

GEORGIA CATTLEMAN



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BEEF MONTH GOES RETRO RAD

feature begins on p. 33





GEORGIA BEEF BITES

BY DALLAS DUNCAN

RETRO RAD GEORGIA TOUR DE BEEF



Let me preface this by saying I love watching cooking shows. When I was little and would hang out with my Nanny every day, that's what we would watch. Our favorite was a fellow from Louisiana who specialized in Cajun cuisine. The love of watching these shows never faded. Nowadays I watch Food Network and Cooking Channel whenever I have the chance, plus many others! One of my favorite shows is "Next Food Network Star," where channel executives find the nation's top television chef to star in her own show on the station. Last year, I fell head over heels for two of the contestants. Justin Warner ended up winning the show, but his teammate, Emily Ellyn, was a strong contender. Her point of view was "retro rad" -- that is, taking everyday classics and beefing them up with a modern twist.

At Taste of Atlanta in October I was handing out beef brisket samples when a woman with platinum blonde hair and a Marilyn Monroe-esque dress grabbed a tasting cup and walked away. I realized who she was just seconds too late -- Emily Ellyn was at Taste of Atlanta! I went home that night and sent her fan page a Facebook message telling her about Georgia Beef Board, Georgia Cattlemen's Association and Beef Month.

Six months later, I got a Facebook message saying she'd love to partner with us. I was excited beyond words and couldn't wait to start brainstorming.

The chance to partner with Ellyn on the Retro Rad Georgia Tour de Beef was out of this world. We selected four cities to visit and tasted beef at restaurants that had been selected "best burger" by local publications. These restaurants use every topping under the sun to top and even fill their patties with. You name it, we probably saw it on a burger during the tour.

We met cattle producers who raise the beef fed to consumers at these restaurants. We sat down and learned tricks of the trade from restaurateurs and best of all, we shared a love of beef with the die-hard burger eaters who stop and eat here several times a week. Even a few vegetarians confessed they enjoyed bacon on top of the veggie burgers at one restaurant!

There are amazing beef restaurants all around Georgia, and Ellyn and I felt blessed and privileged to have had the opportunity to visit these four. This issue's Beef Month feature highlights some ways you can create the burgers in your own kitchen, or visit the restaurants yourself to taste them and share your love of beef with consumers. Emily Ellyn wanted to put a retro rad twist on the feature, so she created a custom recipe just for this magazine, an All-American Cheeseburger.

The burger, which is also pictured on the magazine cover, is made with brioche buns and topped with cheddar cheese, bacon and homemade fried sweet pickles. Served with a bar of condiments and toppings on the side, this is a delicious take on an American diner classic. And if you want to go all-out with a retro rad theme, check out our recipes for a sock-hop shake and diner fries in the feature section!

EMILY ELLYN'S RETRO RAD ALL-AMERICAN BURGER

Ingredients:

2.5 pounds ground beef
Salt and ground black pepper
Cheddar cheese
Bacon slices
Additional toppings of choice
Brioche buns
1.5 quarts canola oil
2 cups flour
1 tablespoon kosher salt
1 tablespoon chili powder 1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon smoked paprika 1
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
25 sweet pickle chips
1 cup buttermilk

Instructions:

1. In a medium bowl, mix ground beef, 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Use your hands to form four equal-size patties. Lightly sprinkle the outside of the patties with salt and pepper.
2. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit. Heat a grill or grill pan over high heat. Cook the patties until there is a good sear, about two minutes, and then turn patties 90 degrees for two more minutes. Flip patties; repeat.
3. Place one slice of cheese atop each patty and transfer to a sheet tray. Cook in the oven until cheese is melted. Remove and place on a wire rack. Lightly toast buns if desired.
4. For the fried sweet pickles: In a medium saucepan, heat the oil to 350 degrees F. Mix the flour with salt, chili powder, baking powder, paprika and pepper. Dip all of the pickles in buttermilk and dredge.
5. Fry in the hot oil. When pickles float to the surface, a nice golden brown, remove and place on paper towels. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.
6. Cook bacon as desired. Assemble burgers on bun and top with fried pickles and bacon. Serve with a side of ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, tomatoes, lettuce and other desired toppings.



RETRO RAD GEORGIA TOUR DE BEEF

MACON: ROOKERY
543 CHERRY ST.



THE WALDEN GREENBACK BURGER

The Walden Greenback is named after the Walden family, which managed stars such as Otis Redding.

