

News

Country-fried Yankee goes north into the deep south

Adrienne is my Southern Bell and I am her Yankee.

I moved from New York City to a two-bedroom apartment in Destin, a couple months ago. In my search for a roommate, I met a friend that has turned out to be my perfect counterpart.

It is quite interesting to see how two women, fresh out of college and into their careers can affect each other. She has started cussing a lot like a Yankee and I have started using southern words like "cussin".

We're both single and new to the area, so we are together a lot. We gossip rottenly, are catty about other pretty girls and giggle about hot boys.

It was no surprise when she goaded me to go to her alma mater for a football game at the University of Alabama last weekend in Tuscaloosa. After all, I was more than a little curious about Alabama, where the state's reputation is just as infamous as New York's.

I had never actually been to Alabama. My only experience was the highway, which lacks luster and appeal, to say the least.

I had grown to know Alabama as rednecks and trailer parks. What I saw in Tuscaloosa was terribly different from the filthy Alabamians that the New Yorkers fear while driving late at night.

It was COUNTRY, that was true, but Adrienne's friends weren't dirty and I wouldn't call them rednecks; I'd call them country.

Especially her childhood friend, Brandon.

The green John Deere hat that perched on his head was tattered like a prized pair of Prada loafers that my friends would have adored.

Brandon wore his snap front, plaid shirt under his wool-lined blue-jean jacket. The shirt was tucked tightly into his jeans that were held snug to his hips by a worn leather belt with a buckle the size of Texas.

His brown boots had buckles too, and the same fade and worn-in grit as the rest of the country western uniform.

While I am sure that his boxers were clean and his socks smelled like fabric softener, the uniform didn't vary much. Whether he

Can't Get There From Here



By Pasha Carroll

was going to a football game, lunch or out for a night on the town.

Country boy Brandon appropriately drives a big red pickup.

At night the crew sat in his driveway, tailgating on the truck bed and listening to George Strait. It was a blast.

It surprised me that I wasn't uncomfortable about the plethora of guns that lay around Brandon's apartment. The shiny shot-guns and oiled revolvers hung around as if they were keys, thrown on a coffee table begging to be remembered as he scurried off.

Somehow, it was all awfully attractive.

I found out that Alabama loves college football.

I can now proudly chant catch phrases like "roll-tide-roll" and "rammer

jammer - yellow hammer - give `em hell - Alabamer!!!"

Adrienne explained that "roll-tide" came from a journalist long ago that wrote about Alabama sweeping the competition like a "crimson tide."

"Adrienne, you don't think that's stupid, the whole team motto is based on a news article," I turned and said.

"Don't you wish you had written that article," Adrienne countered.

I guess a Yankee like me shouldn't be so ignorant to big things found in small places.

There were good looking men to scrutinize at the game too - go figure.

Later that night we went to see the band Ugli Stick with Adrienne's best friend, Lauren, who is as country as Brandon.

Standing on the edge of the stage, shaking what our mammas gave us, I turned to the left and saw the same thing I would have seen in a club in New York.

These girls talk different, act different and are from a whole different world than I know. But

really we are just three single, down-to-earth women, enjoying our youth.

Just like an Alabamian, I love country food. I grew up on grits and greens.

I was disappointed at the caliber of pork chops and turnip greens that I choked down in Alabama. However, my first taste of fried green tomatoes and fried okra was scrumptious. Adrienne always insists that if it's fried it's good.

In the end, they knew I was a fish out of water.

Brandon even commented that he could tell I was from the north by the subjects that I fearlessly spoke about because southerners "don't talk about those things," like what happens between the sheets.

Nonetheless, I was welcomed with open truck beds.

And you know what, this city girl really dug Alabama culture. It won't be the last time I take 331 north.

Pasha Carroll is a reporter with The Walton Sun. She can be reached at 850-267-4555.

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