



REVIEW

The 12 Most Utterly Gorgeous Plates of Food Bill Addison Ate This Year

A dozen dazzling dishes from our national restaurant critic's travels across the country

by Bill Addison, July 14, 2016

Photos by Bill Addison

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es, I'm that guy in the restaurant – the one who first trots out an actual camera to take pictures of his dinner, and then follows up with a few smart phone snaps for good measure. I am the vampire's inverse; I crave natural light. I'll plead for a table by a window. This is my job (the best one in the world).

As *Eater's* restaurant editor, I travel all year to chronicle America's mercurial, ever-unfolding dining culture. Since we're halfway through 2016, it seems an ideal time to break and report — visually — on a dozen memorable meals I've relished in the last six months but didn't mention in other stories. These twelve dishes (plus one unusually elegant cocktail) captured the entire essence of each meal.



Pizzeria Mercato, Carrboro, NC

Southern food lovers lost one of the region's rarest jewels when Ben and Karen Barker decided to close Durham's soul-satisfying Magnolia Grill in 2013 after 26 years in business. Their son, Gabe, followed his parents to the professional stoves, cooking for several years at San Francisco's beloved Pizzeria Delfina. He returned to North Carolina's Research Triangle last year and, with an assist from his folks, launched Mercato in February. Menu items stretch far beyond the excellent, puffy-edged pies, including gorgeous small vegetable dishes prompted by the exuberant Carrboro Farmers Market nearby on Saturdays. Honestly, though? I was most excited to once again swoon over desserts by Karen Barker, especially this lilting custard cake with strawberries and vanilla bean ice cream. 408 West Weaver St, Carrboro, NC, (919) 967-2277, pizzeriamercatonc.com