

Memoirs by Cooks, Chefs, and Foodies

Bourdain, Anthony. ***Kitchen Confidential: Adventures in the Culinary Underbelly***. Harper Perennial, 2007.

Reading this is like eating a juicy peach: Bourdain entertains us with gossipy stories of what it's really like in the kitchens of famous restaurants.

Bruni, Frank. Born ***Round: The Secret History of a Full-Time Eater***. Penguin Pr., 2009. The outgoing *New York Times* food critic reveals how growing up in an immigrant household where food equaled love was a disastrous recipe for him. He was bulimic from an early age and was plagued by eating disorders well into adulthood. A candid, searing account of one man's difficult relationship with food.

Bill Buford. ***Heat: An Amateur's Adventures as Kitchen Slave, Line Cook, Pasta-Maker and Apprentice to a Dante-quotin' Butcher in Tuscany***. Knopf, 2006.

Buford's hilarious and dedicated search for the perfect meal takes him into the kitchen at Mario Batali's restaurant Babbo and stints as an apprentice to a pasta maker and a butcher.

Julia Child with Alex Prud'Homme. ***My Life in France***. Knopf, 2006.

A delightful account of how Child found her true vocation as a cook and cookbook author in France following World War II. We're with Child as she tastes her first meal in France and realized that her mission was to bring this wonderful cooking to American cooks.

Phoebe Damrosch. ***Service Included: Four-star Secrets of an Eavesdropping Waiter***. Morrow, 2007.

Life as a backserver at New York's elegant Per Se restaurant. An inside account of the high stakes restaurant business.

Elizabeth Ehrlich. ***Miriam's Kitchen: A Memoir***. Viking, 1997.

Miriam's loving attention to Jewish observance and preparation of traditional food helped her daughter-in-law Elizabeth find spiritual nourishment. Recipes included.

Madhur Jaffrey. ***Climbing the Mango Trees: A Memoir of a Childhood in India***. Knopf, 2006.

Jaffrey's cookbooks introduced Indian cuisine to the American public. She grew up in India, part of a large extended family; her memories of the wonderful food she ate make this a mouth-watering memoir. Recipes included.

Kingsolver, Barbara. ***Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life***. HarperCollins, 2007.

Kingsolver took the slow food movement to heart: when her family moved to a farm in Virginia, they decided to eat only what they could grow or buy from local farms. It was an eye-opening year for them all and is an inspirational journey for reader, too. Kingsolver's always been an advocate for environmental issues in her novels and essays; here she takes it to a personal level.

Pollan, Michael. ***Botany of Desire: A Plant's-Eye View of the World***. Random House, 2001. You'll never look at plants the same way again! Pollan gives us entrée to the secret life of plants and how they affect our lives in four chapters: apples, tulips, marijuana, and potatoes. The chapter on the genetic engineering of potatoes has a fascinating scariness.

Julie Powell. ***Julie and Julia: 365 Days, 524 Recipes, 1 Tiny Apartment Kitchen...*** Little, Brown & Co., 2005

Powell needed to shake up her life and decided to cook all the recipes from *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* in one year no matter how obscure the ingredients or difficult the techniques. Her blog about the project became this book and then the movie *Julie and Julia*.

Ruth Reichl. ***Tender at the Bone: Growing Up at the Table***. Broadway Book, 1999. It's no wonder that food was important in Reichl's life—her mother's cooking sometimes put guests in the hospital. The former *New York Times* food critic and editor of *Gourmet Magazine* followed this memoir with two more: ***Comfort Me with Apples*** and ***Garlic and Sapphires***.

Some additional titles:

Colwin, Laurie. ***Home Cooking***. Bantam Books, 1990.

Fisher, M.F.K. ***The Gastronomical Me***. North Point Pr., 1989.

Hazan, Marcella. ***Amarcord: Marcella Remembers***. Gotham, 2008.

Pepin, Jacques. ***The Apprentice: My Life in the Kitchen***. Houghton Mifflin, 2003.

Ring, Nancy. ***Walking on Walnuts***. Bantam Books, 1996.

Slater, Nigel. ***Toast: The Story of a Boy's Hunger***. Gotham Books, 2004.

Wizenberg, Molly. ***A Homemade Life: Stories and Recipes from My Kitchen Table***. Simon & Schuster, 2009.