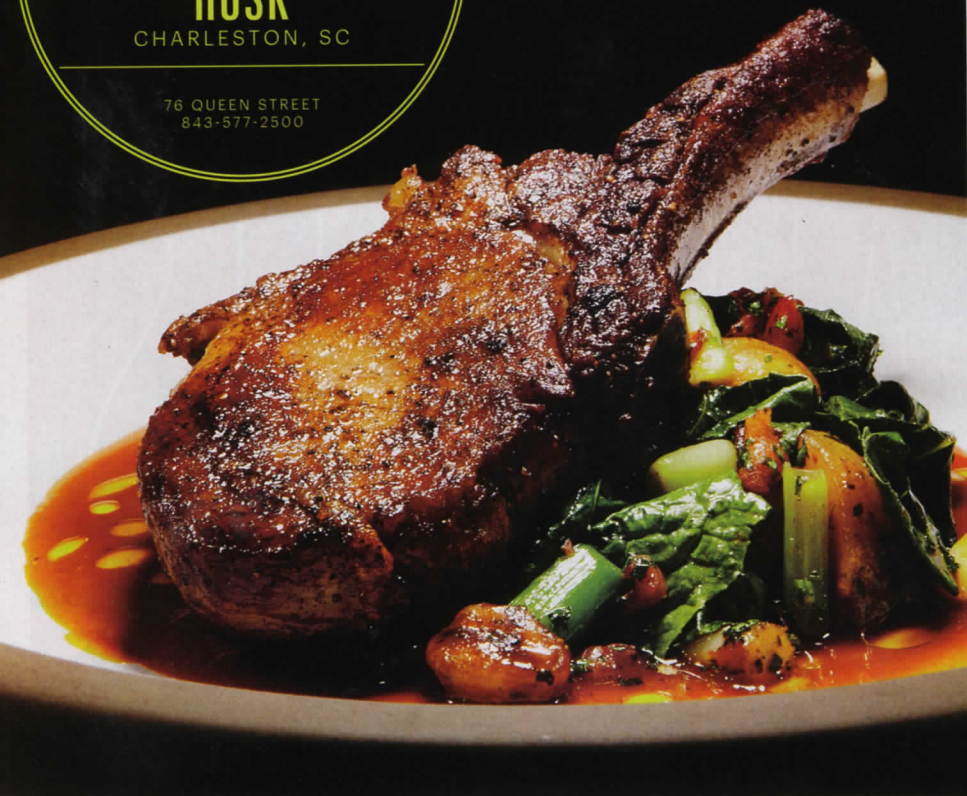


NO. 1

HUSK
CHARLESTON, SC

76 QUEEN STREET
843-577-2500



MY FIRST IMPRESSION

of Husk involved a bowl of boiled peanuts and a shot of bourbon. Not enough to earn the title of Best New Restaurant? Let me explain.

As a son of the South, it's always bugged me that I didn't really grow up eating classic Southern food. My family did the pimiento cheese thing, but I missed out on homemade cast-iron skillet fried chicken, peanut soup, hominy grits, braised collard greens, pickled okra (actually, okra everything), fried green tomatoes, and piles of fluffy biscuits. A few restaurants in my hometown of Atlanta prided themselves on scratch cooking, but their numbers seemed to dwindle every year. Traditional Southern food, it seemed to me, was dying.

And then a few years ago a curious thing happened: Southern-inspired dishes started popping up on menus across the country. My New York friends began asking me about country captain, Brunswick stew, and chess pie. Talented young Southern chefs, perhaps realizing they'd grown up with a food culture that was already "local" and "farm to table," returned to their roots. America's greatest regional cuisine was being rediscovered—and reborn.

This brings me back to the chef responsible for the boiled peanuts and bourbon, Sean Brock. Together with the folks from his molecular gastronomy-driven restaurant, McCrady's, Brock opened Husk in Charleston in November 2010. The historic Victorian house in which it's set is the first indication that the restaurant is a throwback of sorts. And then there are the ingredients he uses in the kitchen, which are all harvested or raised in the South. That even includes vinegar (Brock makes his own; see page 125 for instructions), salt, cheese, and, yes, olive oil (from South Texas, if you're wondering). Brock's self-imposed restrictions separate him from the pack of pretenders. But noble causes alone don't make a restaurant great. In this case it's the fact that Brock is a helluva cook.

