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1 **HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 22**

2 Offered January 14, 2026

3 Prefiled January 12, 2026

4 *Designating April 27, in 2026 and in each succeeding year, as Birthplace of American Cuisine Day in*  
5 *Virginia.*

6 Patron—Tata (By Request)

7 Committee Referral Pending

8 WHEREAS, on April 27, 1607, three ships of the Virginia Company, the *Susan Constant*, *Godspeed*, and  
9 *Discovery*, dropped anchor at the mouth of Chesapeake Bay, and the first permanent English settlers in the  
10 New World came ashore near what is now Cape Henry; and11 WHEREAS, after the long transatlantic voyage, the crew and colonists were weary of a monotonous  
12 shipboard diet and hungry for fresh ingredients and well-prepared food; and13 WHEREAS, George Percy, a future Governor of the Virginia Colony, recorded one of the colonists'  
14 earliest interactions with the culinary traditions of the New World, when they encountered a group of Native  
15 Americans roasting oysters on a bonfire; and16 WHEREAS, the Native Americans fled at the sight of the colonists, leaving behind many of the oysters,  
17 which Percy described as ". . . large and delicate in taste" in what is now considered the first written account  
18 of prepared food in the United States; and19 WHEREAS, the momentous occasion served as the genesis of American cuisine, and while roasted  
20 oysters remain a staple of American diets up and down the east coast, they were only the first component in a  
21 cultural recipe that has incorporated ingredients and traditions from around the world; and22 WHEREAS, the English colonists brought with them wheat, livestock, and European preservation and  
23 baking methods, which augmented Native American knowledge of corn, beans, squash, fish, and local  
24 foraging, while enslaved Africans incorporated the use of rice, millet, okra, yams, and other crops; and25 WHEREAS, as European colonies expanded in the Caribbean, new ingredients, such as sugar, citrus, and  
26 spices began to flavor tables on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean; and27 WHEREAS, the fusion of these diverse elements, ingredients, and preparations laid the foundation for a  
28 unique cuisine defined by shared heritage, resilience, and creativity, further demonstrating the importance of  
29 the Commonwealth's role as the cradle of American culture and identity; and30 WHEREAS, today, agriculture, aquaculture, and commercial fishing businesses employ tens of thousands  
31 of Virginians and produce high-quality products enjoyed across the Commonwealth and around the world;  
32 and33 WHEREAS, culinary enterprises are major drivers of the Commonwealth's vibrant economy, with  
34 restaurants, breweries, distilleries, and wineries generating billions annually in revenue, and culinary tourism  
35 drawing visitors from across the nation and supporting hospitality, retail, and heritage sites; and36 WHEREAS, Birthplace of American Cuisine Day provides an opportunity to celebrate Virginia as  
37 America's first and finest food region, recognize the hardworking Virginians at every level of the food  
38 industry, and encourage consumers to "buy local" and take pride in Virginia products; now, therefore, be it39 **RESOLVED** by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly designate  
40 April 27, in 2026 and in each succeeding year, as Birthplace of American Cuisine Day in Virginia; and, be it41 **RESOLVED FURTHER**, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to  
42 representatives of the Commonwealth's food industry so that they may be apprised of the sense of the General  
43 Assembly of Virginia in this matter; and, be it44 **RESOLVED FINALLY**, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates post the designation of this day on the  
45 General Assembly's website.

INTRODUCED

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