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THE SALTBOX SEAFOOD JOINT

The daily-caught fish bristles with freshness, the preparations reveal chef Ricky Moore's creativity and skill: toothsome grilled bluefish in a smoky-spicy rub of paprika and Aleppo pepper (see page 90 for recipe); an oyster roll, the plump, sweet mollusks dusted in fine cornmeal before frying, then topped with a fresh herb-faced slaw. Moore's tiny but mighty Saltbox Seafood Joint (608 North Magnum Street; 919/908-8970; saltboxseafoodjoint.com) in Durham, North Carolina, fulfills our wildest fantasies of what a takeout fish shack can be.

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85 for recipe.) —*Aglaia Kremezi, author of Vegetarian Mediterranean Feasts (Abrams, forthcoming, 2014)*

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LIVER AND ONIONS AT THE BLACK HOOF

Before visiting Toronto's The Black Hoof (928 Dundas Street West; 416/551-8854; theblackhoof.com), I had yet to meet a liver and onions dish I could truly love. That changed when a bowl arrived at the table: a tangle of braised mushrooms, miniature caramelized whole cipolline onions, and in place of the typical pan-fried calf's liver, a thick swoosh of light, creamy duck liver pâté (see page 80 for recipe). Simple, classy, superb. I fell hard.

—*Christina Tosi, chef-owner of Manhattan's Mamofuku Milk Bar*

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LAZY WOMAN'S PIE

The region of Epirus in northwest Greece is famous for its *alevropita*, savory tarts so easy to make they're nicknamed "lazy woman's pies." Twenty-five years ago, I had an unforgettable version at Kiki's, a restaurant in the village of Monodendri. Served straight out of the wood-fired oven, it had a flaky, cracker-thin crust; the topping was a simple mix of egg and crumbled feta. Kiki took her recipe to the grave, but I developed a version that's as good as what I remember: airy baked egg and cheese, fragrant with oregano and thyme, spiked with just a bit of heat from chile flakes, and layered with buttery phyllo. It's almost too ample a reward for the little effort involved in making it. (See page

PAULE CAILLAT'S BROWN BUTTER TART CRUST

You are but half an hour from a perfect pie crust—no kneading, no chilling, no rolling. All praise Paule Caillat, a Parisian cooking-school teacher who learned the technique from her husband's grandmother. It calls for heating butter and vegetable oil in a bowl in the oven, then adding flour, which froths exuberantly. Seconds later it's ready to be pressed into tins and baked. The golden, fragrant shell is perfect for filling with anything you like, but we keep it simple with pastry cream and berries so the miraculous crust can speak for itself. (See page 94 for recipe.)

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