



Reconciliation Dinner

Shreveport

Slow Food North Louisiana, in collaboration with other partners, is hosting a **Reconciliation Dinner** on **Saturday, August 27, 2016** at the **Petroleum Club**. This dinner is based on a famous historical event that happened in Charleston, South Carolina at the close of the Civil War.

In spring 1865, a freed slave and famed Charleston chef, Nat Fuller, hosted a Reconciliation Dinner at his restaurant. He invited Charleston's elite, white and black, to sit down together in peace. The spirit embodied in that historic dinner helped invigorate the desire for social justice in post-Civil War America during a unique culinary experience that still calls to us to gather around a dinner table today.

The Shreveport Reconciliation Dinner will be an invitation-only gathering of 80-100 residents, each of whom has made a difference in the areas of social justice, culinary outreach, or creative endeavors. An effort will be made to recreate the original dinner, but using local foods specific to north Louisiana.

This will be a celebration of culinary passion and social justice that will set the tone for a renewed spirit of cooperation and reconciliation.

www.reconciliationshreveport.com

Your contribution is tax-deductible through Slow Food, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.



Reconciliation Dinner

Shreveport

SPONSORSHIP:

\$2,000

10 Sponsorships available

Two seats at the dinner

Inclusion of name and logo in all PT

Inclusion of name and logo in printed pieces

Menu

Commemorative piece

Inclusion of name and logo in video of event

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DAVID SHIELDS
Charleston, SC



Nat Fuller's Feast: Reconciliation Dinner Re-enactment

At the center of a community sits a table—a gathering place where people share their foods, their experiences, and their hopes and dreams. Sometimes a table can create a community where none existed before. This was the vision of Charleston's most talented and famous chef in the 19th century, the African American caterer and restaurateur Nat Fuller.

One hundred and fifty years ago, Fuller made his vision a reality. It happened shortly after Charleston, the birthplace of Confederate secession, surrendered to the Union Army on February 18, 1865. In those weeks after the Union occupation, when rice rations were daily dispensed to the citizenry, Fuller refitted his restaurant, the Bachelor's Retreat, and held a sumptuous banquet. He invited leaders of the city's black citizenry, his white clients from the planter and merchant classes, and members of Charleston's provisional administration. All came as equal guests. And all came

because of the splendor of Fuller's food and the luster of his reputation as the "presiding genius" of Charleston's culinary scene.

Nat Fuller was a prophet, and the values he stood for—culinary expertise, the ethic of hospitality, the spirit of generosity, and social harmony—are those that elevated Charleston to a world destination 150 years later. To honor the prophet in his own country, a diverse group of Charlestonians planned and held a banquet commemorating and re-creating Nat Fuller's Feast on April 19, 2015. The company of 80 (the approximate size of the original feast) gathered in the building that once housed Fuller's restaurant, dined on dishes drawn from Fuller's repertoire, and imbibed beverages he served in the 1850s and 1860s.

Representing Fuller as host and chef of the 2015 Feast was Charleston Slow Food member chef Kevin Mitchell, a historian of African American food and faculty member at the Culinary Institute of Charleston. He was assisted in the kitchen by Slow Food "chefarmer" Matthew Raiford, Gullah-Geechee chef Benjamin Dennis, and Sean Brock, chef of McCrady's, Husk, and Minero, and leading advocate of traditional southern ingredients.

The evening began with a cocktail reception in the building where Fuller presided in the 1860s. Three of his signature cocktails—the mint julep, the gin and bitters, and the brandy smash—were served. The last was a watermelon brandy (pictured below) made from the Slow Food Ark of Taste Bradford Watermelon and flavored with Bradford Watermelon syrup. The Brandy was distilled by High Wire Distillery, a business greatly interested in employing Ark of Taste ingredients in its products. Non alcoholic beverages included carbonated shrubs (flavored vinegars) and persimmon beer.

After the cocktails, guests went to McCrady's Long Room, the oldest and best preserved public eating hall in the city. Detailed research into Fuller's bills of fare, his food sources, and his career enabled the chefs to create an accurate menu. To prepare authentic dishes, the chefs sourced local heirloom ingredients, including rice and grains from Anson Mills, and vegetables from Southeaster African American Farmers Organic Network.

Fuller's feast in 1865 was audacious. It was possible because of Fuller's great talent and skill as a chef and host, and also because of the enormous cultural capital he had built up in the years before and during the Civil War.

