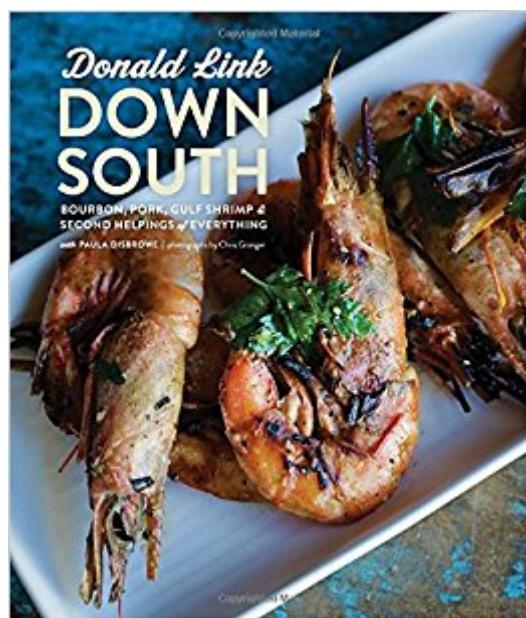


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# Down South: Bourbon, Pork, Gulf Shrimp & Second Helpings Of Everything



## Synopsis

The James Beard Award-winning chef behind some of New Orleans' most beloved restaurants, including Cochon and Herbsaint, Donald Link unearths true down home Southern cooking in this cookbook featuring more than 100 recipes. Link rejoices in the slow-cooked pork barbecue of Memphis, fresh seafood all along the Gulf coast, peas and shell beans from the farmlands in Mississippi and Alabama, Kentucky single barrel bourbon, and other regional standouts in 110 recipes and 100 color photographs. Along the way, he introduces all sorts of characters and places, including pitmaster Nick Pihakis of Jim 'N Nick's BBQ, Louisiana goat farmer Bill Ryal, beloved Southern writer Julia Reed, a true Tupelo honey apiary in Florida, and a Texas lamb ranch with a llama named Fritz. Join Link Down South, where tall tales are told, drinks are slung back, great food is made to be shared, and too many desserts, it turns out, is just the right amount.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Interview with Donald Link Q. Your last cookbook, *Real Cajun*, was a celebration of the culture in which you grew up. With *Down South*, what made you decide to get out of your comfort zone, so to speak? Growing up I had a strong influence from my Mother's father who grew up in Alabama. When it comes right down to it, I probably ate more Southern-style food growing up than Cajun food. We didn't take a lot of trips anywhere to speak of growing up except for to the Redneck Riviera. My aunt Cynthia had a house (trailer actually) on the waterfront in Gulf Shores, Alabama, so we would eat with her and at other funky restaurants on the Gulf Coast. I've also met a lot of other Southern

chefs and have been able to see very distinct subcultures of southern food. Q. I know you routinely go to France and Italy, where you rent houses, shop the markets, and cook. And before you opened your fabulous new seafood restaurant PÃ¢che, you and your crew went to Spain and to Uruguay for inspiration. Tell us about how those experiences translate into the cooking you do in your restaurants and books. My favorite thing to do when I travel anywhere is to cook in those locations with their regional ingredients. People think I'm crazy to cook on vacation but I tell them that cooking is why I got into this business in the first place. It is actually one of my favorite things to do. There is no way to replicate the cooking from my house or even my restaurant. The ingredients, terroir, dairy, meats, etc., are all unique in different parts of the world with very unique flavors. Taste the butter in France or the meat in Uruguay and you'll immediately see what I mean. Q. You also travel a little closer to home--as in the places showcased in the new book. Tell us about the trips and the influences that inspired Down South. The Southern coast was probably the most inspiring of the trip. It's very difficult to find the old-school places that I remember growing up, but there are still a few. Most of the area has been taken over by some sort of crab-trap, generic-named restaurant serving frozen crab from Alaska. Just like the food overseas, the real finds on the Gulf Coast are the markets and the fresh seafood and making my own food with those ingredients. Burris Farm Market and Joe Patti's are great examples of this. Q. The subtitle of the new book references pork, shrimp, and bourbon, but there is clearly a whole lot more inside. What made you decided to pull those three ingredients out? When I first set out on this book, it occurred to me that most of my forays through the South involved some sort of pork and almost always ended up with bourbon, and on a few occasions the day started with bourbon. The shrimp part came after the great Gulf Coast trip. Whereas a lot of Southerners hunt religiously, my dad and I did a lot of fishing and shrimping. Q. This is a gorgeous book with stunning photographs. Why did you feel like it was important to shoot each chapter on location rather than in a studio? I've never been comfortable with studio shots. I don't feel it really represents the soul of the food I cook. Shooting on location with natural light always brings about a real and authentic sense of place to the food. The book is really telling a story about food. I think it would be hard to write about one's time in Spain if you've never been there. I feel the same about food and the photos that go with it. Q. It really feels like "Down South," to borrow your title, is really at the forefront (or maybe it's the engine) of the current national food scene--a trend driven in large part by remarkable chefs such as yourself. One of my favorite new restaurants in Manhattan, Maysville, is named for the town in Kentucky where bourbon was invented, and it has some of the best little grits cakes I've ever put in my mouth. The chef isn't Southern but his influence clearly is. First, do you agree that Southern cooking has moved to the

