

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Southern Foods Culinary Event - March 2013

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Report Highlights:

FAS London worked in conjunction with the Atlanta Food and Wine Festival to create a culinary explosion of Southern food and wine products put together by James Baird trained chefs for UK media, chefs, restaurant owners and UK importers. This was with the aim of generating interest of Southern cuisine and how much is has to offer.

General Information:

On Thursday March 7, 2013 an American Southern foods reception took place at the home of Barbara Stephenson, US Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission in London. This was the first event of a three-day culinary trip to London that was a collaborative effort between the US Department of Agriculture and US State Department at the US Embassy in London, and the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival. The program is supported by the US Secretary of State's Diplomatic Culinary Partnership Initiative.

Six outstanding US chefs all of whom own restaurants in the United States flew into London to cook some amazing Southern dishes. The chefs interacted with guests by serving their creations at various cooking stations. They were able to tell guests more about the various ingredients used and more about the food they had created. In addition there was a mixologist who served some fantastic cocktails and the United States first bean to bar chocolate maker.

The chefs that attended the event were: John Besh, Executive Chef, New Orleans, Neal Bodenheimer, Mixologist, New Orleans, Ashley Christensen, Chef, Raleigh, NC, Kelly English, Chef, Memphis, TN, Kristen Hard, Chocolate Maker, Atlanta, GA, and Duane Nutter, Chef, Atlanta, GA.

The chefs were here to educate and show the UK media about the diversity of U.S. southern cuisine. None of the events would have been possible if it were not for the generosity of US producers and UK importers of American products. All food and drink products were donated for the event. Products included beef, pork, catfish, shrimp, scallops, Virginia wine, bourbon, kidney beans and sweet. These were just a few of the vast array of products that were donated for the events.

FAS worked in partnership with the Atlanta Food and Wine Festival, US Companies wanting to export products to the UK market, US Cooperator Groups, State Department of Agriculture's and UK Importers. It was a very collaborative effect.

The other two events which took place as part of the trip were a media lunch on March 8 and a Southern Invasion party on March 9. All three events were hugely successful.

Attached are some photos of the US Embassy's event and below is a link to a You Tube Video taken at the reception.

<http://youtu.be/vohWH1sOvPo>