



Celebrating Food, Art & Culture

African American Heritage

UniverSoul Circus

Chef Extraordinaire,
Marcus Samuelsson

The B.B. King Museum

Cooking with Peanuts

Planning a Family Reunion



This Publication Brought To You By:
Thompson Hospitality
Compass Group





Clockwise from top left: Paul Rusesabagina, who inspired the movie *Hotel Rwanda*; Aretha Franklin, vocal virtuoso; Muhammad Ali, international hero; Frank Robinson, baseball legend

The Presidential Medal of Freedom

Established in 1963, the Presidential Medal of Freedom is annually awarded to people who make meritorious contributions of legendary proportions to the security or national interests of the United States, world peace, or cultural progress. Of 13 recipients earning the award in 2005, four came from the African and African American community.

Paul Rusesabagina demonstrated courage and compassion by sheltering people at the hotel he managed during the 1994 Rwandan genocide. By risking his own life, he helped to save the lives of more than 1,000 fellow Rwandans.

Aretha Franklin has nearly two dozen number-one singles and was the first woman to be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Frank Robinson is one of the greatest baseball players ever. Among his awards are National League Rookie of the Year and Most Valuable Player in both the American and National leagues. He broke the color barrier for managers, becoming Major League Baseball's first African American manager in 1975.

Muhammad Ali is one of the greatest athletes of all time. He was the first three-time heavy-weight boxing champion of the world, successfully defended the title 19 times, and was a gold medalist for the United States at the 1960 Olympic Games.

Each of their contributions took extraordinary courage, faith, and relentless determination during a time when their effort was greatly underappreciated. We say "Thank you."

It's All About Family

The family reunion. No matter how you feel about going before the event — there's time off from work, travel, and that one relative you've been avoiding for months — afterward, you're always glad you went. The laughing, crying, listening, and eating create strong family ties and memories that last a lifetime. While annual family gatherings are firmly woven into the fabric of American culture regardless of heritage, black family reunions are uniquely significant. They can reunite families once torn by slavery and infuse pride in family history.

The growth of black family reunions, both in number and size, has accelerated over the last two decades and spawned a cottage industry of professionals focused on their planning, hosting, catering, and travel arrangements. Genealogists specializing in tracing African ancestry all the way to the motherland have proliferated and are critical to connecting lost family members. Reunion specialists are on staff at convention and tourism bureaus across the country and are particularly helpful in planning large-scale events. Cruise lines are actively marketing to reunion organizers and provide everything from sinful amounts of food to free child care to exotic sightseeing.

"More than potato-salad recipes and barbeque gets passed around at black family reunions," writes Denise Smith Amos for the Cincinnati Enquirer. "Healthy doses of pride, flavored with heritage and history, are staples."

Food — always the main event at a reunion — is the reason the number one tip offered by professional planners and experienced do-it-yourselfers is "Hire a caterer!" Everyone enjoys eating a good meal while family stories are tossed about, but cooking and pot scrubbing aren't quite as memorable. Hiring a trusted caterer ensures no one has to work in the kitchen, but also, caterers can provide full course, healthy meals that meet the needs of both children and adults.

There are as many ideas for planning a memorable reunion as there are reunion organizers. Below are just a few helpful resources you can consider.

The 16th Annual National Family Reunion Conference will be held March 17-19, 2006 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The conference provides workshops and guest speakers, and it is open to the public.

Black Issues Book Review published an extensive list of resources in its May-June 2005 issue, including tips for tracing family trees prior to 1870, the year African Americans were first listed by name on the U.S. Census.



Ebony magazine has published numerous articles on family reunions, including tips on making them kid friendly and how to choose event planners.

Two events to check out. The Midwest Regional Black Family Reunion Celebration is held annually in Ohio and is billed as the largest in the country, hosting more than 100,000 visitors. The Black Family Reunion Celebration on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., is held each year the weekend after Labor Day.

A Lasting Tribute to B.B. King

In 1947, with guitar in hand and \$2.50 in his pocket, Riley "B.B." King hitchhiked his way from his native home in Indianola, Mississippi, to Memphis, Tennessee, the pre-Elvis town riveted with the cutting edge sounds of black music. It was a painfully humble beginning, further highlighting a career that is a lesson in persistence, endurance and faith. B.B. has performed well over 13,000 live shows and still plays hard, averaging 250 performances per year. His latest album, *B.B. King & Friends-80*, was released last September and is far from being a rehash of old material, which is what you might expect from a man who just celebrated his 80th birthday. It includes new recordings with Eric Clapton, Elton John, Sheryl Crow and other legends.