A meal at Husk begins with buttermilk dinner rolls sprinkled with benne seeds (a.k.a. sesame seeds). You know how people tell you not to fill up on bread? When you're at Husk, you can ignore them. After that it's on to wood-fired clams with Benton's sausage, crispy pig's-ear lettuce wraps, and country ham-flecked pimiento cheese on heirloom-wheat crackers. And do not leave without trying the smoky fried chicken skins served with hot sauce and honey.

Brock isn't reinventing Southern food or attempting to create some citified version of it. He's trying to re-create the food his grandma knew—albeit with the skill and resources of a modern chef. As a result, he (and Husk) has become a torchbearer for an honest style of home cooking that many of us never truly tasted until now.



Reason to Smile: Husk's Sean Brock and his pork chop with wood-fired leeks, potatoes, and spicy kale. Below: Lamb noodle soup at Mission Chinese Food.

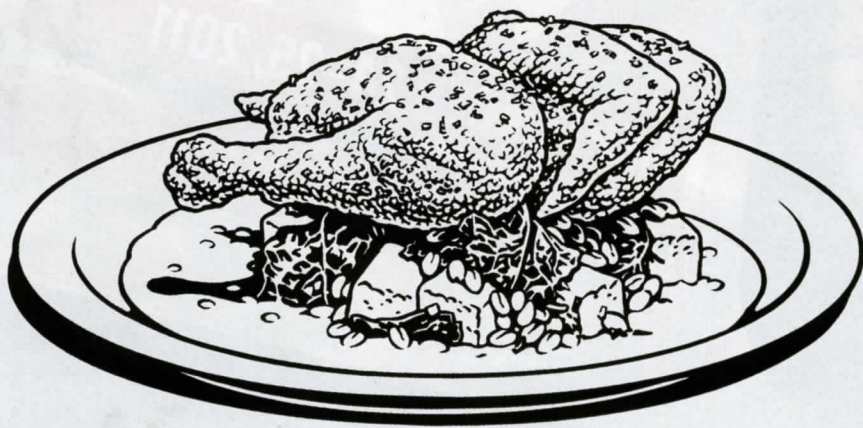
NO. 2

MISSION CHINESE FOOD
SAN FRANCISCO

2234 MISSION STREET
415-863-2800

THE UNLIKELY STORY of this breakout spot goes something like this: Anthony Myint and Karen Leibowitz open a taco truck, Mission Street Food. It lasts four weeks. Next they launch a pop-up restaurant in Lung Shan, a no-frills Chinese place in the Mission District, featuring weekly guest chefs. It eventually matures into this fully operating restaurant, open six days a week. The no-reservations policy means there's always a line. But it's worth the wait to get some of the most out-of-this-world creative (and seriously delicious) Sichuan-inspired dishes in America right now. The cumin lamb belly? Fiery and addictive. Warm egg custard with duck confit and sea urchin? Brilliant. Hot-and-sour pork dumplings made to order? Further proof that the runaway success of MCF is no accident.





COOK THE COVER

WHEN **BA CREATIVE DIRECTOR ALEX GROSSMAN** FLEW TO CHARLESTON, SC, TO OVERSEE OUR COVER SHOOT AT **HUSK**, HE ALSO MANAGED TO EAT PLENTY OF SEAN BROCK'S HOME-STYLE COOKING. THIS RECIPE WAS A PERFECT SOUVENIR FOR HIM TO BRING BACK TO NEW YORK.

SKILLET-ROASTED CHICKEN WITH FARRO AND HERB PISTOU

2-4 SERVINGS "Talk to most chefs and they'll say they'd want a perfectly roasted chicken for their last meal," says Sean Brock. For his definitive version, Brock starts with superflavorful heritage-breed chickens, but the key to the dish is prepoaching the bird in an immersion circulator. Because most home cooks don't have access to this equipment, we adapted the recipe to work in a home kitchen.

- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil plus more for drizzling
- 3 Tbsp. chopped fresh chives, divided
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh thyme
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh chervil
- 1 Tbsp. chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh tarragon
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 tsp. finely grated lemon zest
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper

- 1 2 1/2-3-lb. chicken, halved, backbone removed
- 2 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 2 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- Farro with Acorn Squash and Kale** (see recipe)
- Herb Pistou** (see recipe)
- 1 lemon, halved

Whisk 1/3 cup olive oil, 1 Tbsp. chives, and next 7 ingredients in a medium bowl. Divide marinade between 2 (gallon-size) resealable plastic freezer bags. Season chicken with 2 1/2 tsp. salt; place 1 chicken half in each bag. Seal bags, releasing excess air (for instructions on how to do this, see Prep School, page 134). Chill overnight.

Place bags side by side in a large pot. Add cold water to cover by 2". Heat water over medium heat until an instant-read thermometer registers 150°. Turn off heat, cover, and poach chicken for 50 minutes. Transfer bags to a large bowl of ice water to cool, about 15 minutes. Remove chicken from bags; pat dry.

Preheat oven to 450°. Heat vegetable oil in a large cast-iron skillet over high heat. Add chicken halves, skin side down, so chicken sits against sides of pan. Cook, moving chicken occasionally for even cooking, until skin is browned all over. Flip chicken and transfer skillet to oven. Roast until an instant-read thermometer inserted into thickest part of thigh registers 165°, about 15 minutes. Let rest for 10 minutes.

To serve, divide Farro with Acorn Squash and Kale among plates. Place chicken on top of farro. Drizzle 1/4 cup Herb Pistou around farro. Drizzle 1 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil over each plate. Squeeze lemon halves over chicken. Sprinkle 2 Tbsp. chives over.

FARRO WITH ACORN SQUASH AND KALE

2-4 SERVINGS Farro, an ancient Italian grain similar to barley, is available at specialty foods stores and Italian markets.

- 4 Tbsp. unsalted butter, divided
- 1 small acorn squash, peeled, halved, seeded, cut into 1/2" cubes
- Kosher salt, freshly ground pepper
- 1/2 bunch red Russian or other kale (about 5 oz.), center stems removed, leaves torn
- 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- 3/4 cup farro
- 1/4 cup diced white onion
- 1 small garlic clove, very thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup dry white wine
- 2 cups vegetable stock mixed with 2 cups water, warmed
- 1/4 cup finely grated Parmesan

Preheat oven to 375°. Melt 1 Tbsp. butter in a medium saucepan. Add squash, season lightly with salt and pepper, and toss to coat. Spread out on a rimmed baking sheet. Roast, turning squash every 10 minutes, until tender, 30-35 minutes.

Cook kale in a large pot of boiling salted water until wilted, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a bowl of ice water to cool; drain.

Heat oil in a large ovenproof skillet over medium heat. Add farro; toss to coat. Roast in oven until toasted, stirring once, about 6 minutes. Transfer to a bowl; wipe out skillet.

Melt 2 Tbsp. butter in same skillet over medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until translucent, about 4 minutes. Add garlic; stir until aromatic, about 2 minutes. Add wine; increase heat to high. Stir until almost evaporated, about 2 minutes. Add farro and 1/2 cup warm stock mixture. Stir until almost all liquid is

absorbed, about 3 minutes. Continue cooking, adding broth by ½ cupfuls and allowing broth to be absorbed between additions, until farro is tender, about 1 hour.

Add kale, squash, remaining 1 Tbsp. butter, and cheese; stir gently until butter and cheese are melted and vegetables are heated through, about 2 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

HERB PISTOU
MAKES ABOUT 1 CUP

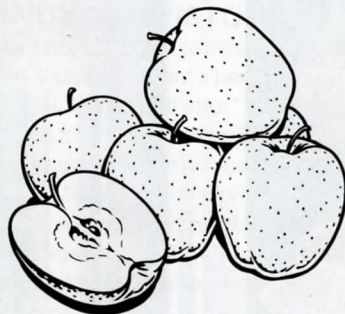
- 1¼ cups flat-leaf parsley
- 1 cup fresh chervil leaves
- ¾ cup fresh tarragon leaves
- Kosher salt
- ½ garlic clove
- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil

Blanch herbs in a large pot of boiling salted water for 10 seconds. Using a slotted spoon, transfer herbs to a medium bowl of ice water to cool. Drain. Squeeze dry; chop. Purée herbs, garlic, and ¾ cup ice water in a blender until smooth, about 3 minutes. With machine running, gradually add oil. Season with salt.

