



SMOKE AND MIRRORS

BARBECUE NATION, CURATED BY the Atlanta History Center, charts a cultural timeline of this fabled American craft. Twenty years in the making, the inclusive and expansive exhibit opened this May and closes next June. Here are highlights:

The material culture game is strong

Ogle a chopping block, worn concave from cleaver work, loaned from Skylight Inn of Ayden, North Carolina; a burn barrel, rusted to a beautiful auburn, signed by Rodney Scott of Charleston, South Carolina; and a fleet of portable patio smokers, including an aluminum Char-Broil model from 1948 that resembles a wheeled trash can and features a chopping block rear spoiler.

Honest barbecue has long been imperiled

The wrapper on a bottle of Wright's

Condensed Smoke, made in Kansas City around 1900, promised: "This bottle will smoke a barrel of meat, cheaper, safer, and quicker than the old way."

Women get the last laugh

Printed in block letters across one wall is a bold declaration: **OUTDOOR COOKING IS MAN'S WORK**. The curators — Jonathan Scott, Jim Auchmutey, and Craig Pascoe— have subversively positioned that quote, from a 1941 James Beard book, above a majestic image of a woman pitmaster, her arms raised high at a 1970s Harlem community barbecue.

As a bonus, the Atlanta History Center has tapped a variety of SFA work for the exhibit, including a documentary film on Helen's Bar-B-Que in Brownsville, TN. To watch Helen Turner work, step to one of the woodsmoke-perfumed viewing theaters, set in a makeshift pit bank (or visit southernfoodways.org). —JTE

Jason Hales/Atlanta History Center



SFA EVENING

For details and ticket information visit southernfoodways.org

JUL 12 Julian Rankin reads and signs *Catfish Dreams* Square Books OXFORD, MS

AUG 12 2018 Egerton Award Ceremony NASHVILLE, TN

AUG 13 Brown in the South Dinner Volume 2 NASHVILLE, TN

AUG 18 Barbecue Digest Volume 2 MEMPHIS, TN

SEP 10 Southern Foodways Graduate Symposium OXFORD, MS

OCT 11-13 2018 Southern Foodways Fall Symposium OXFORD, MS

In 2018, the SFA explores literature and food, twinned cultural expressions.

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