



# The Edible South: The Power of Food and the Making of an American Region

*Marcie Cohen Ferris*

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In *The Edible South*, Marcie Cohen Ferris presents food as a new way to chronicle the American South's larger history. Ferris tells a richly illustrated story of southern food and the struggles of whites, blacks, Native Americans, and other people of the region to control the nourishment of their bodies and minds, livelihoods, lands, and citizenship. The experience of food serves as an evocative lens onto colonial settlements and antebellum plantations, New South cities and civil rights-era lunch counters, chronic hunger and agricultural reform, counterculture communes and iconic restaurants as Ferris reveals how food--as cuisine and as commodity--has expressed and shaped southern identity to the present day.

The region in which European settlers were greeted with unimaginable natural abundance was simultaneously the place where enslaved Africans vigilantly preserved cultural memory in cuisine and Native Americans held tight to kinship and food traditions despite mass expulsions. Southern food, Ferris argues, is intimately connected to the politics of power. The contradiction between the realities of fulsomeness and deprivation, privilege and poverty, in southern history resonates in the region's food traditions, both beloved and maligned.

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