WHAT MAKES IT TICK: Topped with bacon, a fried green tomato, chevre cheese and a sun-dried tomato remoulade

PERFECT FRIED GREEN TOMATOES: "Slice your tomatoes, make a mixture that's part cornmeal and part flour. Dip in buttermilk, add seasoning, fry until they're golden-brown and do the same thing to the other side," says Roger Riddle of Rookery. "Then you're ready to roll."



THE ALLMAN BURGER

This classic band from Macon used a mushroom as its logo, hence the burger topping.

WHAT MAKES IT TICK: Topped with melty Swiss cheese and mushrooms

THE PERFECT COMBO: "Saute your mushrooms," says Rookery's Roger Riddle. "Raw mushrooms are a great topping, but to get the vibe we have here, you want to saute them."

RETRO RAD NOTES: Rookery uses locally sourced ingredients, some from GCA members! Even the buns are from a Georgia bakery.

EMILY SAYS: "My absolute favorite was the Walden Greenback. Do you get more Georgia than that? I loved it! It was absolutely divine."



SAVANNAH: GREEN TRUCK PUB

2430 HABERSHAM STREET



THE BLUE RIBBON BURGER

Green Truck Pub's winning combination of toppings on this burger is inspired by a cordon bleu.

WHAT MAKES IT TICK: Topped with griddled ham, Swiss cheese and dijon mustard

HIGH ON THE HOG: "We use a Berkshire (pork) which is a heritage breed with some really terrific marbling in it," says owner Josh Yates.

RETRO RAD NOTES: In addition to locally-sourced beef, Green Truck Pub staff advises patrons to top everything with their house-made ketchup.

EMILY SAYS: "Green Truck Pub takes the burger championship when it comes to adorning their burgers in creative combos that are so delicious. I am full to the brim."

THE WHOLE FARM BURGER

Aptly named. This burger's got beef, poultry, pork, dairy and crops represented between the buns. Owner Josh Yates calls it their "showiest" burger and menu centerpiece.

WHAT MAKES IT TICK: Topped with cheese, bacon, a fried egg and, if you ask for it, pimento cheese

THE CROWN JEWEL: "The whole point of the over-easy egg is to get that yolk to break and get it into the whole situation of the burger," owner Josh Yates says. "It acts as a mayonnaise and a sauce to pull the whole thing together."



RETRO RAD GEORGIA TOUR DE BEEF

AUGUSTA: SPORTS CENTER
594 BROAD STREET



◀ SMOTHERED & COVERED

Ask for it with the grilled -- not caramelized -- onions on top.

WHAT MAKES IT TICK: Condiments, lettuce, tomato, cheese and a whole lotta love

GRILLED TO ORDER: "We just always have onions. I have been a big fan of grilled onions," says owner Sandi Watkins. "Now they call them 'caramelized,' but we always called them 'grilled' back before Food Network and all that."

RETRO RAD NOTES: Sports Center has been a pool hall for more than 60 years. Sandi's husband and fellow owner first put a burger on the hot plate 36 years ago, and it's been a community staple ever since.

EMILY SAYS: "They have this homemade mustard, homemade fries, homemade onion rings and then topped off with a lot of love. You go in there and it's like a big old breath of fresh air. ... I can't say enough about it!"



◀ LOCKED 'N' LOADED CHEESEBURGER

Diner favorite with a twist.
Try it with the house-made
shotgun spicy mustard.

WHAT MAKES IT TICK: A toasted bun, melted cheese and fresh 80/20 ground beef patty

WORTH THE WAIT: "The spicy mustard we make, one of our customers gave us the recipe," says owner Sandi Watkins. "You have to wait three days to eat it so the flavors meld."

ATHENS: STUFFED BURGER

1860 BARNETT SHOALS ROAD



Retro Rad chef Emily Elyn with the owners and crew of Stuffed Burger



BACON-CHEDDAR STUFFED BURGER

The menu's most popular

WHAT MAKES IT TICK: Filled with fresh-chopped applewood-smoked bacon, a slice of smoked provolone cheese and a slice of American cheese

SECRET TO STUFFING: "The hardest thing about our stuffed burgers is crimping them and making sure they don't turn out to be a soccer ball," says owner Hank Cheatham. "The main thing is crimping it and flattening it out like a pancake."

RETRO RAD NOTES: The concept behind Stuffed Burger came from a Food Network show that featured a Juicy Lucy burger stuffed with cheese. Owner Hank Cheatham says stuffing the burgers gives them a "wow" factor and keeps them moist.

EMILY SAYS: "It's like, mindlessly simple. Why don't more people stuff a burger? The way that they do it, by putting a patty down and putting another patty on top of it causes it not to be a meatball. It's perfect."

