

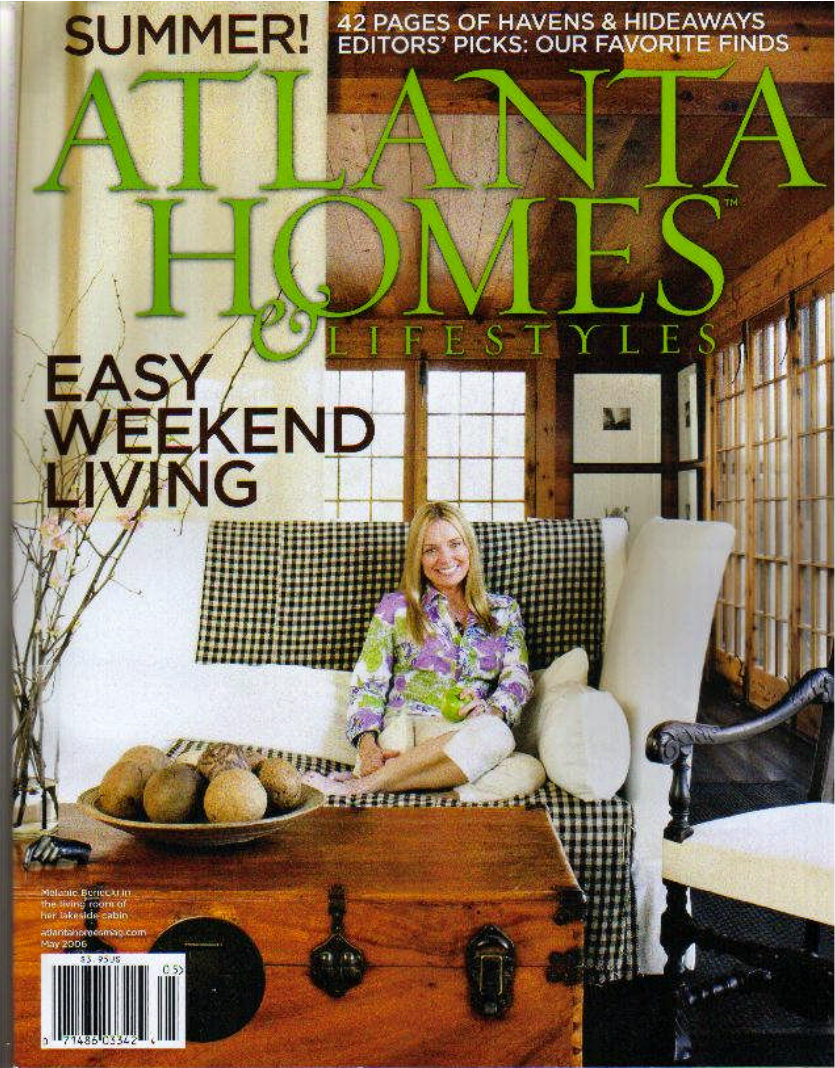
SUMMER!

