

5 MOST ANTICIPATED OPENINGS

Polaris

Situated on the speck of Atlanta skyline where it garners the most attention, the blue-domed Polaris has long been one of the most visible landmarks in the city. Now it's one of the tastiest.

After closing in the mid-aughts, The Johnson Studio recently gutted the space and reimaged it as Don Draper's after-hours hangout. Executive Chef Martin Pfefferkorn's menu promises to oscillate every couple of weeks, but for now, opening service calls for small plates such as white asparagus soup with truffle powder and steak Oscar with bernaise and Dungeness crab. The seared rockhind with black rice dish sounds newfangled (yet tasty), but one thing that hasn't changed? The classic peach daiquiri—a nod to its storied past. *Hyatt Regency Atlanta, 265 Peachtree St. NE, atlantaregency.hyatt.com*

ATLAS

Atlanta foodies have been awaiting the announcement of The St. Regis Atlanta's prime resto real estate for years. So it was—sigh!—wonderful to hear that Tavistock Group's investment gurus are hiring locals to give it a Southern sensibility. They have tapped chef Gerry Klaskala, co-owner of Canoe and co-owner/chef at Aria to head up menu-planning, staff and even hire a chef de cuisine personally. Overstuffed upholstered furniture, lacquered walls and cozy banquets are on the docket for the \$5 million buildout. *88 W. Paces Ferry Road, atlasrestaurant.com*

LE BIBLOQUET

Rick Wahlstedt is bringing his hip New York brasserie concept southward and is set to open doors on the latest Le Bilboquet in Buckhead in early September. Wahlstedt shares that the interiors will include a pewter bar anchoring the dining room and large operable windows that open to alfresco dining. The chef's prowess will be evident in such classic dishes as Black Angus steak with pepper sauce served with tomato salsa and a buttery gravy you'll

want to soak up with the salty frites. Ooh la la, y'all!
Peachtree Road and Buckhead Avenue, lebilboquetny.com

THE SOUTHERN GENTLEMAN

Local restaurateurs Chris Hadermann and John Piemonte continue their winning streak with this latest entry in the Southern Proper Hospitality empire. The métier here is playful Southern staples, such as a version of chicken and waffles made with chicken liver mousse and sorghum syrup. The bar program will focus on—what else?—classic Southern cocktails: mint juleps, bourbon and the like.
Peachtree Road and Buckhead Avenue, buckhead-atl.com

SUPERICA

Superstar chef Ford Fry is doing our dining scene another favor when he opens upscale Mex-Tex (not reversed) spot in Inman Park late this summer. He's already chosen right-hand man Kevin Maxey to head up the edgy and unexpected Latin concept. Inspired by some of his favorite dining spots in Austin, Texas, Fry has a New York-based firm designing the space in its "cool Brooklyn-style."
99 Krog St., supericaatl.com



SMOKE SIGNALS
Creative cocktails like this Rye Up are the reason Kimball House received a James Beard Foundation award nomination for Outstanding Bar Program.

4 JAMES BEARD FIRST-TIMERS

Besides being new to getting the James Beard Foundation nomination nod, this Atlanta quartet also made it to the semifinals. While these stars of the culinary world didn't win the coveted award in the end, it certainly speaks volumes that the top brass are noticing these new standouts in our city.

BEST CHEF SOUTHEAST: MEHERWAN IRANI

Born in London and raised in India, Meherwan Irani considers himself a self-taught home cook who earned his chef's coat on the job. And earned it, he has. Irani opened Chai Pani in Asheville, N.C., in 2009, and Chai Pani Decatur in 2013. His approach to traditional Indian street food, combined with an innovative flair, has garnered Irani much attention. *406 W. Ponce de Leon Ave., 404.378.4030, chaimanidecatur.com*

BEST CHEF SOUTHEAST: TODD GINSBERG

Chef Todd Ginsberg (who previously studied under Alice Waters in San Francisco) has been elevating Jewish cooking to a high status at The General Muir by taking a fine-dining approach to traditional dishes. Next up for Ginsberg: a second Krog Street Market restaurant (a contemporary Israeli outpost, dubbed Yalla) and the new Fred's Meat & Bread sandwich shop (both scheduled to open late summer). *1540 Avenue Place, 678.927.9131, thegeneralmuir.com*

OUTSTANDING BAR PROGRAM: KIMBALL HOUSE

Kimball House is known for its thoughtful pairing of seafood and craft cocktails—and the James Beard Foundation took notice in their first few months out. This hot spot serves up some mean cocktails from mixology whiz Miles MacQuarrie (who previously earned great acclaim at Leon's Full Service). *303 E. Howard Ave., 404.378.3302, kimball-house.com*

OUTSTANDING SERVICE: ONE FLEW SOUTH

How interesting is it that an airport restaurant would make the semifinals? Well, One Flew South—located on concourse E—did just that by combining a fine-dining experience (think globally inspired entrees and a robust sushi menu) with exceptional service. *Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, 404.816.3464, oneflewouthatl.com*