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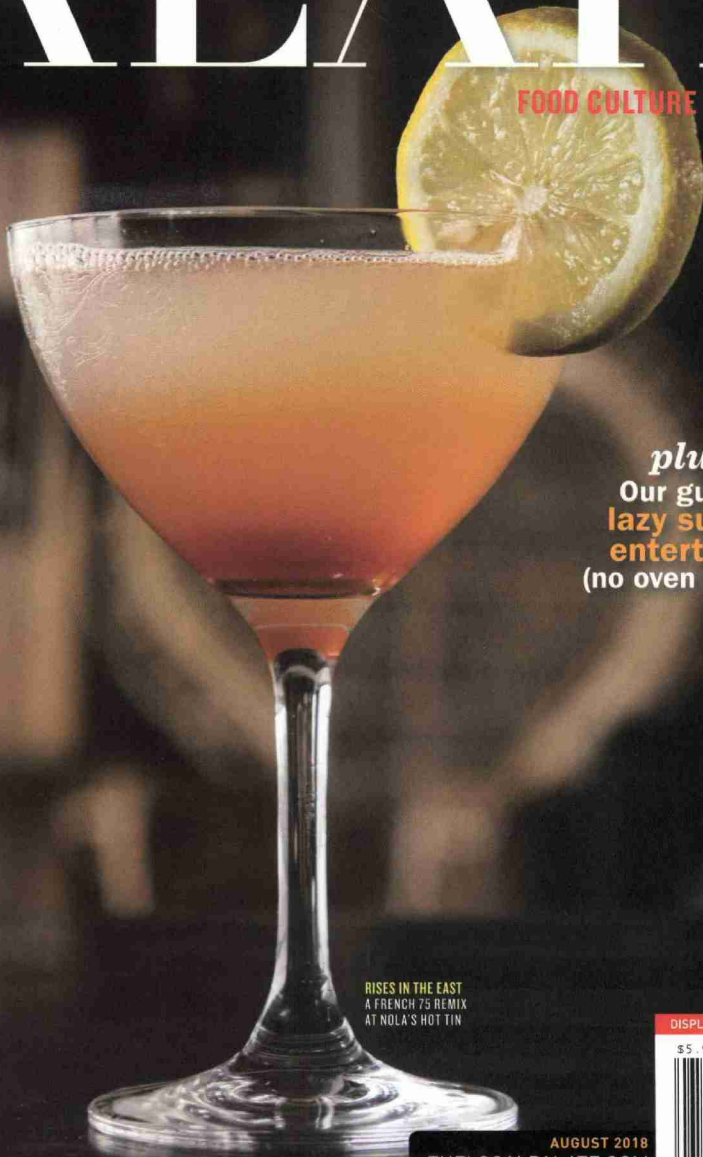
FOOD CULTURE OF THE SOUTH

THE DRINKS ISSUE

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on classic
New Orleans
cocktails

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pen odes to their
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AT HOME

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[PHOTO BY REMY THURSTON]

RECIPES
MUSINGS
FROM
SOUTHERN
KITCHENS

PUNCH IT UP
THIS BATCH COCKTAIL
WILL BE A SHOW-STOPPER
AT YOUR NEXT SUMMER
SOIREE. FIND THE RECIPE
ON PAGE 38.



BIG EASY BENEDICTS

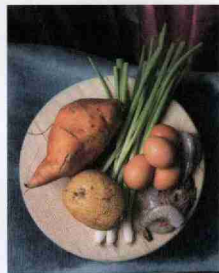
Two takes on a classic

By Emily Storrow

Brunch is a meal that prides itself on excess, from bottomless mimosas to bloody mary bars that often comprise meals in themselves. But on any given Sunday, arguably no city is better prepared for the hours-long affair of eating, drinking, and socializing than New Orleans. "It's a city of celebration all the time," says Slade Rushing, the executive chef of Brennan's in the French Quarter. Helming the kitchen at a restaurant that built its reputation on eggs, he knows how to craft a breakfast plate. He shares a luxurious combo of poached eggs and shrimp atop sweet potato latkes, coated in a scallion hollandaise.

Meanwhile, across town at hip Bywater newcomer Paloma Cafe, chefs Danny Alas and Justin Rodriguez take a different approach. Tapping their Latin and Caribbean roots, the duo goes all out with a benedict that sits atop *pan con tomate* and includes a serrano ham croquette and dijon hollandaise. Still, they save a little time by opting for blender hollandaise and a sunny-side up egg over the traditional poached. *Find the recipes on page 100.*

Self-described BFFs JUSTIN RODRIGUEZ (left) and DANNY ALAS moved to New Orleans to help open Nina Compton's acclaimed *Compère Lapin*. Earlier this year, they branched out on their own with Paloma Cafe, where culinary inspiration comes from their collective Latin upbringing—Alas was born in Venezuela; Rodriguez' family hails from the Dominican Republic.



SLADE RUSHING knows hollandaise can be intimidating to home cooks. "It's simple to make, but easy to mess up," he says. His best advice? Be patient and eliminate all distractions. "Once you've started it, you can't stop—it's like a roux."





For RUSHING, there's only one real benedict—the original. But that doesn't mean he doesn't like playing around with poached eggs and hollandaise. After all, the menu at Brennan's includes a half-dozen iterations. This recipe pairs the subtle sweetness of shrimp with sweet potato latkes.

(FROM REDUX, PAGE 28)

SERRANO HAM CROQUETTE BENEDICT

Danny Alas and Justin Rodriguez of Paloma Cafe, New Orleans

Serves 4 to 6

Pan con tomate, the classic tomato-rubbed bread of tapas fame, finds new life as a benedict base.