ROASTED RED PEPPER & PEPPERJACK STUFFED BURGER

Skip the lettuce and tomato. Top this one with sautéed mushrooms and onions.

WHAT MAKES IT TICK: Fresh roasted red peppers and spicy pepperjack

SPICE IS NICE: "We were lucky — Our general manager was a chef beforehand, so when it came to cooking all the roasted red peppers he taught us," owner Hank Cheatham says. "Timers are the main thing and make sure the temperature is set perfectly."



RETRO RAD GEORGIA TOUR DE BEEF

MODERN TWISTS ON DINER FAVORITES



PARMESAN-OREGANO FRENCH FRIES with CHIPOTLE AIOLI

INGREDIENTS:

1 liter canola oil
8 large potatoes
Salt
Paprika

Grated parmesan
Mayonnaise
Chili powder
Oregano

INSTRUCTIONS:

Peel and slice potatoes lengthwise into a uniform thickness. Heat oil to 375 degrees F. Fry potatoes until golden brown and drain on a paper towel. Season with salt, parmesan and oregano while they're still glistening. Whisk together mayonnaise, paprika and chili powder to form dipping sauce. Serve.



OLD-FASHIONED BEEF PATTY MELT

INGREDIENTS:

1 pound ground chuck
1 egg
2 tablespoons adobo
Breadcrumbs
Rye bread

Provolone cheese
Dijon mustard
Butter
2 tablespoons water
1 Vidalia onion, chopped

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 300 degrees F.
2. Combine ground chuck, egg, adobo, water and breadcrumbs in a bowl until evenly mixed. Form into circular patties.
3. Grill or pan-fry patties until medium. Internal temperature should be 160 degrees F.
4. Spread a light amount of butter on two slices of bread per patty melt. Place butter-side down on a cookie sheet. Top each slice of bread with a slice of provolone. Top one slice with the cooked beef patty. Cook in oven until cheese is melted.
5. Sauté onions until golden brown.
6. Remove melts from oven. Top patty side with sautéed onions and dijon mustard. Place other slice of bread with melted provolone on top. Serve.

MALTED MILKSHAKE

INGREDIENTS:

1 pint vanilla ice cream
1/4 cup whole milk
2 tablespoons malted milk
Flavored syrup (chocolate, strawberry)
Whipped cream

INSTRUCTIONS: Combine ingredients in blender. Process on low speed until combined. Top with whipped cream and swirl extra syrup for garnish.



FAB“MOO”LOUS BURGER COOKING TIPS



GET YOUR GRILL ON

1. Keep the juices: Don't pierce burgers with a fork! Instead, use long-handled tongs. This will keep the flavorful juices inside the ground beef patty.
2. Prevent flare-ups from the grill: Remove any excess fat from the meat before grilling it to prevent charring and excess smoke formation, as well as flames.
3. Though there are many ways to check meat doneness, the recommended way is to use a meat thermometer ... not the inside of a person's palm or the color inside of the burger.
4. Use medium heat: Grilling over medium heat ensures even cooking without overcooking the exterior of burger patties.
5. Be patient with charcoal! Make sure charcoal is covered in gray ash before grilling. Never start grilling while the charcoal is still flaming.

FOOD SAFETY FIRST

1. Use meat in a timely manner, following the "first in, first out" rule. The meat put into the freezer first should be the first to be cooked and served.
2. Is your beef stored properly? Refrigerate it at or below 40 degrees F and freeze at or below 0.
3. Always wash your hands and sanitize all surfaces that any raw beef came into contact with. Make sure to sanitize all cooking utensils after they've been used on raw beef, and don't cross-contaminate.
4. Check the temperature. Ground beef should be cooked to a minimum of 160 degrees F.
5. When it comes to leftovers, freeze or discard anything that won't be eaten within a few days. Refrigerate cooked foods no more than two hours after cooking.



BUILD A BETTER (FOR YOU) BURGER

1. Choose lean ground beef — 90 percent lean, 10 percent fat ratio
2. Be aware of your toppings! Choose light mayonnaise, low fat cheese, low sodium ketchup and other garnishes with fewer calories and less unhealthy fat.
3. Even the bun counts. Top your burger with a whole wheat, multi-grain or similar artisanal-style bread that's lower in calories, or forego the bun and eat your burger Asian-style with a lettuce wrap!
4. Not all veggies are created equal! Spinach and romaine lettuce both have more available nutrients than iceberg lettuce. The same goes for different types of onions, tomatoes, mushrooms and just about every fruit or vegetable that can top a burger!