

JEZEBEL

ATLANTA LUXURY LIVING

**Sultry
& Savvy**
OLIVIA WILDE

Introducing...
101
**Must-Try
Tastes**

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USA \$3.95 Foreign \$5.95

THE DISH ON DINING
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ATLANTA'S BEST BASHES... HELLO, 2012!

101 Must-Try Tastes

At tables across the city, *JEZ* editors hear the same story again and again: “I’ve been living in this town for years—how did I not know about this?!” So we decided to take action. We hunkered down with our stable of foodies to get the lowdown on the 101 best tastes in town. From Abattoir to Zesto, the results range from five-star legends; to spectacular selects; to super-secret Buford Highway holes-in-the-wall; to the casual-cool cuisine found among neighborhood taverns and obscure hipster dens. From entrées to appetizers, desserts to drinks, *JEZ* presents the ultimate insider roundup: the most memorable, delectable tastes in A-town. And so you’ll never miss a beat of your favorite eats, we’ve included Twitter handles galore. So grab a fork—or a glass—and get out there!

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Pâtes de Fruits

Using only direct and fair-trade, organic and locally sourced ingredients, sugar sorceress Taria Camerino, of **Sugar-Coated Radical**, crafts some of the city's best chocolates, lollipops and caramels from scratch. But it's the grown-up gummi bear-esque jellies, called pâtes de fruits, that crown her shop peerless in Atlanta. Intense bursts of fruit and sugar hidden inside a squared-off confection, they are topped with a divine dusting of... *je ne sais quoi*. Delectable! 108
Howell St. NE, 404.438.5854, sugarcoatedradical.org, @sugarradical

101 Must-Try Tastes



Cajun Fried Pickles

All it takes is one bite of the Cajun fried pickles with Creole rémoulade sauce, served straight from the kitchen of a historic Roswell cottage, to understand why **The Fickle Pickle** is a shrine to its namesake dish—and a favorite of Food Network chef Alton Brown, to boot. 1085 Canton St., Roswell, 770.650.9838, ficklepicklecafe.com, [@condimentgroup](https://twitter.com/condimentgroup)

Lil' BRGRs

When it comes to the most taste per square inch, **STK's** Lil' BRGRs are the ultimate evolution of the slider. Wagyu beef, a special sauce and a sesame seed bun combine for a quantifiable explosion on the palate. 1075 Peachtree St. NE, 404.793.0144, stkhouse.com, [@stklatlanta](https://twitter.com/stklatlanta)

Fresh Strawberry N Cream Doughnut

While **Sublime Doughnuts'** sweets will tempt you with sugary doughnut inventions like the Reese's peanut butter cup, Kamal Grant's strawberry and cream doughnut tastes as if the fresh fruits invaded a beignet. 535 10th St. NW, 404.897.1801, sublimedoughnuts.com, [@sublimedoughnut](https://twitter.com/sublimedoughnut)

Vietnamese Coffee

What's better than being in a practically secret, donation-only coffeehouse set among **The Goat Farm's** warehouse ruins? Getting to enjoy the treat that is a proper Vietnamese coffee while you're there. This intense brew makes all others instantly seem weak. 1200 Foster St.

Shrimp Corn Chowder

Next time you're craving the infamously popular **Taqueria del Sol**, order a steaming cup of the shrimp corn chowder in lieu of your go-to guac and chips. It's the ultimate precursor to carnitas and enchiladas. Multiple locations, taqueriadelosol.com, [@taqueriadelosol](https://twitter.com/taqueriadelosol)

Farm Egg Baked in Celery Cream

While we trust **Miller Union's** impeccable take on everything farm-to-table, its much ballyhooped farm egg baked in celery cream is Chef Steven Satterfield's calling card. It comes accompanied by hickory-smoked rustic country bread to dip. 999 Brady Ave., 678.733.8550, millerunion.com, [@millerunion](https://twitter.com/millerunion)