Plans are in the works for the grand opening of the B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center, which will be located at Second Street and Sunflower Avenue in Indianola. It is where a much younger B.B. watched the trains come and go as he worked at the cotton gin that still stands on the site and will be a part of the museum.

Despite his worldwide fame, B.B. is a man of great humility, never forgetting his roots and reaching out to the youths of today. Each year he returns to his hometown and performs a benefit concert. The honor and fame of having a museum isn't as important to him as the hope that his life story will make a positive impact on visitors and particularly the youth of Indianola.

"I'm trying to get people to see that we are our brother's keeper, I still work on it," says B.B. "Red, white, black, brown, yellow, rich, poor, we



One room planned for the museum is the "Blues Studio," where visitors can make music on a range of guitars.



B.B. at his 80th birthday party. Photo courtesy of Tom Davis.

The Legend of Lucille

Talk about a hot performance, in the mid-1950s, B.B. was performing when fans began fighting, knocked over a kerosene stove, and set the place on fire. B.B. raced to safety, but realized his \$30 guitar was still inside. He re-entered the club, got his guitar, and narrowly escaped with his life. He later learned the fight had been over a woman named Lucille, so each one of B.B.'s guitars since then has been called Lucille.

all have the blues. From my own experience, I would say to all people, but maybe to young people especially black, white or whatever color, follow your own feelings and trust them; find out what you want to do and do it, and then practice it every day of your life and keep becoming what you are despite any hardships and obstacles you meet."

Details about the opening are yet to be released, but more information and photos are posted on the museum's Web site.

Did You Know?

Mahalia Jackson, Aaron Neville, Wynton Marsalis, Bryant Gumbel, and Louis Armstrong are all from the same town a bit south of the Mississippi Delta. They were all born in New Orleans.

In the News

Army Sergeant Iris Smith won a gold medal September 30, 2005 in the women's 158.5-pound freestyle division of the 2005 World Wrestling Championships at Budapest, Hungary. She defeated five-time world champion Kyoko Hamaguchi of Japan to become the new world champion in her weight class. The lone American female to win a gold medal in the world championships this year, Iris became the fourth U.S. woman and first African American woman wrestler to win a world crown.



Army Sergeant Iris Smith (top) defeating Ali Bernard for the 2005 women's freestyle national championship, 158.5-pound division, at Las Vegas. Photo by Tim Hipps.

Freddy Adu is still setting records. Last year, at age 15, he became the youngest player ever to win the Honda Major League Soccer (MLS) Player of the Week Award — he won it twice. In 2004, at age 14, he became the youngest player ever to appear in an MLS match and the youngest to score a goal. The Ghana native was the first pick of the overall draft in 2004 and plays for D.C. United.



D.C. United's Freddy Adu on the prowl against Real Salt Lake. Photo by Tony Quinn/Wireimage.

Telling Our Story

A Visual Mosaic by Artists of the African Diaspora

Promoting Cultural Awareness

Diversity, as it is represented through art, provides cultural differences. Our art collection attempts to educate clients, shareholders, and communities. *Unity and diversity* program and be used as a stand-alone to demonstrate a commitment to diversity and disc



Robin J. Miller's inspiration is found in poetry, jazz, African American heritage, and her daily experiences. In the journey from Robin's imagination to the tangible, she sees each piece of artwork as an exploration in texture, pattern, and color. She includes as her influences such diverse masters as Vincent van Gogh, Jacob Lawrence, William H. Johnson, and Romare Bearden. Robin has also written and illustrated a series of highly acclaimed children's books

under the pseudonym r.j. scribbles. Robin is a native New Yorker, and currently lives in the Bronx, where she works as an elementary school art teacher and art staff developer. Robin has studied at Parsons School of Design, New York School of Interior Design, and LaGuardia Community College. She received a B.S. in early childhood education from Bernard Baruch College and a master's in learning disabilities from Herbert H. Lehman College.

Sonia Lynn Sadler was born in Fort Riley, Kansas, and has traveled extensively. She has designed for Anne Klein, Jones New York, and Liz Claiborne, and her accessories have been featured in the *New York Times* and *Women's Wear Daily*. On her own, she has begun work under her own name Sonia Lynn Sadler Arts, which encompasses fine artwork, children's book illustration, and a line of greeting cards featuring her art.

and Diversity Through the Arts

As a personal and visual expression of our valuable assets to mirror the diversity of employees, students, and the artwork it showcases can supplement your diversity publication. They are the perfect way to convey the vibrancy of new cultures and lifestyles.

