



# **Eat Drink Delta: A Hungry Traveler's Journey through the Soul of the South**

*Susan Puckett*

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The Mississippi Delta is a complicated and fascinating place. Part travel guide, part cookbook, and part photo essay, *Eat Drink Delta* by veteran food journalist Susan Puckett (with photographs by Delta resident Langdon Clay) reveals a region shaped by slavery, civil rights, amazing wealth, abject deprivation, the Civil War, a flood of biblical proportions, and—above all—an overarching urge to get down and party with a full table and an open bar.

There's more to Delta dining than southern standards. Puckett uncovers the stories behind convenience stores where dill pickles marinate in Kool-Aid and diners where tabouli appears on plates with fried chicken. She celebrates the region's hot tamale makers who follow the time-honored techniques that inspired many a blues lyric. And she introduces us to a new crop of Delta chefs who brine chicken in sweet tea and top stone-ground Mississippi grits with local pond-raised prawns and tomato confit. The guide also provides a taste of events such as Belzoni's World Catfish Festival and Tunica's Wild Game Cook-Off and offers dozens of tested recipes, including the Memphis barbecue pizza beloved by Elvis and a lemon ice-box pie inspired by Tennessee Williams.

To William Faulkner's suggestion, "To understand the world, you must first understand a place like Mississippi," Susan Puckett adds this advice: Go to the Delta with an open mind and an empty stomach. Make your way southward in a journey measured in meals, not miles.

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