The comfort foods we love are often those that define us. Relocating to Atlanta, whether you’re from the United States or an international student, often means leaving behind that piece of home. I don’t usually think much about the food I eat, except for my favorite, dal makhani, an Indian lentil dish. To me, it embodies home and I hunt down the most authentic version of it whenever I can just to reminisce the India I remember.

Food makes us unique and sometimes feel like outsiders, especially when your favorite dish isn’t something easily found at a mall food court. It holds treasured memories and often evokes the nostalgia of home. The SCAN team is made up of very diverse individuals from all over the world. The following are shared thoughts on our favorite dishes, each as different as we all are.

Our editor-in-chief and fourth-year fashion and writing student Katherine Diaz Villegas retains her connection to her heritage through food. “Bandeja paisa, a signature Colombian dish, originates from the region I’m from and has everything you could want on it.”

Roberta Nicastro, a fourth-year graphic design student and SCAN’s very own art director said, “Brazilian food is a culmination of cultures and is what makes it feel familiar to me. It’s the most accessible connection I have to my family — it’s the only means I have of feeling like I’m home.”

Tyler Judson, our creative director and a third-year photography student added, “Being able to have my grandmother’s spicy pork bulgogi among other dishes always be my comfort food hash brown casserole, biscuits and gravy.”

Mikael Trench, our arts and entertainment editor and fourth-year animation student, uses food to reminisce. “Whenever it got cold or I got sick, my mother would make homemade meat stew. I always associate this with those times of year when I’d be close to my loved ones.”

Valeria Brugueras, our style editor and a second-year fashion marketing and management student, associates arroz con gandules, a Puerto Rican holiday dish with the same ideal.

Multimedia editor and second-year illustration student, Sandra Kennedy, favors her mother’s snowflake-shaped butter cookies — a treat they’d bake every Christmas. “Trinidad and Tobago has hundreds of different foods you may never have the opportunity to eat unless you pay a visit,” said photo editor and second-year film and television student, Josiah Persad. “The amicable diversity amongst the country is remarkable and as a result of this, we have a plethora of food to choose from.” added fellow Trinidadian Rachael Ramchand, our news editor and second-year visual communications student.

Managing editor, Helena Aidoo-Morrison, a graduate luxury and fashion management student from Ghana loves Milo, a malt chocolate drink that she customizes with crushed Ritz crackers. “I cherish this to its core. I’d always devour a glass before bed.”

Third-year graphic design student and the opinions editor, Julie Tran said, “People think Vietnamese food is phở and bánh mì, but what we actually eat is much richer than that. Vietnamese cuisine is part traditional Vietnamese, part Chinese and part French.”

“At the end of the day, food is far beyond a physical necessity and extends itself to being an emotional one as well. As they say, dal makhani for the soul.”