Southern Stained Beef Jerky

Meat master Kevin Ouzts keeps jars of his cravably chewy, salty-sweet Southern stained beef jerky (cured in local sorghum syrup and Kentucky bourbon) on the counter at **The Spotted Trotter**, where customers munch it like candy while waiting for their cuts. 1610 Hosea L. Williams Drive, 404.254.4958, thespottedtrotter.com

Chicken Burrito

Old-school Atlantans go to **Bell Street Burritos** because it reminds them of the now-defunct Tortillas. Everyone else goes because the food is great—especially the chicken burrito, packing pinto beans, jack cheese, rice and chicken, rolled up tight for a flavorful punch. Multiple locations, bellstreetburritos.com

Scotch Egg

The Brits have been eating Scotch eggs since the 1700s. Georgians? Not so much. That's our bad. The hard-boiled egg, wrapped in sausage and then deep-fried, is done to perfection at **Mac McGee Irish Pub**. The solo ovo is sliced into thin rounds and served on a wooden paddle. 111 Sycamore St., 404.377.8050, Decatur, macmcgeeirishpub.com, [@macmcgeeirish](https://twitter.com/macmcgeeirish)

Onion Rings

Atlanta's surprising king of onion rings turns out to be chef Alon Balshan, who owns **Alon's Bakery & Market**, with Virginia-Highland and Dunwoody outposts. Served as an occasional special, the lightly battered, skinny cylinders are stacked to tipsy heights and come out of the fryer as perfect, crispy delights. Yes, we're rhyming. Multiple locations, alons.com, [@alonsdun](https://twitter.com/alonsdun), [@alonsvh](https://twitter.com/alonsvh)



101 Must-Try Tastes



Vanilla Cone

Velvety, real vanilla ice cream—artfully spun from the Zest-O-Mat softserve machine into a crisp sugar cone—has made **Zesto's** drive-in Atlanta's most famous chain since 1953. Generous towers of this creamy-dreamy classic, available at six metro locations for less than \$2 each, mean it's a good thing to get your swirl on. *Multiple locations, burritobroz.com, @zestoatl*

Barbecue Pork Bun Dim Sum

Consider **Golden House** a Cantonese beacon of light in Duluth's sea of international eats. Its barbecue pork bun dim sum acts as a lifeboat of flavor at this massive restaurant draped in lucky gold and red décor. Arrive before 3PM to experience three soft, steamed, pillowy buns, filled with a sweet and tangy sauce, clinging to slow-roasted pork. 1600 Pleasant Hill Road, Duluth, 770.921.2228

Chicken Larb

With a name like **Harry & Sons**, an outsider would be hard-pressed to expect some of the best sushi and Thai in the Highlands. Our top pick is this resto's top app: The chicken larb is packed with basil, lime and peanuts, and served with a quarter of crisp cabbage for munching. Try not to lick the plate. 820 N. Highland Ave., 404.873.2009, harryandsonsrestaurant.com, @harryandsons

Chai Tea

After feasting on a peppery plate of fish curry at chef Asha Gomez's new restaurant, **Cardamom Hill**, you should always order a cup of the home-made chai tea. Served in a whopper-sized mug

with a huge pancake-like cookie, the hot, fragrant blend is luxurious, velvety and comforting. In short, it's the ideal way to end any evening. 1700 Northside Drive, 404.549.7012, cardamomhill.net, @cardamomhill

Georgia Peach-and-Basil Popsicle

In the dead heat of summer festivals, the logo of one street cart stands out above the rest. Though all of the handmade, fresh-juiced pops are delicious, it's **King of Pops'** Georgia peach-and-basil 'sicle that best captures the essence of the season—and refreshes instantly. *Locations vary, kingofpops.net, @thekingofpops*

Blackberry Mojito

It's hard to pick a winner in the battle for the best mojito, but **Steel Restaurant & Lounge** has given it such a spin, the cocktail is now a signature sip. Fresh, juicy blackberries are muddled with mint leaves in a high ballglass, then topped with a brilliant balance of rum and lime juice. 950 W. Peachtree St., 404.477.6111, steelatlanta.com, @steelrestaurant

