

## Celebrate *Red Clay Suzie* with Recipes Inspired by the Novel

Southern cooking serves up tastes and smells that feed the body and nurture the spirit.  
It's comfort food of the first order.

Here are seven recipes that make for great eating as you read, talk about, or re-read *Red Clay Suzie* and immerse yourself in Philbet's world.

Everything from Philbet's beloved green milkshakes to his mama's yummy sad-streak pound cake—with some wonderful Georgia delicacies in between!

Nothing beats a sweet tea, a peach hand pie, and a good reading lamp.  
Southern paradise.





## Sunday Cinnamon Toast

### Ingredients:

- 4 slices of white bread
- 1/4 cup unsalted, softened butter
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- a pinch of salt

### Method:

Preheat the oven to 350F. In a small mixing bowl, using a spatula, combine the softened butter, the sugar, cinnamon and salt until it has a paste-like consistency.

Spread the mixture evenly over one side of each of the 4 pieces of bread, being sure to spread that goodness all the way up to the edges.

Place the bread on a baking sheet and bake it in the oven for 10 minutes. Next, turn on the broiler and broil the toast until it is a deep golden brown, the sugar bubbling. You might want to watch it through the oven window or slightly crack the broiler door 'cause it doesn't take long, and you don't want to burn this Southern Sunday staple.

Serves 4

*I decided that Mama and Daddy liked each other better for a few days if we had cinnamon toast on Sunday before church. If we didn't have cinnamon toast before church, they didn't get along as well all week long. I thought that if we had cinnamon toast that morning, then it might not be too late for us to have a good week.*

-Chapter Seven  
*A Car for Everyone I Ever Loved*  
**From Red Clay Suzie**

## Philbet's Green Milkshake (sort of)

### Ingredients:

- 10-15 fresh mint leaves
- 3/4 cup milk (no less than 1% fat)
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups vanilla bean ice cream
- Just a touch of peppermint extract (optional)
- Whipped cream (optional)



In a high-speed blender, combine and blend mint leaves, milk, and vanilla until leaves are pureed and the mixture becomes light green in color.

### Method:

Add ice cream and pulse until combined. Next, add a few drops of peppermint flavoring, tasting a bit along the way to get it to your liking.

Serve in a chilled glass topped with whipped cream if you're feeling extra decadent.

Single Serving

*"MawMaw, I'm thirsty," I said. "I want a milkshake. A green milkshake." For as long as memory served green milkshakes were my favorite. She led me to the kitchen, poured milk into a glass, added vanilla extract and food coloring, put her hand on the top and shook it. A true milkshake–shaken milk.*

-Chapter Three  
*The Green Milkshake Cure*  
**From Red Clay Suzie**



## Jorma's Sweet Tea

### Ingredients:

- 6 tea bags (Black tea is the Southern standby.)
- Just a pinch of baking soda
- 2 cups boiling water
- 3/4 cup white granulated sugar
- 6 cups cool water

### Method:

Bring 2 cups of water to a rolling boil. Next, put your pinch of baking soda into a 64-ounce pitcher. If it's glass, make sure it is designed to take boiling water without shattering. Pour in boiling water, and then add the tea bags. Allow to steep for 15 minutes.

Then, remove the tea bags and discard. Stir in your sugar until it's dissolved. Pour in cool water and refrigerate until cold, probably 2-3 hours. When ready to serve, pour over ice in a tall glass, and maybe even garnish with a sprig of mint from Granddaddy's garden.

*It was the most delicious, easy, comforting thing in the world to run around with half a sandwich in hand, stopping long enough at the TV trays set up in the backyard to gulp some sweet tea from one of Jorma's aluminum cups, the colors of the rainbow.*

-Chapter Four  
*Tomato Sandwich Air*  
**From *Red Clay Suzie***



## Grandaddy's Yellow Tomato Sandwich

### Ingredients:

- 2 slices of white bread or whole wheat (in honor of Roman Meal Bread)
- 1 ripe yellow tomato, medium-sliced
- 1 sweet onion (Vidalia if you can get them!)
- 1/2 teaspoon mayonnaise (Duke's brand is a particular Southern favorite.)
- Two strips of fried bacon and a leaf of lettuce (optional)
- 1 pinch of salt

### Method:

Toast the bread so it's nice and crispy. Core and cut the tomatoes into 1/8th inch slices. Coat the bread with mayonnaise and layer the tomatoes as thick as you like. Top off the tomatoes with a slice of onion (and some bacon and lettuce if you like), and close the sandwich.

