

Southern Living®

APRIL 2011

Savor the Season!

**WELCOME SPRING
WITH OUR EASY RECIPES
AND FUN PARTY IDEAS**

**Inside:
GEORGIA
Living**



Brunch for
All Occasions
page 118

**HOW TO PLANT
A COTTAGE GARDEN**

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welcome home

Every spring, around the halls at *SL*, you hear it: A gaggle of women gathered 'round an office door or cubicle suddenly let out a high-pitched, joyous shriek. "She's ENGAGED!" Or "She's having a BABY!!" And so begins the shower season, along with the welcome sight of azaleas in bloom, children in their pastel-colored Sunday best, and brunch invitations. Best wishes to the six (!) brides-to-be on our staff—Amy, Betsy, Caroline, Mary Elizabeth, Megan, and Rachel—and to Erynn, our latest mom-to-be; and Robbie, our dad-to-be. All this happy news inspired the party setup shown on our cover and on page 118, developed by Test Kitchen Director Rebecca Gordon, otherwise known as "The Half-Hour Hostess" for her ability to whip up a smash-hit party in a hurry. Those biscuits are to die for, assuming you're not holding back on the flavored butter.

Speaking of April showers, it's finally safe to start gardening here in B'ham without the threat of a rogue ice storm after a 75-degree day, and I've got some serious work to do in the new yard. The only redeeming quality of the property, other than its cheerful sunny orientation, was a lovely old armillary the previous owner removed after closing, much to my chagrin, leaving only barren beds of Alabama clay against a sorry backdrop of browned out Leyland cypress. As much as I want a yard that's worthy of these pages by the end of this month (like the cottage on page 84 that's only a five-minute walk from my house), I learned from my first garden to cultivate patience and restraint before really digging in. Let's get real: You can't create Giverny in a weekend. The dirty secret is that most show house borders and "instant garden makeovers" you see in magazines and on TV quickly fade like fresh flower arrangements. If you focus first on the bones, using bulletproof plants like boxwood and holly to define and enclose spaces, you'll achieve long-lasting beauty without a single bloom. After that, you can blow your budget on annuals and perennials and pour on all the cottage charm you want. Or maybe just go for the instant gratification of Giverny in pretty containers. That's my plan, anyway. Next month, since you've asked, I'll share my crazy renovation stories!



Lindsay walks down an office aisle with the bridal bunch (from left): Amy Burke, Megan McSwain, Rachel Hardage, Mary Elizabeth McGinn, Caroline Murphy, and Betsy McCallen.

Tell me everything!

Share your thoughts about this issue, ask a question, or tell us what you'd love to see. Write me: lindsay@southernliving.com

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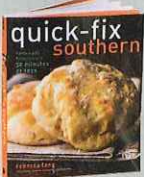
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Lindsay
M. LINDSAY BIERMAN
EDITOR

SL
Test Kitchen
approved!

Editor's Picks: New Southern Cookbooks We Love



Quick-Fix Southern by Rebecca Lang (Andrews McMeel Publishing)

BE SURE TO TRY: Lazy Girl Berry Cobbler. The cobbler "crust" is simply a stir-and-pour batter. So easy.



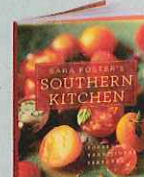
The New Southern Garden Cookbook by Sheri Castle (University of North Carolina Press)

BE SURE TO TRY: Sweet Corn Custard Ice Cream. Pair it with caramel sauce.



Seasonal Recipes from the Garden by P. Allen Smith (Clarkson Potter)

BE SURE TO TRY: Zucchini and Lemon Salad. Seasoned with dill, mint, and salt, this is a summery go-to side.



Sara Foster's Southern Kitchen (Random House)

BE SURE TO TRY: Squash Puppies with Roasted Jalapeño Mayonnaise. Seriously: Go straight to the kitchen and make this.

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