Farmer's Daughter Cocktail

While its well-known chef gets all the accolades, it's the beers, wines and seasonal cocktails at **Woodfire Grill** that complement the ornate tasting menus by Chef Kevin Gillespie. The Farmer's Daughter can make a cold February day taste like summer. Cathead vodka, muddled mint, cucumber, lemon, ginger shrub and ginger beer combine like a refreshing glass of fizzy, spiked lemonade. 1782 Cheshire Bridge Road, 404.347.9055, woodfiregrill.com

Double Zero Napoletana Pizza

Double Zero's namesake pie earns its status with the first bite. Perfect slivers of prosciutto di Parma are layered with fresh arugula leaves over a bed of bufala Campana mozzarella and pecorino gran cru cheeses—with just a touch of garlic, fragrant olive and basil oils to finish. 5825 Roswell Road, 404.991.3666, doublezeroatl.com

Rigatoni with Gorgonzola Dolce

Devotees of Chef Linda Harrell couldn't wait to see her rigatoni with gorgonzola dolce and pistachio cream make a re-appearance on the menu at **Cibo e Beve**, and neither could we. After addicts first became obsessed with the beloved dish at Mangia 101, she brought it back for round two at her new Sandy Springs Italian spot. 4969 Roswell Road, 404.250.8988, ciboatlanta.com, @ciboatlanta



Photo of vanilla cone by Michael Knowlton

101 Must-Try Tastes

Drop Biscuits

The adeptly executed drop biscuits at **Southern Art** are elevated to... well, an art form. Each golden, seductively fluffy pillow of flour is flecked with rosemary and cheddar, and served piping hot the moment you sit down. Even the butter—sweetened with Steen's cane syrup—gets the royal treatment. 3315 Peachtree Road, 404.946.9070, southernart.com, @southernart

Breakfast

Artisanal Bacon

For the ultimate brunch-time indulgence, nothing beats the salty crunch of **Pine Street Market's** applewood smoked artisanal bacon. Laid above applewood chips and dry rubbed with maple and molasses, this carefully crafted delicacy is well worth the trip to the quaint Avondale Estates shop. 4A Pine St., Avondale Estates, 404.296.9672, pinestreetmarket.com, @pinestreet



Sweet Potato Pancakes

You knew **Highland Bakery** had to make the list. But which scrumptious brunch pick was named our fave? It was almost the fried chicken Benedict, but in the end, the sweet potato pancakes won out. They're sweet, but not so much as to prevent you from shoveling as many as you can fit in your tummy. Multiple locations, highlandbakery.com, @highlandbakery1

Red Velvet Pancakes

Borrowing the best qualities of the Southern cake, **West Egg Cafe's** red velvet pancakes, served with a dollop of melty cream cheese frosting, will flip your perception of breakfast 180 degrees. Try them with a side of brown-sugar bacon. 1100 Howell Mill Road, 404.872.3973, westeggcafe.com, @westeggcafe

Breakfast Burrito

The rustic **Belly General Store** is replete with old-fashioned memorabilia, communal farm tables and hand-crafted bites. And yet the tastes skew adventurous—the authentic Mexican mole sauce, slivers of avocado, sharp cheddar and fluffy scrambled farm eggs in a handmade flour tortilla will make you a breakfast burrito believer. 772 N. Highland Ave., 404.872.1003, bellystore.com

Omeletadilla

It's a breakfast that thinks it's a lunch. Take your favorite A.M. item (a big, fluffy omelet) and stuff it inside your favorite Mexican lunch dish (a cheesy quesadilla) and you'll get to chow down on deliciousness regardless of the time of day at **Gato Bizco Café** in Candler Park. 1660 McLendon Ave. NE, 404.371.0889