For more information on our cultural fine art collection, visit www.picture-that.com



Tribute to the Ancestors - Sadler



Remembering Ray - Leigh



Village Queen - Miller



Jazz History Quilt - Miller

Regarding her art, she explains, "In my work I want to explore culture. I want to show we are all more similar than we are different."

Sonia Lynn attended the Maryland Institute College of Art and received a B.F.A. in Fashion Design from Parsons School of Design. She currently manages her time painting in Bowie, Maryland and West New York, New Jersey.

Ton'ya Leigh's inquisitive interest in lifestyles and culture focuses her photography on the beauty and glory of the human being. Creating memorable images of people is her greatest aspiration. She wants viewers to feel the image and discover the personality behind her subjects. Deeply influenced by Carrie Mae Weems, Ton'ya aspires to take her photography in the direction of documentary films with an emphasis on issues concerning women and minorities. Most of her

work is on black and white film where the expressions and thoughts of her subjects are more emotional.

Ton'ya holds a master's from Pratt Institute and a B.F.A. from Virginia Commonwealth University where both degrees are in design. She has studied photography at Coopers Union and the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City. Ton'ya currently designs for the Foreign Policy Association in New York City.

Nguba Peas

Although nguba peas are firmly established as a South American crop, with cultivation dating back more than 2,000 years in the regions around Peru, in the United States they are closely tied to the heritage of African Americans. In fact, nguba is an African word which came to be pronounced goober, which is one of the many names for the all-American peanut. And they really are peas, or legumes, and grow underground rather than in trees. They are also called ground nuts and come in three basic varieties: Virginias, runners, and Spanish peanuts.

How Americans came to eat 2.4 billion pounds of peanuts each year, most of it by way of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, is an incredible story that spans five continents and more than 500 years of international trade. It was in Africa that farmers took full advantage of the low production costs and high nutritional value of the crop, and Africans brought peanuts with them as they were shipped to America.

Peanuts are a terrific dietary staple. Research indicates that people who eat peanuts regularly may be lowering their risk of heart disease, as peanuts naturally contain no cholesterol. They are high in protein (one ounce provides 13 percent of the recommended daily allowance) and contain mostly beneficial unsaturated fats. One small handful of peanuts contains 2 grams of fiber, or 9 percent of the fiber you need each day. These nutrition facts come from Georgia's Peanut Institute, a nonprofit organization dedicated to expanding our knowledge of peanuts.

Mafé (Peanut Butter Stew)

In the West African nation of Senegal, this traditional stew is also made with meat — either lamb or beef. Here is an adaptation of one in Jessica B. Harris's *The African Cookbook* (Simon & Schuster, 1998) and printed in *Saveur* magazine.

- 1 3–4-pound chicken, cut into 8–10 pieces
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 3 tbsps. peanut oil
- 1 large yellow onion, peeled and minced
- 1 cup smooth natural peanut butter
- 1/3 cup tomato paste
- 5 carrots, peeled, trimmed, and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 3 sprigs fresh thyme
- 2 bay leaves

Season chicken with salt and pepper. Heat oil in a heavy medium pot over medium heat. Working in batches, lightly brown chicken all over, then transfer to a bowl as done. Add onions to pot and cook, stirring often with a wooden spoon, until soft, about 5 minutes.

Combine peanut butter and 1 1/2 cups cold water in a small bowl. Combine tomato paste and 2 cups hot water in another bowl. Stir peanut butter and tomato paste mixtures into pot, scraping any browned bits stuck to bottom of pot with the spoon.

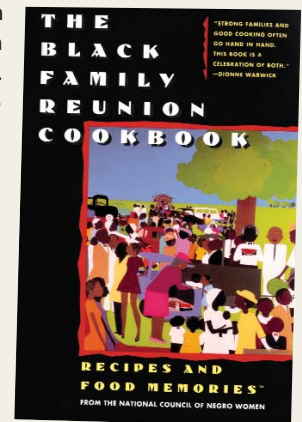


Mafé is a traditional Senegalese dish.

Return chicken to pot and stir well, then add carrots, thyme, and bay leaves. Reduce heat to medium low, cover, and simmer, stirring occasionally, until chicken is tender, or about 1 hour. Adjust seasonings. Remove thyme and bay leaves. Serve stew with hot cooked white rice, if you like.

The Black Family Reunion Cookbook

A young man comes home from school hungry. Following the aroma of his grandmother's freshly baked biscuits, he finds his way to the kitchen and sneaks one out the door. "Where are you going?" his grandmother asks as she grabs his shirttail. "Out to play," answers the young man. She hands him another oversized biscuit and says, "You better take two, because you might make a friend along the way."



