

# TASTE OF ATLANTA HITS THE SPOT

By Dana Hazels Seith



Experience Taste of Atlanta, one of the city's premier food events, October 13 and 14 as it celebrates its 6th anniversary with amazing tastes from more than 70 of Atlanta's favorite restaurants. This marks the second year that Taste of Atlanta will be held in the open-air excitement of Atlantic Station, giving Taste a true street festival feel.

"Taste of Atlanta is an annual event that people in this city look forward to throughout the year. "We were thrilled last year to see the streets of Atlantic Station filled with people enjoying tastes from restaurants all over Atlanta," says Brian Leary, vice president for design and development at Atlantic Station.

Right now, Atlanta's culinary status is in a state of change. On par with major food cities, such as New York, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles, Atlanta now boasts *James Beard* award-winning restaurants, several Food Network "*Iron Chef America*" challengers and recognition from national food magazines. Food critics are realizing what Atlantans have known for quite some time: *We know* how to eat.

From tapas to Thai, grilled to Greek, saucy to sweet, you'll find it at *Taste*. The event captures the essence of the exceptional food in Atlanta. Past Taste of Atlanta executive chefs have included: Riccardo Ullio, *Sotto Sotto* and *Fritti*; Kevin Rathbun, *Rathbun's*, *Rathbun Steak* and *Krog Bar*; Sheri Davis, *Dish*; Joshua Perkins, *The Globe*; and Joe Treux and Mihoko Obunai, *Repast*.

"My vision when I first created Taste of Atlanta six years ago is exactly what it has grown to be," says Taste of Atlanta President Dale Gordon DeSena. "I love the idea that Atlantans can spend one amazing weekend tasting from restaurants all over this city. It's such a unique experience. I think Taste of Atlanta brings the community together with people sharing a universal love of food and



Alton Brown, Linton Hopkins, Kevin Rathbun, Dale Gordon DeSena, Gerry Klaskala, Mayor Shirley Franklin, Bruce Seidel

Atlanta restaurants."

In addition to tidbits from more than 70 restaurants, Taste of Atlanta also features cooking demonstrations by celebrity chefs. Past chefs have included Sara Moulton, Gerry Garvin, Emeril Lagasse, Masaharu Morimoto, The BBQ Queens, Roy Yamaguchi, Virginia Willis and Marvin Woods. This year, be sure to catch all the talented local and national celebrity chefs, including Rocco DiSpirito,

as they demonstrate their culinary expertise on the cooking stage.

Taste of Atlanta is not just a food festival; the organization also supports several educational programs. Students from *Le Cordon Bleu* and *ProStart* are paired with participating Taste of Atlanta restaurants to act as chef assistants. Taste of Atlanta has also partnered with *Savannah College of Art and Design*, allowing students to gain real-world experience while earning college credits. SCAD works with Taste of Atlanta to hold a graphic design contest in which the winning student creates Taste of Atlanta's yearly look and is awarded a \$2,500 academic scholarship. In addition, a consumer research class at *Georgia State University* will be facilitating a demographics study at Taste of Atlanta 2007.

There are several new things happening at this year's event. As a special addition, Taste of Atlanta will feature a Harvest Market, which is an area showcasing restaurants that support local, sustainable, organic farms. Several restaurants participating in the Harvest Market include *Dish*, *Pacific Kitchen*, *Dailey's* and the *City Grill*. Continuing the Harvest Market theme, each day of the festival, *The Piedmont Review* and *Atlanta's Finest Dining* magazines will sponsor a cooking demonstration by a restaurant that represents the Harvest Market message. Also this year, Taste of Atlanta's entertainment will be brought to the streets of Atlantic Station through performances that capture the festival's vibe. An edible event, fun for the whole family, Taste of Atlanta is the place to be this October.



For more information, call (404) 875-4434 or visit [www.tasteofatlanta.net](http://www.tasteofatlanta.net).