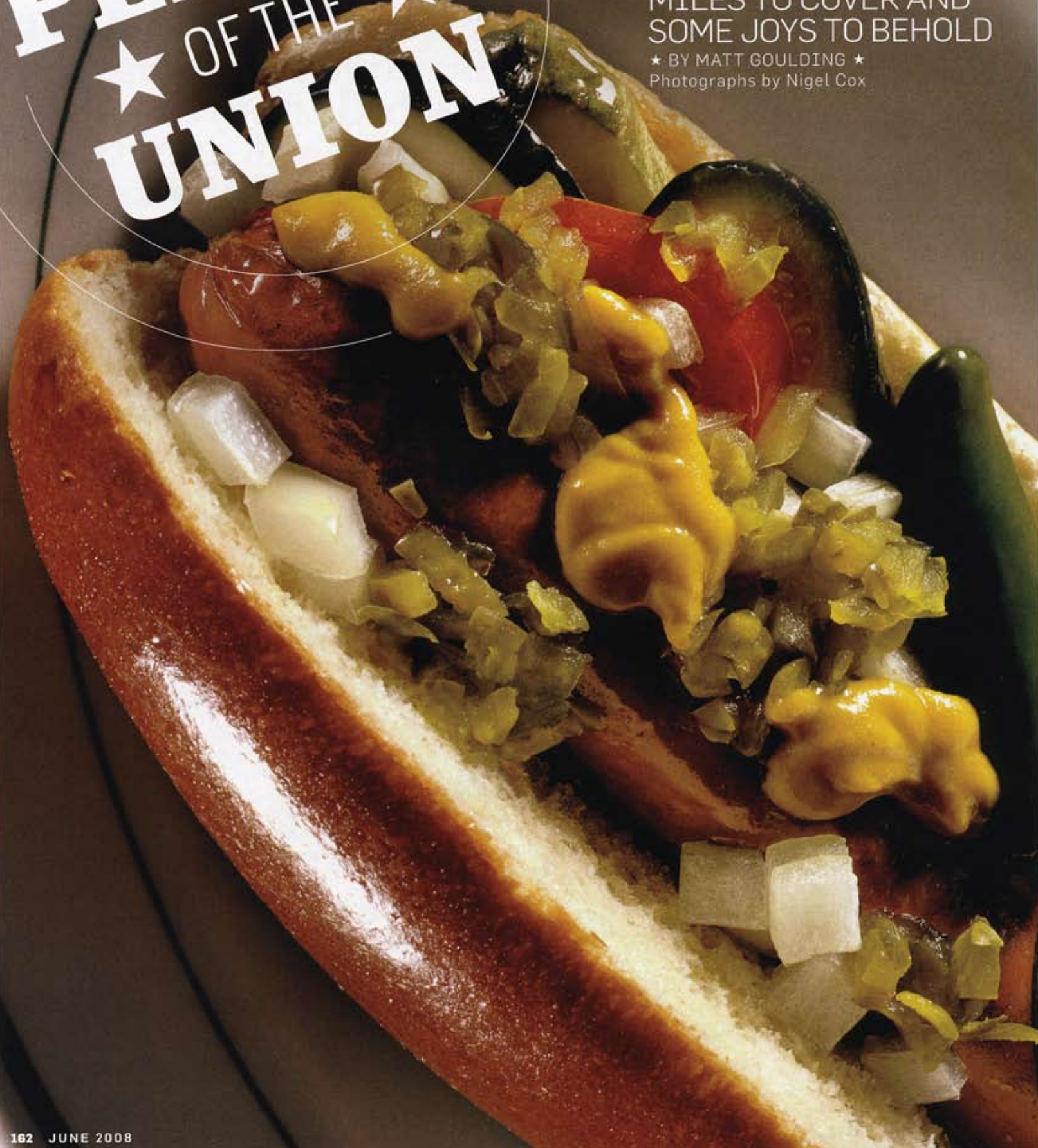


PLATES OF THE UNION

IF THESE DISHES HAVEN'T YET CROSSED YOUR LIPS AS YOU'VE CROSSED THE COUNTRY, YOU'VE GOT SOME MILES TO COVER AND SOME JOYS TO BEHOLD