Eat with a side of paper napkins to catch the juices as they run down your chin. Tasty, y'all, so tasty.

Single Serve

*The shade of the pecan trees was like being in a room outside with only the breeze for walls. And we always had sweet tea and tomato sandwiches. I liked mine with mayonnaise and yellow tomatoes.*

*Everybody else liked red tomatoes, and that must have been all right with Grandaddy because the yellow tomatoes were hard to grow. What the birds didn't eat, the bugs did. But I think Grandaddy used to go to the peach stand down the highway and get me yellow tomatoes because there were always yellow tomato sandwiches whether it was Saturday, Sunday, or any day.*

-Chapter Four  
*Tomato Sandwich Air*  
**From Red Clay Suzie**



## Lawson Family Southern-Style Grits

### Ingredients:

- 4 cups water
- 1 1/2 cups ground corn grits
- 2 pinches salt
- 1/2 cup grated cheese (Parmesan, American, cheddar ... your favorite)
- 1 stick unsalted butter
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 2 dried bay leaves (optional)

*I saw Mama run into the store. I remember thinking that Daddy must not have any money on him and everybody knew you could get arrested if you take something without paying. I pulled a chair up to the stove and stirred the grits because they stick fast if you don't stir them. My chest hurt, like I swallowed one of Daddy's fishing hooks.*

-Chapter Four  
 Tomato Sandwich Air  
 From **Red Clay Suzie**

### Method:

In a large pot, put in 4 cups of water, then add grits, 2 dashes of salt, and 2 dried bay leaves (if you like). Bring to a boil over high heat. Once boiling, immediately remove pot from the heat, cover, and put aside for about 15 minutes.

Cut butter into 8 pieces. Grate your choice of cheese.

Uncover and return the grits to the stove, bring them to a boil over medium-high heat. Stir regularly with a spoon or whisk, scraping the bottom to prevent clumps, about 20 minutes should do it.

When the water is absorbed, your grits are ready. Remove them from the heat, discard the bay leaves (if you've chosen to add them). Stir in the butter pats, cheese, heavy cream, and serve.

Serves 4-6

# RECIPES

## Mama's Chili

*The Dairy Queen put chili on their burgers, but it was different from Mama's chili. It was really smooth, and Mama's was chunky with meat and beans. I liked Mama's better.*

-Chapter Ten  
*Good Grits*  
From *Red Clay Suzie*

### Ingredients:

- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 15-16 ounce can of pinto beans
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 small sweet onion, chopped
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 14.5 ounce can crushed tomatoes
- 1 cup beef broth
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- Dash of cumin, pepper, and garlic salt

### Method:

Brown the garlic and onion in a large skillet, cooking until light brown in color. Next, add the ground beef and sauté until meat is fully cooked (no pink).

Add and stir to combine the crushed tomatoes, pinto beans, beef broth, vinegar, brown sugar, cumin, garlic salt, and pepper.

Let your chili simmer on medium-low for 15 minutes. There will be a reduction of liquid, which is what makes the chili thick and yummy.

Garnish with cheddar cheese.

Serves 6



## The Knox Slider

*"Keebler, you cannot eat ten Krystals." [sliders]*

*"Bet I can too!" And I knew I could because I'd already eaten nine a few months ago, and I could have eaten another one easy. I only stopped because I didn't have any more money, and I'd already beaten Jeb, who could only eat eight.*

*"If you can eat ten Krystals, I'll buy all your Krystals for the rest of the year," Knox promised.*

*Well, I wasn't going to let this challenge get by me. He'd have to be there every time I went to Krystal, and that was reason enough to risk the stomachache and throwing up.*

-Chapter Forty-Five

*Four on the Floor*

**From Red Clay Suzie**



### Ingredients:

- 12 slider rolls (Southerners have a soft spot for King's Hawaiian Rolls)
- 1 pound ground chuck
- 12 slices of cheese (American, Swiss, Jack ...your favorite)
- 6 slices Bacon cooked/one half for each slider
- 1/4 teaspoon of salt
- Splash of olive oil
- 1 Tablespoon of onion powder
- 1 teaspoon of garlic powder
- Half a stick of butter, melted
- Condiments you like-ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, sliced pickles

### Method:

Preheat oven to 350F. Shape ground chuck into 12 small patties and cook in a large skillet, seasoning with pinches of salt and onion powder as you go. When your beef is cooked through, remove it from your skillet (setting it aside in a bowl is fine) and drain the grease from the frying pan. Now, cook the bacon in your skillet and drain on paper towel. Once it is cooled, break into 12 pieces.

