

# Southern style deviled eggs

BY BRIAN MEDFORD

I've lived in the Pacific Northwest for over 20 years, but my food heart still belongs to the South. When I moved to Seattle, the idea that people ordered iced tea at a restaurant and expected it to be unsweetened was shocking. Who would order that on purpose? Eventually, I gave up drinking iced tea when I ate out. I couldn't bear to see the undissolved sugar sitting at the bottom of my glass. I know that sugar felt rejected.

Over the years, I've adapted and let go of certain innate food expectations, sometimes graciously and sometimes not. I no longer expect to see a baked macaroni and cheese casserole on a Thanksgiving table, and I know the pie is going to be pumpkin and not sweet potato. There are no boiled peanuts and rarely a mountain of buttery mashed potatoes in a yellow Pyrex bowl like my nana made.

My sister-in-law almost brought me to tears once when I was visiting North Carolina. She served a plate of sliced tomatoes, white onion and quick pickles alongside of supper. For all I remember, we could have been eating lasagna, but that side dish sure was familiar and comforting.

While my accent has softened, and I sometimes struggle to understand my relatives when we talk on the phone, I'm still hungry for the food of my youth. Although it's not always good for my waistline, I'm fine with loosening my belt for a bite or two of memory.

It's almost Easter, and while they're not originally Southern, deviled eggs were featured prominently at our spring-time table, particularly after hunting for their brightly dyed shells in the backyard. And an Easter church potluck without deviled eggs may not be worth going to at all.

The earliest known printed American recipe for deviled eggs was in a local Montgomery, Alabama, publication in 1877. There are endless variations and must have ingredients for deviled eggs. For me, simple recipes are best, no fancy piping technique and no hard to find or expensive ingredients. I do, however, think yellow mustard is non-negotiable.

Pull up to the table, have a deviled egg as an appetizer or even your entire meal, and think of home.

## Deviled Eggs

*Adapted from Sean Brock, makes 12 eggs*

- Six large eggs
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon yellow mustard
- 4 tablespoons bread and butter or dill pickles, finely diced
- 1 1/2 teaspoons pickle brine
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- Hot sauce to taste (I like Crystal Hot Sauce)
- Smoked paprika

## Preparation

Place six eggs in a large saucepan and cover with room temperature water. Boil the eggs for two minutes. Remove



**Deviled eggs seasoned with paprika and served with fresh pickles.**

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the pan from the stove, cover it and let the eggs remain in the water for nine minutes. Drain the eggs in a colander and peel them under cold water.

Cut the eggs lengthwise in half, remove the yolks, and put them in a medium bowl. Set the whites aside. Add in mayonnaise and mustard to the bowl and mash together. Add the pickles, brine, salt and pepper and stir to combine. Add hot

sauce to taste.

Transfer the mixture to a zip top plastic bag, seal and snip off one bottom corner. Pipe the yolk mixture into the egg whites, sprinkle with paprika and serve.

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