

The Season's Best Flavors, Starring New Grilled Vidalia® Onion Sirloin, Take Applebee's® Guests Away to Their Summer Happy Places

Four New Dishes, Refreshed Beverage Line & Under 600 Calorie Lunch Combos Debut May 5

KANSAS CITY, Mo. -- Marking an annual spring rite of passage – Vidalia® onions shipping from the unique soil of southeast Georgia in late April – Applebee's restaurants recently unveiled the new **Grilled Vidalia® Onion Sirloin** by accepting the ceremonial first Vidalia® onion from representatives of the Vidalia® Onion Committee at "VidaliaBee's," an Applebee's restaurant renamed for the occasion in Dunwoody, Ga. - near the nation's first Applebee's location in Decatur, Ga.

The Grilled Vidalia® Onion Sirloin – a tender 7 oz. sirloin, grilled to order and topped with a grilled and caramelized slice of sweet Vidalia® onion, with garlicky spinach and smashed and crisped red-skinned potatoes in a warm, sweet and spicy Hawaiian BBQ sauce – is the star of a new Applebee's menu arriving just in time for warmer weather, with ingredients chosen to highlight the season's best flavors.

The new **Shrimp Scampi Linguine**, new Unbelievably Great-Tasting & Under 550 Calorie **Strawberry and Avocado Salad** and new Weight Watchers®-endorsed **Chicken Freshcado**, along with Guest favorites like the **Margarita Queso Chicken & Shrimp** and legendary **Grilled Chicken Wonton Tacos** appetizer, round out the delicious new lineup with light flavors and hints of summer sure to transport Guests to their summer happy place, wherever that may be.

And because no happy place is complete without a good beverage in hand, Applebee's will launch a line of new margaritas and cocktails just in time for the summer season. The refreshed margaritas include Guest favorites like the Perfect Margarita as well as five new margaritas and five new cocktails.

"Forget the polar vortex, and bring on summer fun," said Peter Czizek, Applebee's Vice President of Culinary and Menu Strategy. "Our new menu is full of bright dishes made with freshly prepared ingredients that bring out great flavors for warmer weather, and we can't wait for our Guests to discover how Vidalia® onions take our steaks to the next level."

"We are thrilled to provide our unique, sweet Vidalias® to Applebee's. Our onions are exclusively grown in the mild climate and unique soil surrounding Vidalia, Georgia, and are inherently special to our region. Applebee's Guests around the country are in for a special treat this summer," said Susan Waters, Executive Director of the Vidalia Onion Committee.

New Under-600 Calorie Lunch Combinations

Applebee's new under 600-calorie lunch combinations make for a better afternoon – it's (almost) a fact. With new pastas, sandwiches and salads to pair, Guests can reclaim their lunch with a satisfying and personalized meal they don't have to feel guilty about eating. Applebee's proves it's the go-to lunch spot with more than 200 different lunch combinations starting at \$6.99.

#WinBehindTheFresh

Continuing its pursuit to be the biggest fans of its fans, Applebee's is giving one lucky Guest the chance to go behind the scenes at an Applebee's photo shoot in San Francisco. Partnering with Spotify, Applebee's is asking fans to add their "freshest" songs to the #WinBehindTheFresh playlist.

To participate, fans can request songs using the Twitter hashtag #WinBehindTheFresh, add their own tune on Spotify, or Instagram a picture of an Applebee's meal with the hashtag #WinBehindTheFresh. Applebee's social media team will randomly choose a winner to see firsthand how the magic happens.

New Menu Items and Refreshed Beverages

- **Grilled Vidalia® Onion Sirloin:** A tender 7 oz. sirloin is grilled to order and topped with a grilled and caramelized slice of sweet Vidalia® onion, with garlicky spinach and smashed and crisped red-skinned potatoes in a warm, sweet and spicy Hawaiian BBQ sauce.
- **Shrimp Scampi Linguine:** Steaming linguine noodles are tossed in a citrus scampi sauce, then layered with grill-seared juicy shrimp and zucchini and finished with a scoop of pomodoro sauce, Applebee's Parmesan cheese blend and torn basil.
- **Strawberry and Avocado Salad:** Strawberry slices, fresh arugula and romaine are tossed in a fresh chili lime vinaigrette and topped with fire-grilled chicken breast. Hand-cut avocado chunks add a creamy complement to the zesty dressing.
- **Weight Watchers®-endorsed Chicken Freshcado:** Fire-grilled whole chicken breast loaded with avocado, pineapple, peppers, onions, zucchini and cucumbers and served with white rice.
- **Refreshed Margaritas:** Perfect Margarita, Strawberry Lime Margarita, Perfect Sangria Margarita, Malibu® Red Tropical 'Rita, Main Street 'Rita®.
- **Brand-New Cocktails:** Island Blast Rum Punch, Jack's Berry Smash, Kentucky Fruit Tea, Fresh Fruit Citronade, Spiked Summertime Soda

The Applebee's Brand

Applebee's is the world's largest casual dining chain, with approximately 2,000 locations in 49 states, 16 countries and one U.S. territory. Based in Kansas City, Missouri, Applebee's takes pride in providing a welcoming, neighborhood environment where everyone can enjoy the dining experience. Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar® restaurants are franchised or operated by DineEquity's wholly-owned subsidiary, Applebee's International, Inc. and its affiliates.

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