

Sandy and Shane Thomas
Farmers Market to Home Meal Champions
by: Ellen Gurley



Sandy and Shane Thomas haven't been in Charlotte long but they are really enjoying themselves. Shane, a software developer, met Sandy in a little city in California and then they moved here. Charlotte, being a growing metropolis, was attractive to Sandy and Shane. That was when we won the lottery on new residents. These transplants bring that local self sufficiency that our growing queen needs. They love lofts (and have lived in some of the coolest in town), they walk their cat, and they always buy local. The affiliation with the NoDa Farmers Market began because Sandy (coined the Queen of Cheese by the Funky Geezer) works for Orrman's Cheese Shop but it in no way ends there. These two are a fresh breath of air. Check out the descriptions of the dishes that they have created solely from our regional farmers plus enjoy a bonus recipe for a habanero peach hot sauce.

1. These NC little neck clams from Fish On with spicy sausage from Mary L Farms were steamed in a white wine, cream broth and topped with roasted corn from Burton Farms. They were served this with deep-fried creamy corn fritters. The batter was just right making it crispy on the outside, creamy and sweet on the inside, with just a touch of cayenne pepper finish. There are plenty of good fritter batter recipes online if you want to try your own. They are similar to hush puppies, but less bready and much creamier on the inside.
2. We seared these sea scallops and mushrooms with sweet corn coulis, arugula, dill pesto, and tomato. These Urban Gourmet Trumpet mushrooms have a tender, meaty texture and subtle sweet flavor when cooked, similar to that of a sea scallop. We sliced the mushroom stalks into scallop-sized rounds and sautéed them in olive oil on both sides, same as the sea scallops. The sweet corn coulis is a creamed corn we made from Burton Farms sweet corn,

pushed through a fine mesh strainer. Don't throw away the corn left in the strainer. You can use it to make creamy corn fritters.

3. We made garlic pepper shrimp with green beans and cherry tomatoes. The shrimp were marinated in a homemade habanero-peach hot sauce for about 10 minutes before cooking them. The recipe for that hot sauce is below. The dish is finished with a quick chive oil (olive oil, chopped chives and salt in the blender) and black and white sesame seeds.

* See bonus sauce recipe below.



4. Slow-cooked Two Moons Family Farm beef shank with creamy grits is always a favorite. This one makes repeat performances at our house.

5. We slow-roasted some Two Moons Family Farms beef short ribs with homemade Georgia-style BBQ sauce and threw it beside some fried Burton Farms okra braded with local, stone-ground grits.

6. We took local grits and mixed them with farmers market cream, butter, and milk to make them creamy then we added some diced Mary L Farms bacon. We seasoned the shrimp and quickly sautéed them in the bacon fat, adding just a little olive oil. Top dish.

7. Pan-seared, NC rainbow trout with chimichurri, tomato, and roasted asparagus. The skin on this was so crispy! Sear skin-side down first.

8. We pan-seared swordfish from Fish On with fresh turmeric jus and shaved fennel. We had some field peas from Burton Farms and smoked bacon from Two Moons Family Farms and served it all up with pickled jalapeño.

BONUS RECIPE:

Habanero-Peach Hot Sauce

Ingredients:

1 onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, chopped
1 cup carrot, chopped
2 cups water
10-12 habanero peppers, seeded and fine chopped (*thanks to Linwell Farms for these*)
1 ripe peach, peeled and chopped
3 tablespoons white vinegar
1 teaspoon salt
Juice of half a lime
Juice of half an orange

Directions:

Sauté garlic and onion in medium sauce pan until translucent, stirring constantly so as not to burn. Add carrots, and water. Bring to boil, reduce heat and simmer until the carrots are soft. Remove from heat. Add habaneros, peach, lime and orange juices, vinegar, and salt to the carrot mixture. Place in a blender and puree until smooth. Pour into sterilized bottles or jars and seal. Keep refrigerated.

Useful links:

www.Facebook.com/LinwellFarmsNoda

www.MaryLFarm.com

www.OrrmansCheeseShop.com

www.Facebook.com/NoDaCompanyStore

www.NoDaFarmersMarket.com