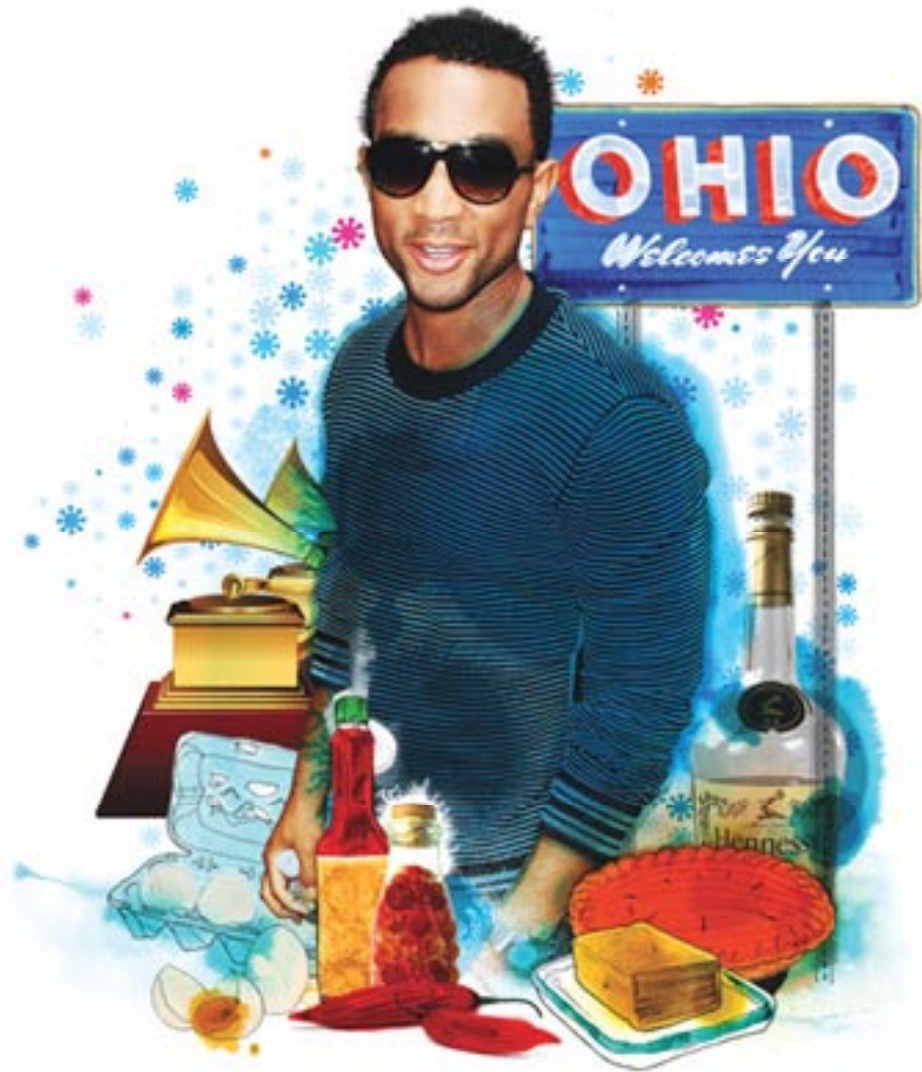


John Legend

singer, songwriter

Both soothing and stirring, Legend's music has an appeal that has garnered him legions of fans and multiple Grammy awards. When he's not singing at the Super Bowl, touring the globe, or fighting poverty through the Show Me Campaign, Legend kicks back in his New York apartment. During the holidays, he returns to his family home in Springfield, Ohio, where he exchanges his microphone for an apron and cooks up comfort-food favorites.

INTERVIEW BY BEKAH WRIGHT



He's known around the world for his soulful tunes, but at home the R&B singer's mac and cheese wins the raves.

What do you like to make?

Baked macaroni and cheese, fried chicken, and chicken stew are my favorites.

What food always reminds you of home?

Mac and cheese. My recipe is a hybrid of stuff I read in a couple of soul-food cookbooks and advice from my mom. I make it every holiday when I go home to Ohio. I always have to make two batches because it's very popular in the family.

What three things are always in your refrigerator?

Eggs, hot sauce, and butter.

What is your comfort food?

Chicken stew and chicken pot pie. I don't have a real recipe with measurements for my chicken stew. I just kind of make it up as I go. I made it for the first time one Christmas when I came home from college. It's guaranteed to cure a cold.

What do you like to eat, even though you know you shouldn't?

Fried chicken! My fried chicken is very simple. I pan-fry it in a skillet.

What's your favorite restaurant?

I love Sant Ambroeus in New York and Via Veneto in Santa Monica [in California]. Tokyo is very good for restaurants, too. I love ordering Kobe steak there.

What's your drink of choice when you go out?

I prefer vodka sodas. When I really want to get loose, though, I go for Hennessy and Cokes.

Where was your most memorable meal?

I had one in Como, Italy, that was lovely. We were staying at the Villa d'Este on the lake and took a small boat over to a restaurant, which was essentially a family's home with only a few tables. They served delicious ravioli and fish and great wine and panna cotta. The atmosphere was romantic and mellow.

What's the perfect snack?

Bananas, grapes, oranges. I love fruit.

What are you having for dinner tonight?

Roasted chicken and vegetables. I have that most nights before I perform.

What's the most unusual thing you've ever eaten?

I ate some pretty funky, authentic Chinese food in Hong Kong. There was an egg from some bird that's not a chicken. I can't remember what it was, but it was green and brown and not very tasty.

Is there any food you would never, ever eat again?

That egg in Hong Kong. ■

PORTRAIT BY JEFFREY UFBERG/WIREIMAGE