Sassy Scramble

Thumb's Up Diner knows breakfast. The savory, sassy scramble features three eggs with a mélange of onions, fresh herbs, smoked salmon and cream cheese, plus one of those homemade biscuits that made them famous. Fittingly, it deserves two big thumbs up. Multiple locations, thumbsupdiner.com, @thumbsupdiner

Banana Pancakes

They weren't called "the world's best pancakes" by *The New York Times* for nothin'. At **Ria's Bluebird's** Sunday brunch, her large, fluffy, oval patties are smothered in candy-like caramelized bananas and soaked in precisely the perfect proportion of syrup per square inch. 421 Memorial Drive SE, 404.521.3737, riasbluebird.com, @chefria

Super Food Salad

This much we know: The lunchtime super food salad at **Empire State South** always includes a medium-rare hanger steak, greens, lentils, farro and a light dressing of oil and vinegar. Beyond that, the salad changes with whatever fruits, herbs, vegetables and cheeses are available. Each time, it arrives looking like the ROYGBIV spectrum appeared on the plate. 999 Peachtree St., 404.541.1105, empirestatesouth.com, @essouth

Skirt Steak with Black Truffle Sauce

The high-octane social scene at **Barcelona Atlanta Wine Bar & Restaurant** fades to black after your first bite of chef Michael Blydenstein's obscenely tender skirt steak laced with sexy, subtle black truffle sauce. Wash it all down with any one of the 43 wines by the glass. 240 N. Highland Ave., 404.589.1010, barcelonawinebar.com/atlanta, @barcelonawineba

Tittle Pop

A regular fixture on *Esquire's* list of The Best Beer Bars in America, the **Brick Store Pub's** snacks are right on par with the pours. Tittle pop isn't just fun to say; the suped-up version of caramel corn (an addictive combo of bourbon-caramel popped kernels, roasted pecans and peanuts) is a party to eat, too—particularly with a pint in hand. 125 E. Court Square, 404.687.0990, brickstorepub.com, @brickstorepub

101 Must-Try Tastes

Banana Pudding

Chicken and the Egg soaks Nilla wafers in bourbon, throws them in a Mason jar with the real-fruit deal, tops it with whipped cream and, just for kicks, tosses a caramelized banana chunk on top. Yummers. 800 Whitlock Ave, Marietta, 678.388.8813, chickandtheegg.com, [@chickandtheegg](https://twitter.com/chickandtheegg)

Joe's Maine Lobsta' Roll

Creamy with threads of fresh lobster, mayo, celery and lemon, this savory and rich concoction from **Local Three** has few, if any, equals in Maine, much less in Georgia. A New England sea captain couldn't catch it any fresher. 3290 Northside Parkway, 404.968.2700, localthree.com, [@localthree](https://twitter.com/localthree)

Juices

Babs Midtown, a charming haunt helmed by a pair of hilarious proprietors, has the cozy cool of a 1960s home, imaginatively themed Sunday brunches, fresh produce plucked from the owners' garden and—our personal favorite—pressed-on-the-premises juice blends to light up your morning, every time you stop in. 814 Juniper St., 404.541.0888, babsmidtown.com, [@babsmidtownatl](https://twitter.com/babsmidtownatl)

Pork Cheek Tacos

If an eatery boasts an animal in its moniker, it's best to take anything relating to said animal seriously. **Iberian Pig**'s pork cheek tacos are let-me-pause-for-a-moment-to-collect-myself good. Four house-made shells arrive filled with slow-roasted meat, corn salsa and scratch-made avocado crema. 121 Sycamore St., Decatur, 404.371.8800, iberianpigatl.com

Honey-sesame Chicken

Forget everything you thought you knew about Chinese delivery. At **Rice Box**, you can order healthful, MSG-free, wok-cooked dishes. We're especially partial to the honey-sesame chicken, our go-to comfort food. A night in doesn't get much sweeter. 931 Monroe Drive, 404.685.8655, eatricebox.net

