

BlackBook

Arts & Culture Lifestyle News &

Travel Dispatch: Empire State South Opens in Atlanta

Nightlife | By: BlackBook | September 3, 2010



The culinary scene in Atlanta has never been so hot, thanks to a new movement of outside-the-box creations like *Top Chef: Chicago* contestant Richard Blais' [Flip Burger Boutique](#) and local favorites like [Sotto Sotto](#) giving a downtown, no-frills spin to fine dining.

The newest restaurant on the scene destined to become a frontrunner is [Empire State South](#). The much-anticipated restaurant by celebrated chef Hugh Ocheson officially opened this past Monday and is already buzzing in the city. Foodies in Georgia will recognize Hugh for his crowd-pleasing restaurants [Five & Ten](#) and [The National](#) in Athens, as well as the notable distinction that Hugh has been nominated multiple times for the James Beard Foundation.

At [Empire State South](#), Hugh gives a modern twist to traditional Southern cuisine, using fresh, local ingredients, while staying faithful to the "meat and three" concept (protein, two sides and choice of bread). Expect creative touches to classics like catfish with tomato chutney and lemon sauce, braised beef short ribs with ciopolini onions and the popular frogmore stew. The restaurant's interior embraces contemporary decor with some Georgia history: the woods used are from a century-old Duluth, Georgia home.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are served at [Empire State South](#). There's also a Bocci Ball Court and outdoor seating, if you need a break between dishes. Oh, and if you're wondering, the name of the restaurant has nothing to do with New York. "Empire State South" was actually the old nickname of Georgia before it became "the Peach State."