



WHERE IS THE SOUTH

A VISUAL RESPONSE

Curated by BITA HONARVAR

IN 2023, THE SOUTHERN FOODWAYS ALLIANCE centers its programming around the question, Where is the South? We ask, How do we identify its edges? Can we mark its coordinates with bourbon, catfish, and birria? Can we map our present South onto the culinary and labor landscapes that preceded it? And what does the tendency to define space with borders tell us about ourselves?

Illustration by
Dèsirée Kelly

I did a bit of research into my great-grandfather Percy, who was born in Arkansas in 1899. He moved to Detroit in 1950 during the Great Migration and worked for an auto factory as a furnace tender. Here, he wears his work uniform with his lunch in hand.





◀ Photo by **Jason B. James**

During a visit to Bali, we stayed in an artist's house in the city of Ubud. There was an open-air restaurant, Made Becik Waroeng, located a short walk from the house, and we ended up eating there every day. Their specialty was sticky pork ribs that were succulently sweet yet spicy enough to produce small beads of sweat on my forehead. The more we ate there, the more the entire meal reminded me of my life in Savannah, Georgia, where I lived at the time. The ribs, the black tea spiked with fresh ginger, the side of juicy tomatoes and fresh cucumber, and the plates of nasi goreng (fried rice) all reminded me of eating in the Lowcountry.

▼ Mixed media illustration by **Ann Madden**

My college friend from Minnesota remarked on her first visit to the South, "I get it! This is a place where you can fill your gas tank and get dinner all in the same spot. And it's GOOD! How can it be this good?" This illustration is inspired by the pleasure of finding such roadside fare.





Illustration by **Delphine Lee**

Is Washington, DC, the South? Many people would say no, yet the DC metropolitan area includes the northern part of Virginia, a decidedly Southern state. Many Southerners come to DC for work and settle down, bringing the South and its culinary culture with them. Here, the border of the South is not a line but a gradation.

Photo by **Sandy Noto**

Cuba feels like a place unto itself, yet it maintains a distinct relationship with Florida. There's the geographic proximity and the flow of people between Havana and Miami. Despite the ongoing trade embargo, Cubans on the island have long been able to pick up radio stations from Florida. As the music scene in Cuba has evolved over the decades, it has incorporated certain sounds and influences from American radio.



chicken
WING
3 LB \$ 8.69

END
CUT PORK CHOPS
4 LB. \$ 7.99



“Run to the Corner Store for Me”

Photo by **L. Kasimu Harris**

While photographing Black Masking Indians in New Orleans' Central City on Mardi Gras Day 2018, I was struck by the hand-painted food ads on the wall of a corner store. This traditionally working-class Black neighborhood has a dearth of fresh food options, and these corner stores have long filled that void.



Illustration by **Jamiel Law**

For this illustration, I imagined a Sunday dinner featuring some of my favorite Southern comfort foods: cornbread, collard greens, macaroni and cheese, fried chicken, and all sorts of desserts that make my heart (and stomach) content. Growing up in Florida, I found this cuisine and hospitality all around me.







Photos by

Aaron R. Turner

My grandmother Fannie Bohanon washes kale, mustard greens, and turnip greens in preparation for a dinner of greens, sweet potatoes, and cornbread at her home in West Memphis, Arkansas, in 2013.

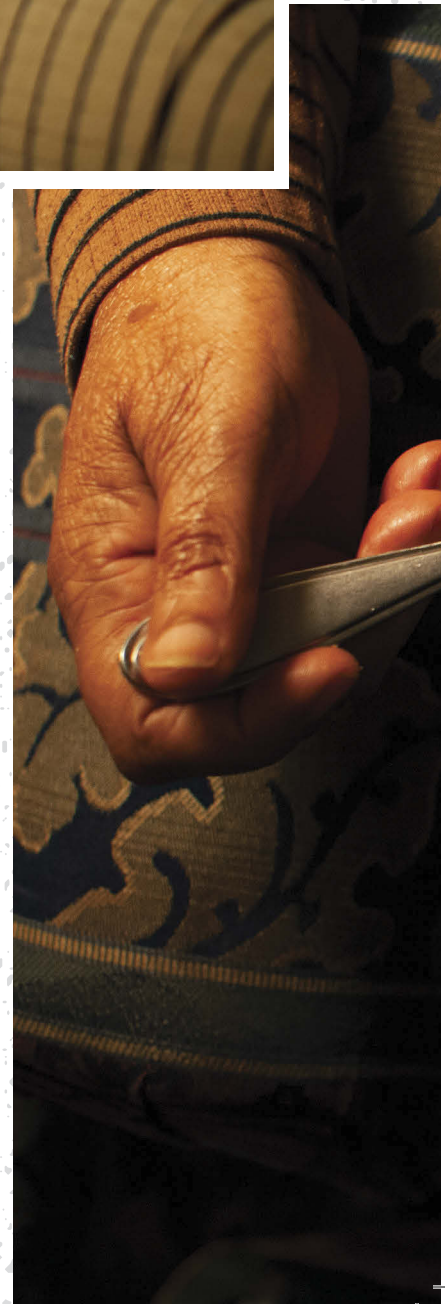




Illustration by

Simone Martin-Newberry

The South exists wherever its history lives—or has been buried. This illustration shows leased convict workers at the Sugar Land Plantation, one of the largest in the state of Texas. The sugarcane that surrounds them is simultaneously depicted as their harvest and their means of imprisonment, sprouting up from the same ground where centuries later the workers' bones would be unearthed.



