Grits Encyclopedia Article

Grits

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Grits

Made from finely ground dried and hulled corn kernels, or hominy, grits are a central feature of Southern foodways. Grits are commonly eaten for breakfast and complimented by a wide variety of condiments; including red-eye gravy, butter, cheese, ham, bacon, salmon, shrimp, and sausage. While generally boiled to a porridge-like consistency, grits can also be served with milk and sugar or even cold-sliced and fried. Generations of Southerners have enjoyed grits since Native Americans first introduced Virginia colonists to unrefined hominy, but this Southern staple apparently has little culinary currency outside the region. Indeed, grits are an important element of Southern distinctiveness and celebrated in the region through festival, humor, literature, and song. Packaged instant or quick, grits are a key ingredient in Southern cooking and an enduring feature of Southern identity.

Further Reading:

Egerton, John. *Southern Food: At Home, on the Road, in History.* Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1993.

Wilson, Charles Reagan, and William Ferris, editors. *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture.* Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1989.