

2023 Herb Society of America Southeast District Gathering

Southeast District (Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Georgia, Tennessee,
Florida, and Southern Arkansas)

September 22 and 23, 2023

Mobile, AL: The city that was “Born to Celebrate”

“An Herbal Experience”

Join us to experience the most biodiverse river system, garden of the south, the
use of herbs in olive oil, tea and cocktails (mocktails).



Southeast District Gathering 2023
“An Herbal Experience”
Friday, September 22, 2023

Location: 5 Rivers Delta Center. Where the Mobile, Spanish, Tensaw, Apalachee and Blakeley rivers flow into Mobile Bay stands an incredible facility for outdoor recreation, conservation, and land stewardship in Alabama It's the ultimate place to begin your adventure into over 250,000 acres of scenic waterways, woods and wetlands. Or simply soak up the natural beauty and history of the region.

5 Rivers Delta Center, Blakely Hall
30945 5 Rivers Blvd
Spanish Fort, AL 36527

9:00 – 10:00 am Registration
 Ways and Means Set up.

10:00 am Annual Southeast District Business Meeting

11:00 am The Happy Olive . . . Topic: Infusing Olive Oil and Herbs

Happy Olive Owner Sue Rusyniak brings her own passion for food and the endless health benefits of the Mediterranean lifestyle to the store she purchased from longtime original owners Vickie & Richard Bailey in 2020. Today, Sue shares the Bailey’s commitment to educating customers and ensuring the very freshest harvests from Spain, Italy, Australia, and other regions that produce award-winning monocultivars. Her husband George has his own family roots in Italy, and the Rusyniak’s frequent European travels make the transition from foodie to EVOO evangelical a natural. Sharing recipes from her own kitchen comes just as naturally... so customers are sure to leave with a fresh idea for the Olive’s oils & vins or seasonings.

12:00 Box Lunch will be included from Georgia Roussos Catering:

<p>Select One: Chicken Salad Wrap _____ Vegetarian Wrap _____ (both options include: Fruit Cup and Brownie)</p>

Friday, September 22, 2023 / 5 Rivers Delta Continued

1:00 pm Keynote Speaker: Ben Raines:

Ben Raines is an environmental journalist and filmmaker. A longtime newspaper reporter, Raines has won more than two dozen awards for his coverage of environmental issues and natural wonders in Alabama and on the Gulf Coast, and coauthored several peer-reviewed papers published in scientific journals. He wrote and directed *The Underwater Forest*, an award-winning film about the exploration of a 70,000-year-old cypress forest found off the Alabama coast. Raines also wrote and produced the documentary *America's Amazon*, which has aired on PBS stations around the country and been distributed to public schools across Alabama. His underwater film work has appeared in documentaries on the Discovery Channel and National Geographic TV. Raines co-authored the book *Heart of a Patriot* with U.S. Sen. Max Cleland, which chronicled Cleland's journey from triple amputee to the Senate. Ben is a graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts with a degree in filmmaking, and is a U.S. Coast Guard-licensed captain, giving tours of the Mobile-Tensaw Delta and Alabama's barrier islands. He lives with his wife and son in Fairhope, Ala.

3:30 pm Delta Explorer Cruise . . . Accompanied by Ben Raines

Nobody knows the waters of the scenic and historic Mobile-Tensaw Delta better than the licensed captains of Historic Blakeley State Parks Delta Explorer! You will journey by boat through these tranquil waterways and discover this incredibly diverse ecosystem. This cruise will explore stunning natural plant life and habitat along with nationally important historic sites, including locations associated with the Civil War's "Mobile Campaign".

Experience it all from the comfort of the *Delta Explorer*. The U.S. Coast Guard – licensed covered boat features bench seating and a restroom facility and is handicapped accessible.

5:30 Dinner on your own

Recommended: (options in close proximity) Blue Gill or Oyster House

Or

See Dining Options (attached) that are close to the Hotel locations in Downtown Mobile

Southeast District Gathering 2023
“An Herbal Experience Continues “
Saturday, September 23, 2023

Location: Mobile Botanical Gardens. Marvel at the stunning array of native plant life at this fantastic facility in the city. Stretching 100 acres the lush garden is impeccably landscaped with a magnificent array of flowers including a number of exotic plants. Deserving a special mention is the Rhododendron Garden with no less than eight varieties. The garden organizes various educational activities and events throughout the year to promote native flora. A walk through the lush landscape is a refreshing experience. Herb Garden maintained by the Gulf Coast Herb Society.

Mobile Botanical Gardens
5151 Museum Drive
Mobile, AL 36608

9 am Check – in / Time to mingle in the gardens / Ways and Means

9:45 Todd Crandall

ALL THINGS TEA: The Plant, the processing and the pleasure

Todd Crandall, MBG Director of Grounds and Facilities, will introduce us to *Camelia sinensis*, the tea plant. Todd will present how to harvest young tea leaves and process them to make our own green tea. Prior to joining the MBG staff, Todd was responsible for converting a thirty-acre working timberland into a thriving tea plantation in Walterboro, S.C. Young plants were established from cuttings and within four years the first crop was harvested. The primary product was a brewed tea concentrate widely used in restaurants. There may even be the opportunity for attendees to harvest their own leaves from our Tea Maze! Everyone will receive instructions in drying the fresh leaves for brewing green tea.

11:30 Aeriell Cashin

Herbal Mixology: How to make herb-forward libations

Aeriell Cashin, MBG Event Coordinator and Operations Manager, will be showing us how to make herbs the star of crafted cocktails (and mocktails!). With an interactive presentation and live demonstration, we will learn that the world of herb-infused beverages goes far beyond the mint in a mojito.

For many years, prior to joining the MBG staff, Aeriell was a bartender with a passion for concocting botanical infused craft cocktails. Following the presentation, attendees are welcome to enjoy one of these herb-forward cocktails or mocktails in what may be the perfect setting.. a botanical garden!

Additional Information:

Southeast District Members will provide a "Ways and Means" table and also provide information about various Herb Society of America Programs and Activities.

Each Member/Unit is encouraged to contribute items to be sold at the 'Ways and Means Table' to benefit the Southeast District Operation Account. If possible, bring these items to Registration on Friday morning at the 5 Rivers Delta for display and then the items will be transported to the Mobile Botanical Gardens on Saturday for set-up.

Please bring cash or check for Ways and Means purchases. We will not have a means of credit card purchases. Thank you!

Hotel Information and Reservations

A Block of rooms have been held at the Hampton Inn, Mobile, AL.

Rates are \$119 per night

Link to reservation:

Additional Visitor Information:

Alternative Hotel Accommodations in Mobile, AL area

Some of the Dining Options Near Hampton Inn Downtown Mobile

Nurseries in Mobile Area.

Registration Information

Name _____

Address _____

City/ST _____ Phone _____

Email Address _____

Select One: Member at Large _____ Unit Member: Unit Name _____

Cost: \$115.00

**Space is limited to 49 Members. Please register early.
Deadline for Registration is September 1, 2023**