★ BY MATT GOULDING ★
Photographs by Nigel Cox



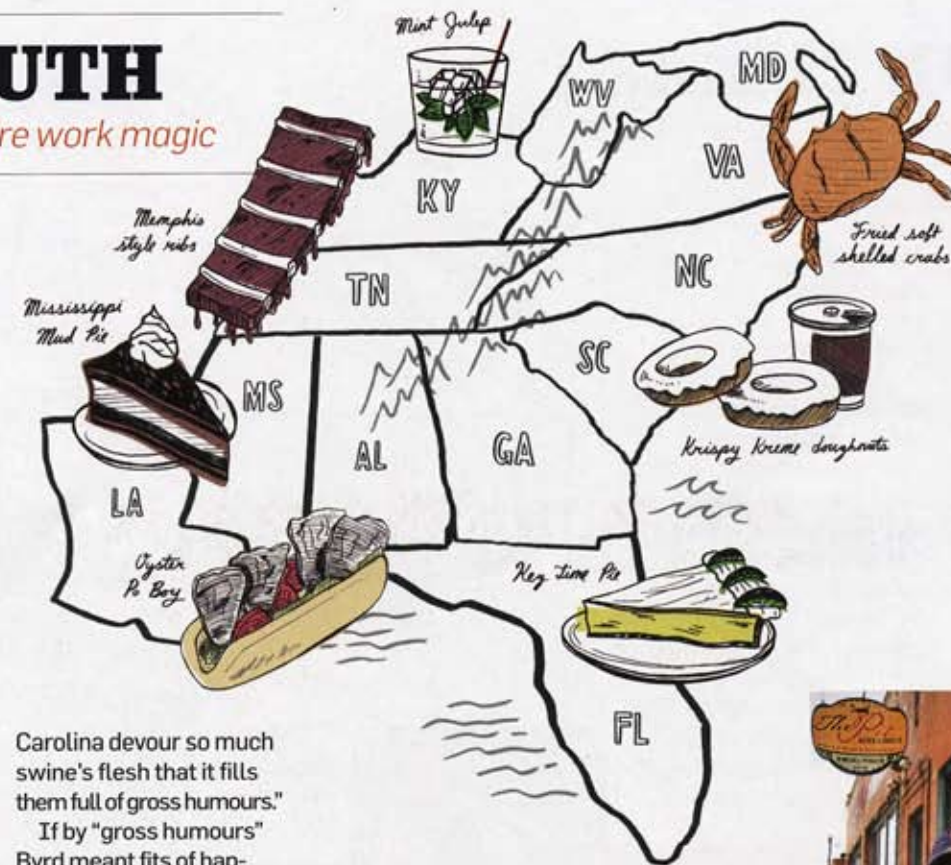
THE SOUTH

Where smoke and fire work magic

Barbecue" is not a verb in the South, nor is it a charcoal-burning device. No, for carnivores from Daytona to Decatur, it is a religion. Whether it's the fat-speckled burnt ends of Kansas City or the dry-rubbed brisket of eastern Texas, you can feed this faith at shrines across the region. And nowhere is this ritual of smoke and fire better harnessed than in North Carolina, where whole pigs cook over hardwood for half a day before being torn apart and tossed with cider vinegar and cayenne pepper. Indeed, 18th-century author William Byrd noted, "The inhabitants of North

Carolina devour so much swine's flesh that it fills them full of gross humours."

If by "gross humours" Byrd meant fits of happiness, he was right. "Nothing beats the aroma of that smoke and that pig and that vinegar on the hot coals," says Ed Mitchell, the pope of pork in these parts. "It reaches right down to the soul."



"I'VE SETTLED MANY A FAMILY DISPUTE OVER BARBECUE."

ED MITCHELL



BEST OF THE SOUTH

1. **Ribs and barbecued spaghetti** Cozy Corner, Memphis, TN
2. **Fried bologna** Silver Sands, Nashville, TN
3. **Jack Daniel's** Lynchburg, TN
4. **Country ham** Benton's Smoky Mountain Country Ham, Madisonville, TN
5. **Mint julep** Churchill Downs, KY
6. **Fried softshell crabs** Harris Crab House, Grasonville, MD
7. **Krispy Kreme doughnuts** Winston-Salem, NC
8. **Shrimp and grits** Hominy Grill, Charleston, SC
9. **Brunswick stew** Harolds, Atlanta, GA
10. **Key lime pie** Louie's Backyard, Key West, FL
11. **Crawfish étouffée** Brenda's Diner, New Iberia, LA
12. **Beignets and chicory coffee** Cafe du Monde, New Orleans, LA
13. **Oyster po'boy** Uglesich's, New Orleans, LA
14. **Mississippi Mud Pie** MS



PULLED PORK SHOULDER

"Barbecue's not a spontaneous thing," says Ed Mitchell, who cooks his cue at The Pit in Raleigh. "It takes time and planning. But with barbecue, something good is about to happen."

What you'll need

- 8-10 lb Boston butt
- Apple-cider vinegar
- 2 Tbsp salt
- 2 Tbsp black pepper
- 1 Tbsp cayenne pepper
- 4 cups hickory or oak chips
- 10-15 lb charcoal briquettes
- Hamburger buns

How to make it

1. In a deep dish, place the shoulder with enough vinegar and water to cover (2 parts vinegar to 1 part water), along with the salt, black pepper, and cayenne. Marinate in the refrigerator overnight (or at least 2 to 3 hours).
2. Follow the smoking technique on page 175, and cook covered for 3½ to 4 hours, until very tender. Allow the meat to rest for about 30 minutes and pull pieces off by hand.

COLESLAW

- 1 cup Miracle Whip
- 1 tsp mustard (Dijon or yellow, to your taste)
- ¼ cup cider vinegar
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 bags slaw mix

How to make it

1. Whisk together all the wet ingredients and add the slaw mix. Toss to coat evenly.

VINEGAR SAUCE

1. Mix together cider vinegar, salt, pepper, crushed red pepper, and cayenne to taste. Use it to accent the pork's natural flavors.
2. Serve the pulled pork on a bun or on its own, topped with a dash of vinegar and with coleslaw on the sandwich or on the side.