Special equipment: deep fry thermometer

For the serrano ham croquette:

- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ½ cup yellow onion, diced small
- Salt to taste
- Pepper to taste
- ¼ cup flour
- 3 cups whole milk
- 6 ounces serrano ham, diced
- ½ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- 3 large eggs
- 1½ cups panko breadcrumbs, finely ground in food processor
- Vegetable oil for frying

1. In a medium saucepan over medium heat, heat butter and oil. Add onion; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until onion is translucent, about 3 minutes. Add flour and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Whisk in milk and cook, continuing to whisk, for 3 minutes. Whisk in ham and nutmeg. Season again with salt and pepper. Spread mixture onto a baking sheet and let cool completely.
2. In a shallow dish, whisk eggs. Set aside. Using a tablespoon, scoop the cooled mixture and, using floured hands, shape into 2-inch rounds.
3. Coat each round in beaten egg, then in breadcrumbs. Transfer to a parchment-lined baking sheet and place in refrigerator. Allow to chill for about an hour before cooking.
4. In a large, heavy-bottomed stockpot fitted with deep-fry thermometer, heat 2½ inches of oil to 375 degrees. Working in batches to avoid crowding, fry the croquettes, flipping once, until dark golden brown, 1 to 2 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer to paper towels to drain.

For the dijon hollandaise:

- 4 egg yolks
- 1 tablespoon dijon mustard
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice

- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 2 sticks unsalted butter, melted
- Kosher salt

1. In a blender, combine egg yolks, mustard, lemon juice, and cayenne pepper. Cover and blend for about 15 seconds.
2. With the blender running on high speed, pour melted butter into egg yolk mixture in a thin stream. Hollandaise should thicken almost immediately. Keep warm until serving by placing the pitcher of the blender in a warm water bath.

For the pan con tomate:

- 2 large tomatoes, cut in half
- Kosher salt
- 1 baguette, cut into 1½-inch slices on a bias
- Olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, cut in half
- Flaky sea salt

1. Using the largest holes of a box grater, grate tomatoes into a large bowl. (Use a flat palm to move the tomatoes so the flesh grates off while the skin remains intact.) Discard the skin and season tomato pulp with salt.



DANNY ALAS and JUSTIN RODRIGUEZ pull out all the stops for their Latin-focused plate. "Benedict is always so rich, so why not indulge?" Rodriguez says.

PHOTOS BY CHRIS GRANGER



2. Set broiler to high. Place bread on a sheet tray and drizzle with olive oil. Broil until bread is crisp and starting to char around the edges.
3. Remove bread from oven and rub with garlic. Spoon tomato mixture onto bread. Drizzle with more olive oil and season with flaky sea salt. Set aside.

To plate:

4-6 eggs, fried sunny-side up

Place two slices of pan con tomate on each plate. Top with a croquette and a fried egg, then spoon hollandaise over top.

POACHED EGGS WITH BUTTER-POACHED SHRIMP, SWEET POTATO LATKES, AND SCALLION HOLLANDAISE

Slade Rushing of Brennan's, New Orleans
Serves 4

For the sweet potato latkes:

- 2 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled
- 1 pound Yukon gold potatoes, peeled
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 1 large egg, beaten
- ¼ cup flour

1 stick unsalted butter, melted

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Using the largest holes of a box grater, grate potatoes into a large bowl. Season with salt and pepper and toss to coat. Let sit for 5 minutes, then transfer shredded potatoes to a clean kitchen towel and wring out excess liquid.
2. Transfer potatoes to a medium bowl with egg and flour. Mix thoroughly and form into eight equal-sized patties. Place latkes on a nonstick sheet pan, spacing apart evenly. Drizzle with butter then bake until golden brown and crisp, 15 to 18 minutes. Keep warm until ready to serve.

For the scallion hollandaise:

- 8 egg yolks
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 sticks unsalted butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons thinly sliced scallions
- ½ teaspoon hot sauce
- Salt to taste

1. In a medium saucepan, bring 2 cups water to a slow simmer. Place a medium stainless steel bowl over top to create a double boiler.
2. Add egg yolks and lemon juice to bowl and whisk constantly until mixture starts to steam and is thick like a yellow cloud. Slowly whisk in melted butter and scallions. Add hot sauce and salt to taste. Keep warm until ready to serve.

For butter-poached shrimp:

- 1 pound unsalted butter, cut into chunks
- Juice of 1 lemon
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 garlic clove, smashed
- 2 pounds medium shrimp (16-20 count), peeled and deveined

In a medium saucepan, bring 3 tablespoons water to a boil. Reduce heat to very low and whisk in butter piece by piece until emulsified. Add lemon juice, salt, cayenne, and garlic. Add shrimp and poach for 8 minutes, then remove from heat. Keep warm until ready to serve.

For the poached eggs:

- ½ cup white vinegar
- 8 eggs

1. Prepare a half sheet pan with a layer of paper towels. In a large saucepot, bring 1 gallon water and vinegar to a simmer.
2. Using a slotted spoon, stir water in a clockwise

direction, then drop eggs in one by one while water is still rotating. Allow eggs to cook for 3 minutes, then, using the slotted spoon, carefully transfer to the sheet pan. Trim away any excess egg white.

To plate:

Place two latkes on each plate and top each latke with shrimp. Top shrimp with a poached egg, spoon scallion hollandaise over top, and garnish with scallions. Serve immediately.