DEAR BON APPÉTIT,

The Apple Crostata served at **Sea Glass** in Cape Elizabeth, ME, is the best use of apples I can think of.

—**HARLAN SLOAT**, *West Haven, VT*



APPLE CROSTATATA

6 SERVINGS *This dessert is a favorite of chef Mitchell Kaldrovich's. "When I moved to Maine, I discovered how great the apples here are," he says. Don't forget to finish it with maple syrup and a scoop of vanilla ice cream. Says Kaldrovich: "It makes the dish."*

- CRUST**
- 2½ cups all-purpose flour
 - 1 tsp. fine sea salt
 - 1 tsp. sugar
 - 1 cup (2 sticks) chilled unsalted butter, cut into ½" cubes

- FILLING**
- ½ cup sugar
 - 2 Tbsp. cornstarch
 - ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
 - ½ tsp. ground nutmeg
 - Pinch of fine sea salt
 - 2½ lb. Golden Delicious apples (about 5 large), peeled, halved, cored, cut into ¼"-thick slices (about 7 cups)
 - 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
 - 1 large egg
 - 2 Tbsp. raw sugar
 - 2 Tbsp. pure maple syrup
 - Vanilla ice cream, vanilla gelato, or sweetened whipped cream

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT: A pastry brush

CRUST Place flour, salt, and sugar in a food processor; pulse to blend. Add butter; pulse just until coarse meal forms. Add ¼ cup ice water; pulse until dough forms clumps, adding more ice water by teaspoonfuls if dough is dry. Gather dough into a ball; flatten into a disk. Wrap dough in plastic and chill 1 hour. **DO AHEAD:** Crust can be made 1 day ahead. Keep chilled. Allow to stand at room temperature for 15 minutes to soften slightly before rolling out.

FILLING Preheat oven to 400°. Place a large sheet of parchment paper on a work surface. Roll out dough disk on parchment paper to 15" round (some of dough will extend over edges of paper).

Whisk sugar, cornstarch, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt in a large bowl. Add apples and lemon juice to bowl with sugar mixture; toss to coat apples evenly.

Transfer apples to crust, mounding in center and leaving a 3" plain border. Scrape out any juices from bowl and drizzle over apples. Fold crust edges up over outer edges of filling, crimping dough and folding and pleating as needed to fit. Slide crostata and parchment onto a large rimless baking sheet. Crack egg into a small bowl. Using a fork, beat egg just to blend. Brush

crust edges with beaten egg, then sprinkle crust with raw sugar.

Place crostata in oven and bake until juices in center are thick and bubbling, about 1 hour. Let cool for 5 minutes. Run a long, thin knife or offset spatula around edges of crostata to loosen from paper and to prevent it from sticking to the paper. Transfer baking sheet with crostata to a wire rack. Brush apples generously with maple syrup. Let crostata cool.

Cut crostata into wedges. Place wedges on plates. Serve with ice cream, gelato, or whipped cream.

DEAR BON APPÉTIT,

My favorite drink at **Upper West** in Santa Monica is the Honey Rye. I'd love to sip it at home.

—**MELISSA BART**, *Marina del Rey, CA*



HONEY RYE

MAKES 2 *For inspiration, co-owner Eyal Raziel looked to his native Israel, where honey liqueur is popular. "The Bärenjäger balances the kick of the rye," he says.*

- 5 Tbsp. rye whiskey
- 3 Tbsp. honey liqueur (such as Bärenjäger)
- ¼ tsp. orange bitters
- Ginger ale
- 2 orange twists

INGREDIENT INFO: Honey liqueur is available at well-stocked liquor stores and online from bevmo.com.

Fill 2 Old Fashioned glasses with ice. Divide rye, honey liqueur, and bitters between glasses. Stir for 5 seconds. Top with a splash of ginger ale. Garnish with orange twists.