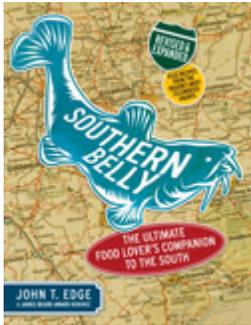


Southern Belly: Chitlin Market (and Trailer), Virginia-D.C. Area

ED LEVINE

Editor's note: Occasionally what looks at first glance to be a conventional guidebook transcends the genre in surprising ways. [John T. Edge](#)'s *Southern Belly* is just such a read, which is why I'm pleased that he has allowed us to excerpt selected items from it on Serious Eats, where they appear every other week. --[Ed Levine](#)



By John T. Edge | Shauna Anderson wants to be your chitlin vendor of choice. "Selling chitlins is all about trust," she tells me when I visit the suburban Cape Cod home she has transformed into a combination restaurant and commissary for chitlin deliveries. "Chitlins are very personal. A good cook knows that clean chitlins are where it all starts," she says of the laborious process of scouring pig intestines, a skill she learned from her grandmother.

Anderson opened her chitlin business in 1995. At the time, she was working as an accountant. Her idea was simple. Cleaned chitlins were hard to come by. And tax season only lasted a few months. She would clean chitlins during her downtime. It was an idea whose time had evidently come, for consumers, wary of the low-rent white buckets of chitlins available at traditional groceries, bought every hog intestine that Anderson and her compatriots could clean.

The following ten years were a blur. One week, producers from the *Oprah Winfrey Show* would call. Next, it's poet Nikki Giovanni on the line, placing her regular order, a ten-pound bucket. By 2003 she's taking the stage at the Smithsonian's Anacostia Museum, talking about the history of African-American entrepreneurship.

Over time, what began as a seat-of-the-pants operation morphed into a delivery service with a kitchen trailer that wends its way through Washington, D.C., dishing chitlins, stewed in her trademark vinegary sauce, as well as potato salad and cake-like cornbread. Internet orders for ten-pound buckets continue to spiral upward.

More recently Anderson has written a memoir, *Offal Great*. And she has adapted that memoir for the screen, sketching scenes of the days when Anderson, still in her crib, would watch her mother, a performer of some note, sing at Chitlin Circuit clubs. And then, of course, there's her Gourmet Chitlin Seasoning Blend, which, if Anderson has her way, will soon be available nationwide. The side label of this brownish vinaigrette-like stuff says that it can also be used with "pigs feet, hog maws and other uncured pork products." And on the front, beneath a whimsical portrait of Anderson, is her slogan, "It takes good eyes to really clean chitlins."

Chitlin Market (and Trailer)

5711 Ager Road, Hyattsville MD 20782 (with Chitlin Wagon deliveries to metropolitan D.C.; [map](#)) 866-436-9381