Born into slavery in 1812, Nat Fuller was sold at age fourteen to financier William C. Gatewood. Gatewood had Fuller trained by Eliza Seymour Lee, the supremely talented free black caterer and confectioner. Fuller displayed a genius for cuisine, and in 1853 he negotiated a self-hire arrangement—a quasi-liberty in which Gatewood would receive a portion of Fuller's earnings while Fuller established himself as public culinarian. From 1853 to 1857 Fuller ran the city's game market, and from 1857 to 1861 he catered Charleston's premier events. In 1861 he opened his famous restaurant, the Bachelor's Retreat, the first choice for fine dining in the city. He was so famous that General Beauregard hired him to cater the ball celebrating the capture of Fort Sumter from the Union. When U. S. General Gilmore reoccupied Fort Sumter in February 1865, he hired Fuller to cater a Washington's Birthday bash. The same table service was used at both events, and also at the Fuller's Feast re-creation held in April.

The invitees to the 2015 commemoration of Nat Fuller's Feast reflected the ethnic diversity of the original company. They were chosen because their lives illustrate the culinary ideals or social vision that Fuller articulated and lived. The banquet's sponsors, too, stand for those principles he held dear: culinary professionalism, good food, community, and social justice. Slow Food USA was proud to be counted among them. 🍷



Interested in learning more about the Reconciliation Dinner held in Charleston?

Check out the Gravy Podcast for more info:

<https://www.southernfoodways.org/gravy/a-charleston-feast-for-reconciliation-gravy-ep-17/>

NAT FULLER RECONCILIATION DINNER MENU

AMUSE BOUCHE OR PASSED APPETIZERS

Skillet cornbread squares topped with Louisiana Caviar
(black-eyed pea “caviar”)

Fried catfish bites served with local “Looweezeeanna” Peppa Sawce by
Chef Panderina Soumas, and green onion garnish

SOUP

Corn and crawfish chowder

FRUIT SALAD

Watermelon and blueberry salad
Honey-balsamic dressing

ENTRÉE

Loose meat pulled from:
Smoked turkey legs and neck bones, smoked pork neck bones
and ham hocks.

Sliced smoked sausage bites

SIDES

Tourne’ root vegetables

Mustard and turnip and possibly other greens

DESSERT

Grilled pound cake bites with a fresh honey peach glaze
with bits of fresh peaches

Pecan Napoleon with fresh berries and local ice cream (Fleur de Crème)

BEVERAGES

Peach sweet tea, water, lemonade

Wine – Mandela wines, possibly Enoch’s Stump wine

“Us Up North” cocktail – Sweet Tea vodka with peach schnapps
and a splash of bourbon



SAWA BONA MOMENT

The Shreveport Reconciliation Group decided that a component of reconciliation talks would be a great way to foster dialogue and present a program format that participants can take back to their organizations and communities. A member of our history subcommittee will implement part of a short program she developed for the National Park Service called "Sawa Bona."

Sawa Bona is a South African (zulu, khosa) greeting which translates to "I see you." The respondent says Sikhona which means "I am here" – or until you acknowledge my humanity I do not exist. This greeting is based on the South African humanist philosophy Ubuntu – I am who I am because of who we all are, which stresses the interdependence of human beings. Ubuntu inspired the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that aided South Africans in coming to terms with the atrocities perpetrated under the white supremacist system of apartheid.

The Sawa Bona Moment is a short presentation series that gives participants the opportunity to develop trust, dignity, and respect within their environments; and to increase cultural awareness through short biographical presentations from volunteers who to share their culture and life experiences.

The presenters describe how their background has shaped their development and self-awareness. Each presentation is between 10 -15 on average with time allotted for questions between each presentation. Some general topics that presenters are encouraged to focus on include: cultural values that influence their work ethic and how they relate to others and basic information about their cultural history. The program opens and concludes with a short dialogue from the facilitator about an issue or topic related to racism, injustice and inequalities (i.e. educational disparities, food access disparities, disparities in criminal justice system).

At the dinner, we will choose 4 or 5 individuals who will spend just a few minutes each sharing their stories with the group. We are working on specific suggestions for how participants in the dinner can take the ongoing reconciliation talks, incorporating sawa bona moments, back to their own groups to continue the conversation.
