



A peak inside One Flew South, located in Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson airport.

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## One Flew South...and Burst into the Culinary Scene

*Anna Vega - June 23rd, 2014*

An airport dining establishment landed in the James Beard Award semifinals. What might seem like a strange paradox came true for Duane Nutter, executive chef at One Flew South, when the foundation announced its contenders

earlier this year, making it the first of its kind to receive the coveted nod.

Inside Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson airport, the upscale travel/dining restaurant presents a menu mindful of its Southern locale but fused with enough diversity to satisfy the global clientele migrating through the concourse on any day. Nutter creates what he dubs "Southernational" cuisine inspired by world travels, to purposely cater to the flights he anticipates will transit through. With Asian-inspired fare guiding the theme, his offerings include seared scallops with kale and navy bean ragoût, golden beets, *chimichurri*, shiitake mushrooms, and crispy kale, and the highly requested Concourse E (half-pound Kobe burger with goat's milk cheese, shiitake mushroom spread, frisée, tomatoes, pickles, and five spice fries). In-house, a 30-foot pine and Cherokee marble sushi bar prepares Japanese basics, while appealing to diners with *makimono* (variety of rolls) such as the bagel roll—smoked salmon, Greek yogurt, English cucumber, and citrus, or One's version of the kamikaze—tuna, salmon, hamachi, spicy mayonnaise, and white seaweed with eel sauce. Thoughtfully factored into One Flew South's passenger-focused model are those diners with no time to spare; they can order "Farewell" takeaway from a pre-prepared selection.

Still, being housed in an international airport under the stringent rules of the TSA introduces anomalous situations, and no two days are alike for Nutter and his team. Knives are permanently chained to workstations, and the entire restaurant has been evacuated mid-service.

# FOOD ARTS

**Mention:** One Flew South

**Date:** 6/23/2014

**Circulation:** 55,983

**Link:** <http://ow.ly/ymmOK>

"I just wanted to cook the chicken!" Nutter recalls of the moment he and every occupant of the terminal was abruptly forced to vacate as a result of a suspicious package. A veteran stand-up comedian, Nutter's wit proves beneficial for dealing with the quotidian challenges, but it's his innate ability to prepare inventive, pleasurable meals that draws travelers and the enthusiastic attention of the industry. While the restaurant accumulates its share of accolades, including America's Best New Airport Restaurants from MSNBC.com, Nutter continues to boost their presence by making appearances at local farmers' market demos and contributing his talents to exclusive ticketed dinner events, indicating that, despite not having brought home the James Beard Award in May, the only direction for One Flew South to take is to the top.

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