front of the culinary pack? And if so, why do you think that is? For a long time, I think Southern food was considered a type of peasant fattening food. I think chefs now are seeing it's not all chitlins and cornbread. Southern food is, in my opinion, the most distinct food culture the United States has. It has a real history and a solid technique. I find the real trend going on right now is what is considered real. Early in my career at Herbsaint, I had moved back from a three-year stint cooking French California food in San Francisco and was hell bent on doing the same in New Orleans. I felt like the food I grew up with would never be received in an upscale dining situation. Then I came around and realized that cooking Southern and Cajun style was my God-given birthright, and there was no reason that I shouldn't let that come to the forefront of my cooking style.

DONALD LINK is the chef-owner of Herbsaint, Cochon, Cochon Butcher, PÃ¢che, and Calcasieu in New Orleans. He won the James Beard award for Best Chef South in 2007 and is a finalist for the 2017 James Beard award for Outstanding Chef. His first book, *Real Cajun*, won the James Beard award for Best American Cookbook. PAULA DISBROWE is the author of *Cowgirl Cuisine* and co-author of *Real Cajun* and Susan Spicerâ™s *Crescent City Cooking*. She lives in Austin, TX.

I ordered this cookbook because I am a HUGE fan of Cochon, Herbsaint and Pesche in New Orleans. Also b/c when interviewed in Food and Wine Magazine Link said that he carries a small knife in the glove box in his car so he can taste boudin sausage wherever he happens to be driving through Louisiana. I was not disappointed by the cookbook. First off, it is gorgeously photographed, and each section and recipe has a forward written by Link which is very personable and accessible. The recipes are not crazy ones that you will never be able to cook - they contain readily available ingredients (especially if you live in the South) Everything I have tried so far is delicious. Am SO glad for his Barbecue Shrimp recipe - been trying to work this out on my own for years and many failed internet recipes this is by far the best!

Bought this because his previous book (*Real Cajun*) is the best cajun cookbook bar none. Oh yeah it won a James Beard award for cookbook of the year. This book will more than likely follow on the heals of its predecessor. The care and the craft with which this book was written is evident on every page. I guess it's obvious i enjoyed this book. For me if there was only one recipe in the book, his recipe for banana pudding with nilla wafers justifies the cost of the book. This dessert was a comfort food from my youth that my new snobby tastebuds could no longer eat. My kitchen does not suffer boxed or instant "foods". It took me back to simpler times. Strange what a simple recipe can

do.

I bought this book because I have Donald Link's other cookbook, "Real Cajun" and really enjoyed it. I also looked at what was available in the preview and looked forward to this book being it's equal. For me, it fell a little short. Don't get me wrong, there are a number of good recipes in this book that I look forward to trying them, but there are more recipes that I would pass on completely. I also thought that the background info and stories weren't quite as interesting. So it's good, but not great in my mind.

Good cookbook.

Nice book

Leaves your mouth watering, your foot tapping and your heart ready to head down south. As much about southern culture as food. A delightful book for southerners and wannabes.

Great gift for son in law who looks cooking

I purchased the cookbook for a birthday present....He LOVED the book!! Wonderful recipes and pictures!!

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