



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 24, 2017

Contact:  
Todd Scholl  
Director of Sales and  
Marketing  
todd.scholl@auhcc.com  
334.321.3174

**The Hotel at Auburn University Fried Chicken Ranked Among Best in South by  
*Garden & Gun* Magazine**

AUBURN, Ala. – Fried chicken is a way of life in the South – it’s a matter of pride for both professional chefs and at-home cooks. The Hotel at Auburn University and Dixon Conference Center is honored to have its fried chicken ranked among the best in the South in a new list by *Garden & Gun* magazine.

*Garden & Gun* polled chefs, travel writers and its own magazine contributors to find out who made the best fried chicken for their article, “Fried Chicken Bucket List: A state-by-state guide to the best birds in the South.” The Hotel at Auburn University’s chicken was one of eight Alabama restaurants named.

Nominated by Rob McDaniel, executive chef at Lake Martin’s Springhouse restaurant, the hotel’s fried chicken is a hidden jewel, both on the catering menu and at the hotel’s restaurant, AT Ariccia Trattoria.

“It’s not listed as a regular menu item, but folks that are in the loop can order Mrs. Annie Cook’s fried chicken,” McDaniel said. “Mrs. Annie has been working for the hotel for 14 years, and in that time, she has gotten the fried chicken on lock. Just ask for it and you’ll see.”

Mrs. Annie Cook has cooking in her blood, as well as her name. She always cooked at home for her family, and decided to apply to the hotel to begin cooking professionally. She started as a breakfast cook, moved to lunch, a la carte, Employee Dining Room Chef and now is a lead cook in the hotel’s banquet kitchen.

“I love it when I cook and people enjoy what I cook,” Mrs. Annie said. “It makes me feel really good.”

What makes her chicken so good?

“It’s the love I put in it,” she says.

-more-

However, don't ask for her secret ingredient. While she keeps a tight lid on what gives her chicken that unmistakable flavor, she's happy to share a plate of it. "I can't give you my ingredients, but you can come and I'll fry you some," she said.

Auburn University Hotel Executive Chef Leonardo Maurelli is proud of this accomplishment, both for the hotel and for Mrs. Annie.

"Mrs. Annie's fried chicken is truly the epitome of 'cooked with love,'" he said. "I honestly think her secret ingredients are love and pride. When I returned to work here, the FIRST thing I asked for and the FIRST meal I ate was a plate full of Mrs. Annie's fried chicken. It just warms the heart and soul."

While there are many culinary awards to win, there is a certain pride in winning one for a Southern staple.

"Fried chicken – a truly great fried chicken – reminds southerners of the 'family table,' of Sunday suppers, and grandmas cooking," Maurelli said. "It is nostalgic; it takes you back to simpler days. As a chef, you try to bring out 'emotion and feeling' in your food – fried chicken does this in the simplest and most perfect of ways."

If you haven't experienced Mrs. Annie's (now award-winning) fried chicken, The Auburn University Hotel wants to ensure you get a taste with their new "Fried Chicken Fridays" on the AT lunch buffet.

Auburn University and a diverse array of cultural and entertainment attractions. Whether in town for the big game, a special party, or a productive business meeting, the hotel's 236 guestrooms and suites offer true Southern hospitality in an ideal setting. For a southern twist on Italian, visit A•T, located inside the hotel. An open kitchen and outdoor patio seating add character to this restaurant, which serves breakfast, lunch, dinner, cocktails, Sunday Brunch and offers take-out service. A•T features an espresso bar and unique wine list, and has a private dining room for special events. Located in A•T, Piccolo is Auburn's only true lounge experience for specialty cocktails and a large variety of appetizers and desserts. The menu features a variety of small plates perfect for sharing, refreshing cocktails, and piccolo bottles of champagne. Live jazz performances take place on Fridays and Saturdays (except on home football game weekends). The property is owned by Auburn University and managed by the Atlanta-based Capella Hotel Group. For additional information or reservations, please call (800) 228-2876 or visit [www.auhcc.com](http://www.auhcc.com).

###