Tuna Tartar

For our editors (who argued about this incessantly) **TopFlr**'s best dish was a close tie between the tuna tartar (lean fish topped with Thai miso pesto, avocado and lime aioli on a thin, lightly crispy Sardinian flatbread) and the bubbling tray of savory mac 'n' cheese, made with sharp cheddar, smoked gouda and topped with a spicy panko crust. The tuna tartar won out. 674 Myrtle St. NE, 404.685.3110, topflr.com, [@topflr](https://twitter.com/topflr)

Trofie Plate

Melt-in-your-mouth pasta blends with swoon-worthy ingredients in the indulgent trofie plate at **No. 246**. Sit and enjoy this carnivorous delight (chicken liver, pork, beef Bolognese, Parmesan and parsley) with a glass of sangiovese and let your thoughts wander. 129 E. Ponce de Leon Ave., Decatur, 678.399.8246, no246.com, [@no_246](https://twitter.com/no_246)



Grit Crouton

The Caesar salad with fried okra and Grana Padano has been on the menu at **South City Kitchen** since it opened its doors 19 years ago. But it's the square-shaped, grit croutons that make this simple salad a revelation. The croutons are an anomaly and defy grits' very nature—to be unstructured and sinuous. Multiple locations, southcitykitchen.com, [@fifthgrupper](https://twitter.com/fifthgrupper)

Rib-eye

Outside the glitz of the city, Serenbe's upscale restaurant **The Hil** offers farm-fresh tasties in a warm atmosphere. And it doesn't get any more toothsome than the wood-grilled rib-eye with fries. Unassuming? Yes. Simple? Sure. Perfect? No doubt. 9110 Selborne Lane, Palmetto, 770.463.6040, the-hil.com

Bo Luc Lac

In case you didn't know, *bo luc lac*, or shaking beef, is one of Vietnam's most popular dishes. Without a doubt, you can find a dozen such plates along the Buford Highway corridor, but for a truly outstanding example of this sautéed delicacy, head to **Nam Phuong**. 5495 Jimmy Carter Blvd., Norcross, 770.409.8686, namphuongatlanta.com

Barbecue Showdown!



We asked the **JEZ** crew and contributors to argue their stances on one of the most volatile debates in the American South: Where's the best barbecue in town?!

Community Q BBQ (communityqbbq.com) in Decatur is the place I go to put my pulled-pork cravings in a coma. They get extra credit for their mac 'n' cheese, which is greasy and undeniably good. —Austin L. Ray

Ribs N Blues (ribsnblues.com) in Midtown, hands down. I don't know if it's the ribs or the chicken—it's like the food dissolves in your mouth. OMG, so good. And the rum baked beans are to die for. —Kimberly Fleming

For an off-the-beaten-path choice, try Marietta's **Rib Ranch** (theribbranch.com). It's got an old-school country-western vibe, complete with animal heads and kitschy tchotchkes on the walls. No pretense, just great Southern-style barbecue. —Bret Love

It may not be trendy, but the 'cue at **Slope's BBQ** (slopes-bbq.com) in Cumming is solid. Their Georgia-style pulled pork, smothered in tangy-sweet sauce, melts in your mouth, just like a hot-now Krispy Kreme donut. —A.E. Mayer

There is no dispute. It *must* be pork and it *must* be vinegar-based—like East Carolina barbecue. I miss **Dusty's** in Decatur! —Gregory Odendahl

Fox Brothers Bar-B-Q (loxbrosbbq.com). Cool staff, hip atmosphere, nice drink specials and delicious, spicy barbecue in Candler Park. —Eddie Childs

Heirloom BBQ Market (heirloommarketbbq.com) in Smyrna. They know how to fine-tune the smokiness, so it hits that perfect pitch when slathered with sauce. Pork always, spicy sauce, 'nuf said. —Katie Kelly Bell

Let me just say that whatever kind of barbecue they're cranking out at **P'cheen** (pcheen.com) in the Old Fourth Ward is the best. The sausage, ribs and pulled pork—all slowly smoked over hickory and white oak—are beyond *barbecool*. —Stephanie Davis Smith