

Fried Chicken Goes Hollywood



Fried Chicken Wings. Photo: Jennifer Davick. Styling: Buffy Hargett.

Now that the Oscar nominees have been announced, and the ceremony is little more than a month away, the really serious deliberations begin: What should you serve at your party? This year we're giving dainty little bites a pass, and handing the statuette to over-the-top Southern fare served by Atlantan-turned-Beverly Hills-resident, [Alex Hitz](#).

He serves some of the best Southern food west of the Rockies at his annual [party](#) the night before the Oscars. He says, "Instead of sitting home and being so worried that their teeth fall out, my friends who are up for awards come to my house." Alex's amazing [fried chicken](#), chicken pot pie, and macaroni and cheese all get red carpet treatment from candlelight, lavish floral arrangements, silver serving dishes, and fine wine.

His entertaining philosophy is straightforward. He explains, "People don't go to parties for health food. (Does anyone get excited by a lone radish?) So I give them comfort food—not things that are death-defyingly fattening and bad for you, but something that they recognize and love—the simpler the better." This authentic (and delicious) food has opened many doors for him in the City of Angels. "Angelenos embrace every weird health food trend," he says, "but they all go back for thirds and fourths of my caramel cake and corn pudding."



My Beverly Hills Kitchen

Classic Southern Cooking with a French Twist

ALEX HITZ

The author of [My Beverly Hills Kitchen: Classic Southern Cooking with a French Twist](#), and creator of [The Beverly Hills Kitchen](#) frozen gourmet food line, Alex is a man with a larger-than-life personality and well-honed sense of style. We asked him to share some of his tips for living well, and entertaining beautifully, no matter where you live.

- Make every day a special occasion. Use your good stuff, and if you don't like your good stuff, get rid of it and get something you do like!
- Dining room lighting is really important. Turn the incandescents way down—the room should not be lit for surgery.
- One really simple, inexpensive way to add glamour to every single evening—use really tall candles, 18 to 24 inches. (Tip: buy them at church supply houses.)
- When entertaining, limit the cocktail “hour” to 45 minutes. (“Entertaining at home is theater,” Alex says, “and you lose your audience if the first act is too long.”)
- If some guests are late, go ahead and start without them. Otherwise you penalize the people who got there on time.
- Serve people simple, delicious comfort food.
- Most importantly, fry chicken! (We confess, this is our tip. But once you taste [Alex's version](#) of the iconic dish, you'll be tempted to make it often.)