



5 reasons to check out Secreto Southern Kitchen & Bar in Alpharetta

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Secreto Southern Kitchen & Bar's bourbon-braised short ribs are served on truffle sweet potato puree and topped with Cajun shoestring onions.

Those craving Southern food have a new option outside the Perimeter in Secreto Southern Kitchen & Bar, off Windward Parkway in Alpharetta, where Chef Boyd A. Rose cooks dishes that hark back to his upbringing in the region. Here are five reasons to check it out:

1. A cool vibe

This is a spot that's equally suitable for a casual date or a hearty meal with friends and family. The decor is a balanced mix of rustic and industrial chic, with dark leather, reclaimed wood paneling, wood tile floors and farm-themed artwork. Dim lighting accompanies the comfy digs, while some low-key music (Bob Marley never hurts) in the background adds to the laid-back ambiance. A giant metal and glass wine rack on the back wall adds visual intrigue and a modern touch.

2. The Southern eats



Secreto focuses on Southern classics, but with a contemporary spin. Based on recipes that Rose learned from his mother and grandmother, the menu has plenty of soulful offerings.

Don't-miss appetizers include fried green tomatoes stuffed with gooey, melted pimento cheese and topped with a strawberry-jalapeno jam; a Charleston-style crab cake with spicy remoulade and arugula salad (packed with plenty of fresh crab meat); and the warm pimento cheese dip served with flatbread for spreading and dipping.

Meat lovers should opt for the bourbon-braised short ribs on truffle sweet potato puree for a tender treat. For a classic Southern meal, order the signature Southern fried chicken, featuring a rich buttermilk mash, crisp garlic green beans, and smoky bacon jalapeno gravy. Another entrée standout: the coastal shrimp and grits, which gets an extra-creamy lift from Havarti cheese grits.

The food will leave you deeply satisfied — and full.

3. The staff

The easygoing atmosphere at Secreto is largely thanks to its welcoming and knowledgeable staff. From a warm greeting at the host stand the moment you walk in the door, to a friendly server who helps you navigate the menu options, to the chef making the rounds and asking diners how their meals are, the staff makes you feel like old friends.



The white chocolate raspberry crême brulee (a seasonal flavor).

4. The wine drinks

The uber-cool floor-to-ceiling wine rack on the restaurant's back wall isn't just eye candy. The restaurant has a strong wine game, with thoughtfully chosen selections available by the glass and bottle. The wine list focuses on small producers in California and Oregon, but also includes French, Spanish, Australian and Italian varietals. If you like your red wine bold, try a glass of Substance cabernet or the Antinori Il Bruciato Super Tuscan. A rotating selection of cocktails sees classics like

an Old Fashioned, as well as signature libations, like the vodka-based Southern Passion.

5. Dessert

Can't decide between the warm buttermilk-glazed carrot cake or the seasonal white chocolate raspberry crême brulee? We couldn't either, so we ordered both. If you have a fierce sweet tooth and love citrus, this classic carrot cake with orange cream cheese frosting will keep you digging in for extra bites. But, the crême brulee will disappear just as quickly, so savor those spoonfuls.

6195 Windward Parkway, Alpharetta. 770-752-0922, secretokitchen.com.

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