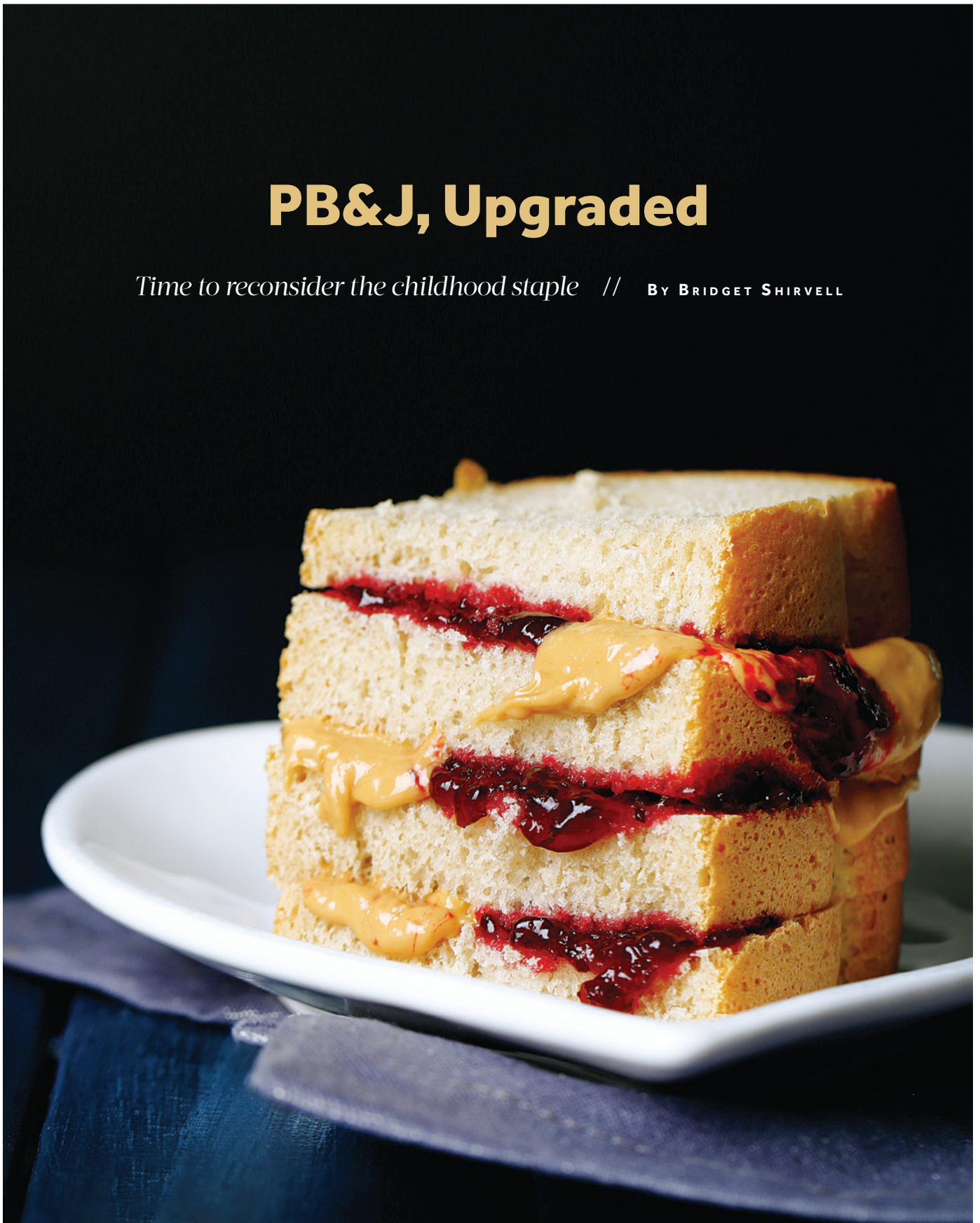


Eat + Drink

PB&J, Upgraded

Time to reconsider the childhood staple // BY BRIDGET SHIRVELL



Eat + Drink

» DONE RIGHT, peanut butter and jelly is as much a feeling as it is a sandwich (or crepe, or milkshake, but more on that in a bit). Simple, unfussy, and quick to make, when that Goldilocks ratio of peanut butter to jelly is achieved, taking a bite is akin to getting a hug from a parent.

Early on in the pandemic, I found myself texting friends and family members about all the PB&Js I was making and eating. I think I ate more in that first month than I previously had in a decade. “Same,” they said. Nearly a year into our new routine, I

still find myself reaching for slices of sourdough bread and slathering them with peanut butter and raspberry jam. But I’ve also become curious about upgrading the childhood staple, thanks to creative chefs throughout Connecticut. There’s the PBB&J Burger at Old River-ton Inn in Riverton, Peanut Butter and Jelly-Stayed French Toast at the Hidden Kitchen in North Branford, LJ’s PB&J Wings at the Spicy Green Bean in Glastonbury, and many more.

“No one would think to mix chicken with peanut butter, but it just works,” says

Jenna Rosella, manager at the Spicy Green Bean. Chef John Wright’s love of peanut butter led him to create LJ’s PB&J Wings (hey, don’t knock it until you’ve tried it) roughly five years ago, and they’ve become one of the restaurant’s most beloved dishes. The wings, served up either lightly fried with or without the skin, tossed in warm peanut butter and drizzled with house-made jelly, are worth the drive.

While PB&J wings might not sound like your mom’s PB&J, the original wasn’t exactly a casual affair. The first PB&J recipe appeared in the

Boston Cooking-School Magazine of Culinary Science and Domestic Economics back in 1901. Created by Julia Davis Chandler, it called for the use of currant or crab apple jelly and was often served at fancy parties and high teas. It wasn’t until it was added to the U.S. military’s ration menus during WWII that it caught on across the States.

As tempted as I am to attempt Wright’s PB&J wings at home, I doubt I’d manage them as well. I’m sticking to raspberry jam and peanut butter (or sunflower butter) on sourdough bread, maybe grilled with cheese.

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