

From Chicken Shack to Fish Camp: A Food Lover's Guide to Hidden Gems Off the Beaten Path



Southern Belly: From Chicken Shack to Fish Camp, from Barbecue Pit to Pie Shed—A Food Lover's

Companion by John T. Edge

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In a world of chain restaurants and fast food joints, it can be tough to find truly unique and delicious food experiences. But if you're willing to venture off the beaten path, you'll be rewarded with some of the best food in the country.

From chicken shacks to fish camps, barbecue pits to pie sheds, there are countless hidden gems serving up incredible food all across the United States. Here's a guide to some of the best spots to add to your culinary bucket list:

Chicken Shacks

Chicken shacks are a Southern institution, and they're a great place to find some of the best fried chicken in the country. But not all chicken shacks are created equal. Here are a few of the best:

- **Gus's World Famous Fried Chicken** (Memphis, Tennessee): Gus's is a Memphis institution, and for good reason. Their fried chicken is crispy on the outside, juicy on the inside, and perfectly seasoned. Plus, their sides are just as good as their chicken.
- **Hattie B's Hot Chicken** (Nashville, Tennessee): If you like your chicken hot, then you need to check out Hattie B's. Their chicken is fried to perfection and then coated in a spicy sauce that will have you sweating. But don't worry, they also have a milder sauce available if you can't handle the heat.
- **Mrs. Wilkes Dining Room** (Savannah, Georgia): Mrs. Wilkes is a Savannah institution, and her fried chicken is legendary. But what really makes Mrs. Wilkes special is her family-style dining experience. You'll sit down at a communal table with other guests and enjoy a delicious meal that feels like it was cooked by your grandmother.

Fish Camps

Fish camps are another Southern tradition, and they're a great place to find fresh, local seafood. Here are a few of the best fish camps in the country:

- **The Fish House** (Orange Beach, Alabama): The Fish House is a laid-back fish camp that serves up some of the best seafood on the Gulf Coast. Their menu changes daily based on what's fresh, but you can always expect to find delicious fish, shrimp, and oysters.

- **Captain Anderson's Restaurant** (Panama City Beach, Florida): Captain Anderson's is a Panama City Beach institution, and it's known for its fresh seafood and beautiful views of the Gulf of Mexico. You can dine inside or out, and you're sure to enjoy your meal no matter where you sit.
- **Gilchrist Seafood Restaurant** (St. Augustine, Florida): Gilchrist Seafood Restaurant is a family-owned and operated fish camp that's been serving up fresh seafood for over 50 years. Their menu features a wide variety of fish, shrimp, and oysters, and they also have a great selection of sides.

Barbecue Pits

Barbecue is a staple of American cuisine, and there are countless barbecue pits across the country serving up delicious smoked meats. Here are a few of the best:

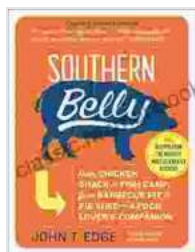
- **Franklin Barbecue** (Austin, Texas): Franklin Barbecue is one of the most famous barbecue joints in the country, and for good reason. Their brisket is legendary, and their other meats are just as good. Be prepared to wait in line for hours, but it's worth it.
- **Joe's Kansas City Bar-B-Que** (Kansas City, Missouri): Joe's Kansas City Bar-B-Que is another barbecue institution, and it's known for its delicious ribs and burnt ends. Their sauce is also top-notch, and you'll want to buy a bottle to take home with you.
- **Smoque BBQ** (Chicago, Illinois): Smoque BBQ is a relatively new barbecue joint, but it's quickly become one of the best in the country. Their brisket is melt-in-your-mouth tender, and their other meats are just as good. Plus, they have a great selection of craft beers on tap.

Pie Sheds

Pie sheds are a dying breed, but they're still a few great ones left in the country. Here are a few of the best places to get a slice of pie:

- **Miss Mary Bobo's Boarding House Restaurant** (Lynchburg, Tennessee): Miss Mary Bobo's is a Lynchburg institution, and it's known for its delicious pies and homestyle cooking. You can't go wrong with any of their pies, but the chocolate chess pie is a must-try.
- **The Pie Hole** (Los Angeles, California): The Pie Hole is a Los Angeles institution, and it's known for its creative and delicious pies. They have a wide variety of flavors to choose from, so you're sure to find something you'll love.
- **Four & Twenty Blackbirds** (Brooklyn, New York): Four & Twenty Blackbirds is a Brooklyn institution, and it's known for its rustic pies made with seasonal ingredients. Their pies are always delicious, and they're sure to impress your friends and family.

So there you have it, a food lover's guide to some of the best hidden gems off the beaten path. From chicken shacks to fish camps, barbecue pits to pie sheds, there are countless great places to find delicious food all across the country. So next time you're looking for a great meal, be sure to venture off the beaten path and explore some of these hidden gems.



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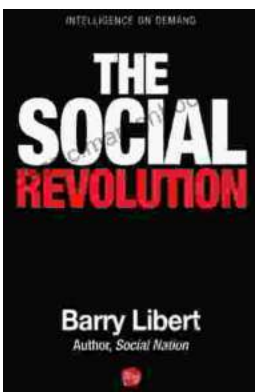
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