

Dinner Dare!



Celebrity Chef:
Virginia Willis
Author of "Bon Appetit, Y'all"

The Weapon:



(TILAPIA)

The Mission:

- Dinner prepared by a celebrity chef
- Seasonal ingredients
- Under 30 minutes

video. BLOG. recipes.

If chef can, you can.
eveningedge.com/dinnerdare



Hello! Lots of things going on! I am still on book tour. Since I last wrote I've been to both South and North Carolina and had several additional cooking classes and signings in the Atlanta area. Later in the month I'll be in California and will be in Memphis, Nashville, New Orleans, and Chicago in September! Check out my website and make sure to come see me if I am in your area.

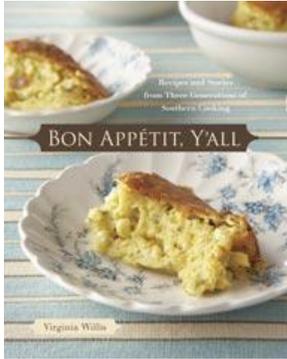
I'm working with the Atlanta Journal Constitution on a great new project called Dinner Dare on the website eveningedge.com. Click on the photo above to see the video of me making Herb Crusted Fish Fillets. The recipe is soooo easy, sooo quick -- and delicious!

Many, many thanks to everyone for their support.

Bon Appétit Y'all!
VA

Check it Out!

In the News



Hey - if you have a book or have seen it and have an account with Amazon, click on the photo of the cover. Please help me out and write a review!

Click on Dinner Dare below for the whole package including recipes and photos. Please feel free to post a comment.

Meredith Ford wrote an amazing and very kind write-up of my cookbook in Access Atlanta.

A couple of my non-Southern friends got a kick out of her commenting on my "almost undetectable Southern accent", laughing they can almost understand about 1/3 of what I say. Hmmpf. Or maybe that should be Hmmpf, Y'all!

If you missed my last appearance on MARTHA you can click on the link below to check out the segment. I was thrilled beyond words to be included in the Dessert Show which also featured my dear friend and mentor Anne Willan as well as Lidia Bastianich. Not bad company!!

Atlanta dames visit White Oak Pastures

[Will's Angels?!](#)



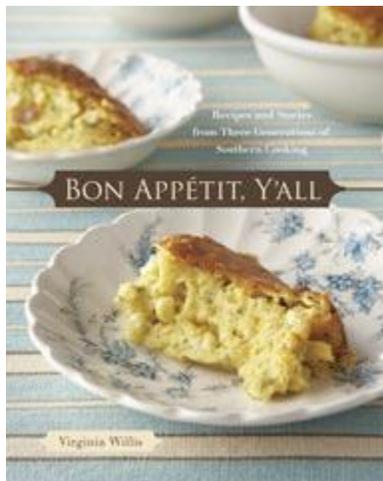
Clearly we weren't having any fun as a group of chefs, including members of Les Dames d'Escoffier traveled to White Oak Pastures in Bluffton, GA. Pictured left to right are the lovely and talented Angie Mosier, Melissa Libby, Cathy Conway, Carolyn O'Neil, and Virginia Willis. (And, no - we hadn't been drinking! Um, yet!)

The family farm has been in operation since 1866. The current owner, Will Harris, is the 5th generation cattleman. He used to farm "industrially" and eventually grew disgusted by it. He said, "I'd put the cattle into a double decker truck. The animal waste from the top would fall onto the animals below. They be without food and water for the 30 hour trip to Nebraska to be corn-finished. I just didn't like it". The beef is free-range, certified all natural, sustainable, and humane and processed in a "green" USDA approved processing plant. He ranches 2000 acres in rural South Georgia. We had nutritionist from the CDC explain that grass fed beef is higher in beta carotene, vitamin E, conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), and omega 3 fatty acids. Will's cattle are not forced to fatten on high grain feed concentrates in industrial feedlots, a phenomenon that just started after WWII. His cattle are given no antibiotics and no hormone implants. He also explained, "grass fed cattle have a naturally alkaline rumen which minimizes the possibility of E.coli". Also, grass fed cattle thrive on a purely vegetarian diet that contains no animal byproducts which virtually eliminates the opportunity for the spread of BSE or Mad Cow Disease.

On a different note, I've been reading selections from my book in my classes and at my book signings. The introduction is especially popular. It really seems to touch people, which makes me so very happy because I wanted all along this book to be recipes AND STORIES. Some folks have even been moved to tears. I definitely don't have a mission to make people cry, but am happy to see my words resonate. I've been thinking about it and where my "story" is essentially fried chicken, the woman in Texas was touched by her memories of her grandmother making tortillas and the student in Massachusetts remembered her Italian- American grandmother making red gravy (aka tomato sauce). It makes me realize how deep and important food is woven throughout the fabric of our lives. The experience has been very emotional, informative, and moving.

CORN SPOON BREAD

Serves 4 to 6



Spoon bread is more like custard than bread, and less like a casserole than a soufflé. As the name suggests, it's soft enough to eat with a spoon. Spoon bread is more common in Virginia, Maryland, and Kentucky. Berea, Kentucky, in the south central portion of the state, actually boasts a spoon bread festival.

The key to this recipe is using very fine cornmeal for a smooth, creamy texture. If you are unable to find fine meal in the supermarket, try Mexican or South American groceries. Also, adding a bit of fresh corn when in season really makes this spoon bread delicious. Some recipes call for baking powder for lift, but in this recipe, with a nod to my French training, I use beaten egg whites.

2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted, plus more for the pan
2 cups whole milk
1 cup very fine yellow cornmeal
Coarse salt and freshly ground black pepper
Scraped kernels from 2 ears fresh sweet corn (about 1 cup)
2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives
2 large eggs, separated

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Butter an ovenproof casserole or round 2-quart soufflé mold.

To prepare the batter, in a medium saucepan, combine the milk and cornmeal over medium-high heat. Bring to a boil, whisking rapidly and constantly, until very, very thick, about 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

Transfer the mixture to a large bowl. Add the corn kernels, chives, and the 2 tablespoons melted butter. Season with salt and pepper and stir to combine. Add the egg yolks, one at a time, stirring after each addition.

To beat the egg whites, in a separate bowl, using a handheld mixer, beat the egg whites with a pinch of salt on high speed until stiff peaks form. Gently fold the egg whites into the warm cornmeal mixture.

Transfer the lightened cornmeal mixture to the prepared pan; smooth the surface with a spatula. Bake until puffed and risen and the inside is firm, but moist, and the top is golden brown, 35 to 40 minutes. Serve immediately while puffed and risen.