Although first printed in 1991 and now out of print, *The Black Family Reunion Cookbook* recounts heartwarming stories of food, family, and friends, making it a timeless treasure for generations to come. It's worth the search to find copies, some of which are still on bookshelves.

The cookbook is a publication of the National Council of Negro Women, the organization that annually hosts the largest, most significant family event in the nation — The Black Family Reunion Celebration.

"The sharing of good food among loved ones and good friends not only gives us sustenance but also strength to meet life's challenges. During decades of public life, I have seen more problems settled in a dining room than in a conference room."

*Dorothy I. Height, Executive Chair
National Council of Negro Women*

5,000 years of African winemaking

The Nguni (African) word for joyful is thabani, and that is the word that Jabulani Ntshangase and Trevor Steyn thought best described the wines produced by their young Cape Town, South Africa winery. The two founded Thabani Wines in 2002 with the goal of using Africa's viticultural expertise to place wines of superior quality on the world market. According to the company's Web site, winemaking thrived in the Nile Delta 5,000 years ago. The walls of Pharaoh's tombs often depict winemaking scenes and contain large stone jars of wine as provisions for the afterlife. Less than 150 years ago, Algeria was the third-largest wine producer in the world. Jabulani and Trevor are among the first black Africans to venture into enology in the post-apartheid era, but with wine tourism a growing and promising South African industry, many more are sure to follow. Attempts to contact Jabulani and Trevor were unsuccessful.

In the kitchen with

Marcus Samuelsson

At the tender age of 34, Marcus Samuelsson has received more accolades than most chefs receive in a lifetime, for example: youngest chef ever to receive a three-star review in *The New York Times*; “Best Chef: New York City” from



Marcus Samuelsson

the James Beard Foundation; recognized in *Crain's New York Business's* annual “40 Under 40”; celebrated as one of “The Great Chefs of America” by the Culinary Institute of America; and recognized by the World Economic Forum as one of the “Global Leaders of Tomorrow.” It is an impressive list of accomplishments made even more remarkable by Marcus’s early childhood.

Born in Ethiopia in 1970, Marcus was orphaned at the age of 3 when his parents fell victim to a tuberculosis. He and his sister were adopted by a Swedish couple and made a new home off the west coast of Sweden. Marcus spent many of his childhood days cooking alongside his grandmother, who was a professional cook. He later studied at the Culinary Institute in Göteborg and apprenticed in Switzerland, Austria, and France. In 1995, after working his way through the ranks, he was appointed executive chef of Aquavit in New York. Aquavit is world-renowned for its traditional Scandinavian cuisine, which is complemented by the extraordinary interior design of contemporary Scandinavian masters.

Marcus’s culinary mastery is not limited to Scandinavian dishes. He is adept at African, Japanese and fusion foods as well. He has three critically acclaimed cookbooks. *En Smakresa: Middagstips Från Marcus Samuelsson, Aquavit* and *The New Scandinavian Cuisine*, and *Street Food*, a soft-cover cookbook featuring easy recipes based on street foods from all over the world. He is currently working on his fourth cookbook celebrating the food and culture of the African continent. He has been featured in numerous publications, volunteers with the Careers Through Culinary Arts Program, and acts as the official spokesperson for the U.S. Fund for UNICEF.



Inside Marcus Samuelsson's Aquavit restaurant

Marcus's recipe for Swedish Meatballs

serves 4 to 6

for the meatballs

1/2 cup fine, dry bread crumbs
1/4 cup heavy cream
2 tbs. olive oil
1 medium red onion, finely chopped
1/2 pound ground chuck or sirloin
1/2 pound ground veal
1/2 pound ground pork
2 tbs. honey
1 large egg
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
3 tbs. unsalted butter

for the sauce

1 cup chicken stock
1/2 cup heavy cream
1/4 cup lingonberry preserves
2 tbs. juice from quick pickled cucumbers
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Prepare the meatballs: Combine the bread crumbs and heavy cream in a small bowl, stirring with a fork until all the crumbs are moistened. Set aside.

2. Heat the oil in a small skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and sauté for about 5 minutes, until softened. Remove from the heat.

3. In a large bowl, combine the ground beef, veal, pork, onion, honey, and egg, and mix well

with your hands. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Add the bread crumb-cream mixture and mix well. With wet hands (to keep the mixture from sticking), shape the mixture into meatballs the size of golf balls, placing them on a plate lightly moistened with water. You should have about 24 meatballs.

