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The Feed: Southern Cooking Lands in Brooklyn

Carla Hall's Southern Kitchen opens, an Apricot dessert and Chelsea Market's newest cookbook



Southern Cooking Lands in Brooklyn

Carla Hall has a visceral reaction to her long-delayed restaurant debut, which officially opens in Brooklyn on Friday.

"I feel like I've had this baby—this baby who's not sleeping through the night," said the former "Top Chef" contestant. "I'm like, ooh, this is what it's like."

Carla Hall's Southern Kitchen was previously scheduled to open by Thanksgiving, but its delay allowed her to tweak everything from ingredients to restaurant design, adding more seating and eclectic antiques.

The restaurant's side dishes are all vegetarian, which some might call a break with its Southern-cooking tradition. According to Ms. Hall, however, the fresh ingredients are "just the way that probably our grandmothers had it when they had the gardens out back."

The quirky spiciness-rating system ranges from "hoot & honey" (mild) to "boomshakalaka," which precipitates a cowbell and stares. "I've seen tears," Ms. Hall said.

There is an ulterior motive to stocking her menu with personal favorites like pickled vegetables, collard greens and cornbread, she added. "I made sure I never feel homesick again."

Carla Hall's Southern Kitchen, 115 Columbia St., Brooklyn; carlahallsouthernkitchen.com

—Sophia Hollander