42 PAGES OF HAVENS & HIDEAWAYS
EDITORS' PICKS: OUR FAVORITE FINDS

ATLANTA HOMES

LIFESTYLES

EASY
WEEKEND
LIVING



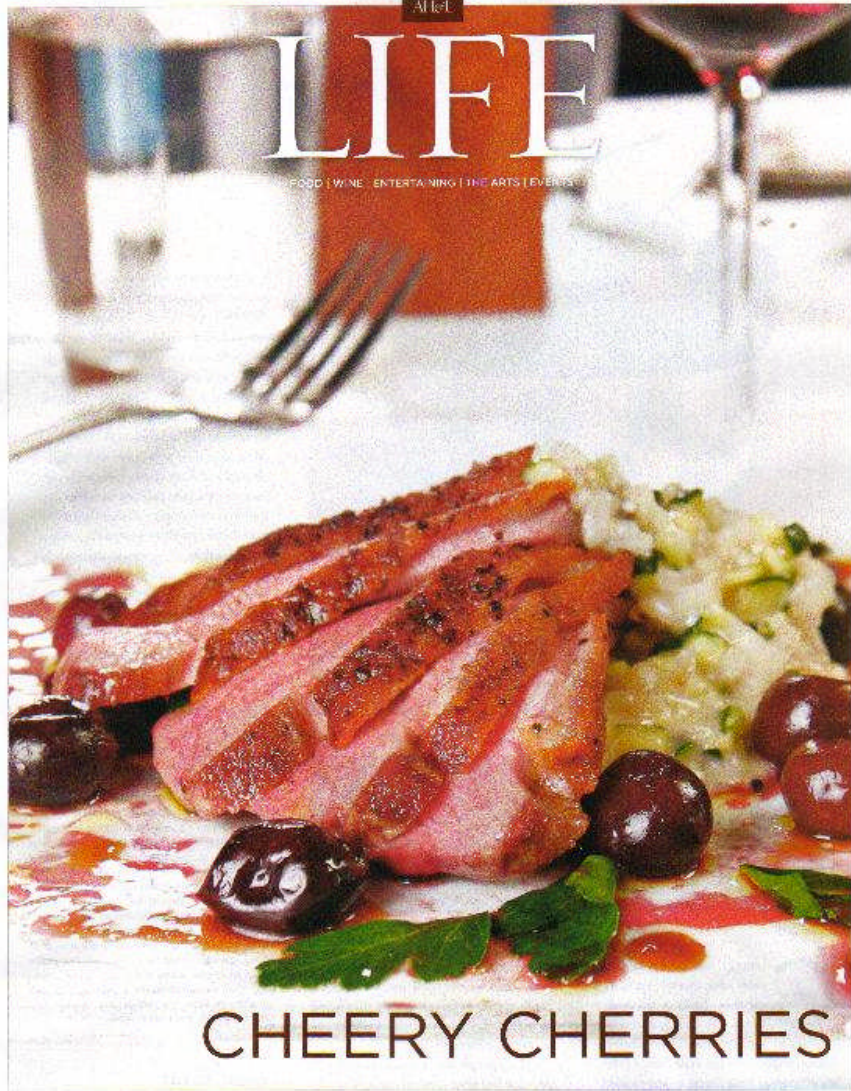
Melanie Berbeck in
the living room of
her hideaway cabin
atlantahomesmag.com
May 2006



All

LIFE

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CHEERY CHERRIES

Chef Kevin Rathbun's crispy duck breasts with bing cherry vinaigrette puts a new spin on a classic summertime fruit.

STORY BY JAMILA DORSEY | PHOTOGRAPH BY LAUREN AUSTIN

LIFE In Season



As summer arrives, so does a plethora of pitted fruits—including the long favored cherry.

Compact, colorful and delectably juicy, cherries are one of the many fruits people look forward to each summer. Starting in May, the all-too-brief cherry season begins with the availability of the most popular Bing cherry, a sweet variety. Soon after the Lamberts, Vitas and others follow and remain available through

mid-August. There is also a sour variety that is seldom sold fresh; instead, it's generally canned or frozen sooner after being harvested and is most often used for pies, preserves, jellies and juice.

Many people like to snack on fresh cherries, but most think of cherries in sweet summer desserts such as pies, cobblers, and ice cream. However, the fruit is

just as tasty to savory dishes as it is in sweets. We talked to Chef Kevin Rathbun of Rathbun's Restaurant in Jumaná Park to find out some of the more savory ways to enjoy the cherry. Though people may not realize it, cherries are great in rubs, purees, compotes and natural reductions for veal, duck or pork. One of his favorite ways to cook with them is doing so in their own juices with a little olive oil and black cherry vinegar. So are there any tricks to cooking with cherries? Rathbun says simply pull them apart and seed them, no matter how you're using them. He does, however, recommend that you wear plastic gloves as cherries stain easily. He also says, "Fresh is best. Any fresh cherries can be used for any type of recipe." So on your next trip to the market this month, pick up a pit and enjoy.

WHEN SHOPPING FOR CHERRIES, look for those that have been kept cool and moist; the flavor and texture suffers in warmer temperatures. One of the best things about this fruit is that, generally, you can taste them before you buy, and that is exactly what you should do to ensure both ripeness and flavor. Check carefully for bruises on the dark surface and don't purchase any that are sticky (a sign that the juice is leaking). If you find more than a few damaged fruits, consider shopping elsewhere, as a number of spoiled cherries can start to decay the entire bin.

The stems should be fresh and green. Avoid cherries without stems as the breaking of the skin is another opportunity for decay to begin. Likewise, sick stems are a sign of poor storage conditions. Once you've made your purchase, store them by loosely packing them—unwashed—in a plastic bag and placing them in the refrigerator, where they will generally keep for a week.

WHERE TO EAT

RATHBUN'S RESTAURANT,
(404) 524-8290; rathbuns-restaurant.com