Split slider buns in half and set the 12 tops aside. Place the bottom buns on a cookie sheet and cover each with one half of your 6 slices of the cheese of your choice. Place one patty on each bottom bun.

Next, add one half of the remaining 6 slices of cheese to cover each portion of beef, essentially encasing the ground chuck in cheese. Add a piece of bacon to each roll. No bacon nibbles if you can help it!

Add a dab or two or three of your favorite condiment. Knox likes ketchup and mayonnaise mixed together. Cap each creation with a bun top you set aside, cover with aluminum foil and bake for 15 minutes.

After those 15 minutes, take out of the oven and remove the foil. Brush with the melted butter mixed with garlic powder. Then, it's back in the oven for 3-to-5 minutes, or until the cheese is completely melted. Betcha can't eat 10 like Philbet!

Serves 12



# Jorma's Short-Cut Peach Hand Pies



## Ingredients:

- 2 store-bought refrigerated pie crusts
- 1 (21 ounce) can of peach pie filling
- 1 large egg white, beaten
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- Optional glaze
  - 1 1/2 cups powdered sugar
  - a splash or two of whole milk

## Method:

Preheat your oven to 425F. Next, remove pie crusts from packaging and allow them to come to room temperature while you focus on the filling.

Scoop out the pie filling into a shallow bowl. Cut the peaches into bite-sized pieces and add the cinnamon. Mix well, and set aside.

Unroll pie crusts and cut 6 circles from each. If you have a 4-inch biscuit cutter, use that. If not, fake it the way Jorma does. Re-roll the scraps as needed to make 6 circles.

Evenly divide the peach pie filling and spoon into the center of each pie crust circle. Next, fold in half and press edges closed with the tines of a fork to seal.

Beat egg white in a small bowl until frothy. Poke each hand pie with a fork just once, to let out the steam as it bakes.

Brush over the tops of each hand pie with your beaten egg white, and bake 1 inch apart on a cookie sheet for 15 minutes or until they're browned. Hint: Jorma lined her cookie sheet with parchment paper from the Dollar Store. Let your hand pies cool for 5 minutes, and they're ready to serve or sit in the pie safe.

If you would like to glaze your hand pies, whisk powdered sugar and a splash or two of milk and drizzle on top of each pie before they cool completely.

Serves 6

*She didn't walk in from the kitchen wiping her flour-caked hands on her apron, declaring with a smile, "Peach hand pies for anybody who wants one!" Nope, the pies were just there in the pie safe, every bite as bitter as a raw lemon. Her peach hand pie crusts bore the markings of her weapon of choice, a fork. Oozy peaches ripped too soon from the tree bled from the fork-crimped, charred edges.*

-Chapter Six

MawMaw and Jorma  
From **Red Clay Suzie**

# Betty Tom's Sad-Streak Pound Cake

## Ingredients:

- 3 cups white flour (not self-rising)
- 3 cups granulated sugar
- 3 sticks of sweet cream butter (no margarine or butter-margarine combination will do)
- 8 eggs

Important Note: This cake recipe requires no baking soda or baking powder.



**Method:** Preheat oven to 300F. Cream the butter and sugar well in a mixer. The resulting mixture will take on a light, lemony look. Next, add eggs, one at a time, beating each time until egg yolk is dispersed. Sift flour and then add to mixture in small amounts (a half cup at a time is about right here), mixing each time. (If short on time, the sifting step is not a requirement for a wonderful outcome.) Bake in a decorative bundt pan (well buttered and floured) for 1 hour and 15 minutes; and please don't open the oven door until Betty Tom's pound cake has baked at least one hour, or it will not rise properly. May require an additional 3-5 minutes, if your oven runs slightly below settings, but don't overbake or you won't have that yummy sad streak.

Serves 12-16

*I liked Mama's cakes 'cause she under baked them. There was always a gluey, moist streak running right through the bottom sitting just inside the brown crusty bottom layer.*

*"Why do you call it a sad streak, Mama?"*

*"Well, if you press a finger on top of a piece of just cut, still warm poundcake, a little sugary and buttery batter seeps out. It weeps a little."*

*I felt the moist cake in my mouth each time I took a bite, and I thought it must have been sad because it didn't get to be what it was supposed to be. Close but not exactly right.*

-Chapter Eighteen  
Wonky Me  
From **Red Clay Suzie**