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treehouse

for grown-ups



Being friends with a tree hugger has its perks.

Just ask the guests at environmentalist Peter Bahouth's party for *Country Home*—between bites of Southern-style appetizers and drinks, of course. Peter has been hosting alfresco events ever since building a connected trio of platforms—which he named “Mind,” “Body,” and “Spirit”—in the treetops next to his glass-sided Atlanta home. “I thought, *I’m a tree hugger, right? A tree house. Perfect.*,” he says with a smile. The breezy getaway provides the perfect platform for celebrating nature and the incredible culinary skills of his friend Scott Peacock, who is chef at Watershed Restaurant in nearby Decatur, a Southern food expert and supporter of local/seasonal ingredients, and coauthor of *The Gift of Southern Cooking*. Both share a mutual respect for each other's commitment to the land. “I don't think Scott realizes just how much he's taught people about food and what it means to eat fresh, seasonal, regionally grown food,” reflects Peter. But that lesson is deliciously clear in his oh-so Southern spring party menu. Scott's simple dishes start with locally produced foods from people he knows and trusts. You can enjoy Scott's seasonal, make-ahead recipes at your own backyard retreat or a nearby park—embellishing them with farmers market ingredients just as he would.

OPPOSITE Peter Bahouth's tree house is the ultimate tribute to nature and an ideal party place with its three platforms—one open, one closed, and one screened.

THIS PAGE Lemonade, biscuits filled with country ham, chicken salad, and fresh-picked crudités "all remind me of old-fashioned Southern garden parties," chef Scott Peacock says.



ON THE
menu

SOUTHERN CHEESE STRAWS

For the best flavor, bake them a day ahead.

**BUTTERMILK BISCUITS WITH
COUNTRY HAM AND PRESERVES**

Spread biscuits with butter, fill with ham, and serve with blackberry preserves.

BUTTER BEAN HUMMUS PLATTER

Scott uses garden-fresh veggies as dippers.

CHICKEN SALAD CUPS

Serve this picnic favorite in lettuce cups.

MARINATED SHRIMP SALAD

Toss shrimp in a simple caper vinaigrette.

DEVILED EGGS

These eggs are always a party pleaser.

CHOCOLATE MACAROONS

Chewy, chocolaty, and easy—party perfect!

HUMMINGBIRD CAKE

Each bite has nuts, pineapple, and banana.

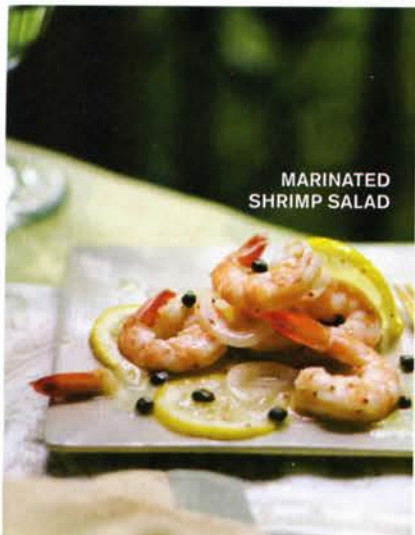
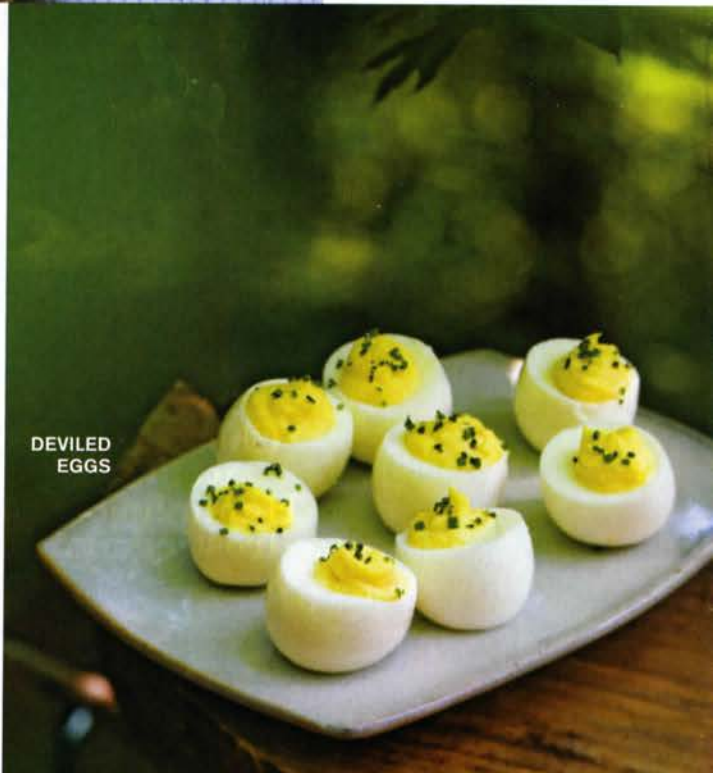
PIMM'S CUPS

SOUTHERN
CHEESE STRAWS





DEVILED EGGS



MARINATED SHRIMP SALAD



Scott and Peter's Earth-minded friends, including (left to right) Natasha Trethewey, Lois Swords, and Judith Winfrey, enjoy Scott's food, Pimm's Cups, and conversation in the middle tree house. Eco-landscaper Vanessa Vadim and organic farmer Nicholas Donk provided the eggs for the deviled eggs, *above*. "It's good to cultivate relationships with people who raise chickens," says Scott, *top*, "because who doesn't love deviled eggs?" The marinated shrimp, *at left*, is light, make-ahead, and ideal for spring.

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dessert outdoors

Chocolate Macaroons and spring berries pair well with one of Scott's favorite desserts: Hummingbird Cake, layered with cream cheese frosting and filled with fruit, nuts, and spices.



HUMMINGBIRD CAKE



CHOCOLATE MACAROONS