4. Melt the butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the meatballs, in batches if necessary, and cook, turning frequently, for about 7 minutes, until browned on all sides and cooked through. Transfer the meatballs to a plate, and discard all but 1 tablespoon of fat from the skillet.

5. Prepare the sauce: Return the skillet to the heat, whisk in the stock, cream, preserves, and pickle juice, and bring to a simmer. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Add the meatballs to the sauce, reduce the heat to medium, and simmer for about 5 minutes, until the sauce thickens slightly and the meatballs are heated through. Serve hot. Great with mashed potatoes, preserves, and pickled cucumbers.



Hip Hop Under the Big Top



When Cedric Walker was a child, his family went to the circus whenever it came through town. Afterward, he and his brother Frank would go home and spend hours re-creating the spectacles they had seen, and deep inside, Cedric wanted to run away to join the fun.

As a young adult, Cedric met the guys in a promising young musical group called the Commodores. He became their production manager and toured with them around the world. Even at this exciting point in his life, his fondness for the circus was so great he would have quit it all to be a part of the big-top show.

By the mid-'90s, Cedric, who is African American, and his associates were disappointed with traditional forms of black entertainment and desperate to create something new. "The vision was to explore the various talents other than singing and dancing that black performers had to offer," he says. "We wanted to apply our gathered years of [performing] experience ... to change the industry we worked in." The vision led Walker to create The UniverSoul Circus, affectionately dubbed by the media as "Hip Hop Under the Big Top."

The first show lost every penny, but despite going deep into the red during the first season, enthusiastic crowds and rave reviews encouraged Cedric to continue operations. By 1997 the UniverSoul tour had grown to 10 cities and to 19 cities in 1999. The first international destination came in 2001 with a tour of South Africa. 2006 promises to be the best year ever with performances scheduled in nearly 30 cities.

UniverSoul includes 17 acts of comedy and daring in a single-ring format. The big tent holds up to 2,400 people and offers everyone an intimate view of the performance. Performers come from 11 countries and include Africans, Europeans, Asians, and Hispanics. There is the award-winning Gabonese Troupe, who can stroll across the tightrope on stilts; the Cossacks, who defy death by riding horses at blazing speeds while flipping on, off, under, and over the galloping steeds; Lunga, the South African contortionist; and LaTonya Peoples, the Howard Univeristy grad who plays an inspiring violin solo for the featured ballerina. The show is anchored by Patrice Lovely, known under the big top as Maybelle, and she is the first African American female ringmaster in circus history.



Visit the UniverSoul Web site to find a show date near you.

Onionhead, otherwise known as Robert Dunn, captures the essence of UniverSoul Circus. He got his start in 1983 when the clown he had hired for his daughter's birthday party flubbed his act. Robert suited up and did the job himself, and the laughter of the children went right to his soul. He joined UniverSoul Circus as a cook, but soon was making cameo appearances as Onionhead. His great love for children is reflected in his philosophy, "Children should be loved and hugged and never hurt."



House of Africa offers a rich collection of contemporary and antique African art, as well as herbs and fabrics.

House of Africa

Serious collectors and decorators don't have time for imitations or duplications when it comes to African art, which is why they keep Pape Ndiaye's business card close at hand. Pape's two shops, one in New York City and one in Charlotte, are treasure troves of authentic artwork, fabrics, and herbs from all over the African continent. A native of Senegal, Pape has served the art community for nearly a decade and his list of clients is a virtual "Who's Who" of African American celebrities.

Not all shoppers come for the art. Popular items are rich, tapestried fabrics for making clothing at home and herbs long used for blood cleansing, hypertension, memory improvement, and weight loss. But the art is overwhelming, and the collection comes from skilled artisans not just in Senegal but from tribes all across the continent. With knockoffs flooding the market, Pape suggests dealing only with African dealers who know the market through their own extensive traveling. An if you visit the boutique and don't buy anything, the trip will still be well worth the education.

On the Cover

Top: Carribean Flava of the UniverSoul Circus. Middle: Senegalese peanut butter stew and Chef Extraordinaire Marcus Samuelsson. Bottom left: *Brooklyn Brownstone*, presented in memory of artist Kenneth Addison. Bottom right: the legendary B.B. King at his 80th birthday bash, photo courtesy of Tom Davis.

Send Us Your Stories

Diversity is a core value of Thompson Hospitality and Compass Group. To serve you better, visit us at www.thompsonhospitality.com or e-mail us at diversity@thompsonhospitality.com to give us your comments and suggestions for future stories. Visit www.thompsonhospitality.com for information on our many diversity initiatives.

This Publication Brought To You By:

