

# atlanta Parent

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PROFESSIONAL CHEFS ARE PARENTS TOO  
– AND HAVE A FEW TRICKS UP THEIR  
CULINARY SLEEVES WHEN IT COMES TO  
FEEDING THEIR FINICKY LITTLE ONES.

## What Atlanta Chefs Feed Their KIDS

by Tenisha Mercer

Juggling a demanding career with putting dinner on the table each night is a tough act for most parents – but what if cooking is what you do for a living? Chefs often can't escape their "day job" because they're expected to whip up the same delicious dishes at home; after all, they are the culinary experts. These Atlanta chefs demonstrate that cooking nutritious and tasty meals for your family – even for finicky 3-year-olds who swear off everything except peanut butter and jelly sandwiches – doesn't have to be that difficult. Here they share some valuable tips for coaxing stubborn children to eat and offer a few kid-pleasing recipes to try.

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**Linton Hopkins**  
Restaurant Eugene, Atlanta



Chef Linton Hopkins is accustomed to working for demanding clients. After all, he's cooked meals for some of the world's most powerful people: former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, Sen. Joe Lieberman, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg, to name a few.

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**CHEF LINTON HOPKINS**

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When it comes to making dinner for his children, Linton, 7, and Avery, 5, however, Hopkins draws the line at letting the young diners dictate the menu.

"I'm not a short-order cook for the kids," says Hopkins, a chef at Restaurant Eugene in Atlanta. "If we're eating, we're eating together and we're eating the same thing. It's not like a restaurant where you can order off the menu."

Hopkins likes to keep it simple. On a recent night, dinner was grilled skirt steak, roasted new potatoes and sautéed squash. Another night it was a store-bought roasted chicken, homemade chicken stock and fried eggs.

Still, it doesn't hurt when children have eclectic palates. Hopkins' children both love vegetables – red bell peppers, broccoli, cauliflower and even brussels sprouts with the leaves peeled off, blanched in salt water and sautéed in butter.

So how do you get your kid to gobble up those veggies? Hopkins advises letting children pick out fresh vegetables, then devise a simple cooking plan.

"Kids love pure, simple flavors," he says. "We buy as fresh as we can, dress it up a bit with a little salt and lemon, grate cheese over it, and keep it nice and fresh. You don't have to worry about elaborate recipes."

That's not to say he doesn't pull some tricks out of his chef's toque every now and then to convince his kids to try a dish. Hopkins relies on a tried-and-true restaurant gimmick: mouth-watering descriptions. And a little exaggerating helps.

"We'll say, here's Dad's famous this or famous that and it will be the only time I've ever made it," Hopkins says. "Like, this is Dad's famous sautéed pork tenderloin that has won awards. Kids like something out of the ordinary, and it's often in the language of how you do it."

He insists his children at least try a new dish. "They can be picky eaters, depending on their moods," he says. "But if we cook something new, we ask them to try it. Before you say, 'I don't like it,' at least try it."

**Linton Hopkins:  
Citrus Shortbread**

1 1/3 cup powdered sugar  
Zest of 6 lemons (or combination of citrus, i.e. oranges, limes, etc.)  
1 lb. butter  
4 tsp. vanilla extract  
2 tsp. salt  
4 cups + 8 Tbs. all-purpose flour

Add powdered sugar and zest in mixer with paddle and mix for a few minutes. Add butter and mix well until smooth and creamy. Add extract and salt. Add flour and mix just till combined. Do not over mix. Roll out and cut into desired shape, or may be refrigerated and kept for when needed.

Bake at 300 degrees till crispy and slightly brown around the edges.

<http://www.atlantaparent.com/07-03-Mar2007/mar07-art1-chefs.html>