

Dates A Global History Reaktion Books Edible

Edible Flowers

Most of us like to look at them, but why on earth would anyone want to eat them? As Constance L. Kirker and Mary Newman show in this book, however, flowers have a long history as a tasty ingredient in a variety of cuisines. The Greeks, Romans, Persians, Ottomans, Mayans, Chinese, and Indians all knew how to cook with them for centuries, and today contemporary chefs use them to add something special to their dishes. *Edible Flowers* is the fascinating history of how flowers have been used in cooking, from ancient Greek dishes to the today's molecular gastronomy and farm-to-table restaurants. Looking at flowers' natural qualities: their unique and beautiful appearance, their pungent fragrance, and their surprisingly good taste, Kirker and Newman proffer a bouquet of dishes—from soups to stews to desserts to beverages—that use them in interesting ways. Tying this culinary history into a larger cultural one, they show how flowers' cultural, symbolic, and religious connotations have added value and meaning to dishes in daily life and special occasions. From fried squash blossoms to marigold dressings, this book rediscovers the flower not just as something beautiful but as something absolutely delicious.

Avocado

The avocado is arguably the most iconic food of the twenty-first century. In less than one-hundred years, it has gone from a little-known regional delicacy to global embrace and social media fame. This may seem like an astounding trajectory for a fruit that isn't sweet, that gets bitter when it is cooked, and has perhaps the oddest texture of any fruit or vegetable. But it is precisely the avocado's contradictions that have contributed to its ascent: the idea that this rich and delicious fruit is also healthy despite being fatty and energy-dense grants it unicorn status with modern eaters, especially millennials. Through lively anecdotes, colorful pictures, and delicious recipes, Jeff Miller explores the meteoric rise of the avocado, from its coevolution with the megaherbivores of the Pleistocene to its acceptance by the Spanish conquistadors in Mexico, to its current dominance of food consumers' imaginations.

Pineapple

Poet Charles Lamb described the pineapple as “too ravishing for moral taste . . . like lovers' kisses she bites—she is a pleasure bordering on pain, from fierceness and insanity of her relish.” From the moment Christopher Columbus discovered it on a Caribbean island in 1493, the pineapple has seduced the world, becoming an object of passion and desire. Beloved by George Washington, a favorite of kings and aristocrats, the pineapple quickly achieved an elite status among fruits that it retains today. Kaori O'Connor tells the story of this culinary romance in *Pineapple*, an intriguing history of this luscious fruit. O'Connor follows the pineapple across time and cultures, exploring how it was first transported to Europe, where it could only be grown at great expense in hothouses. The pineapple was the ultimate status symbol, she reveals—London society hostesses would even pay extravagantly to rent a pineapple for a single evening to be the centerpiece of a party. O'Connor explains that the fruit remained a seasonal luxury for the rich until developments in shipping and refrigeration allowed it to be brought to the major markets in Europe and America, and she illustrates how canning processes—and the discovery of the pineapple's ideal home in Hawaii—have made it available and affordable throughout the year. Packed with vivid illustrations and irresistible recipes from around the world, *Pineapple* will have everyone falling in love with this juicy tropical fruit.

Dates

In *Dates*, Nawal Nasrallah draws on her experience of growing up in the lands of ancient Mesopotamia, where the date palm was first cultivated, to explore the history behind the fruit. Dates have an important role in their arid homeland of the Middle East, where they are a dietary staple and can be consumed fresh or dried, as a snack or a dessert, and are even thought to have aphrodisiac qualities. In this history, Nasrallah describes the central role the date palm has played in the economy of the Middle East. This informative account of the date palm's story follows its journey from its land of origin to the far-flung regions where it is cultivated today. Along the way, Nasrallah weaves many fascinating and humorous anecdotes that explore the etymology, history, culture, religion, myths, and legends surrounding dates. For example, she explains how the tree came to be a symbol of the Tree of Life and associated with the fiery phoenix bird, the famous ancient goddess Ishtar, and the moon, and how the medjool date acquired its name. This delightful and unusual book is generously illustrated with many beautiful images, and supplemented with more than a dozen delicious date recipes for savory dishes, sweets, and wine.

Olive

Olives are at once a mythical food—bringing to mind scenes from ancient Rome and the Bible—and an everyday food, given the ubiquity of olive oil in contemporary diets. In this succinct and engaging history, Fabrizia Lanza traces the olive's roots from antiquity, when olive oil was exalted for ritual purposes and used to anoint kings and athletes, to the sixteenth century, when Europeans brought the olive to the New World, to the present day, when, thanks to waves of immigration and the popularity of the healthy Mediterranean diet, the fruit has successfully conquered our palate. Lanza describes the role that olive trees, olives, and their oil have played in myths, legends, and literature, as well as in the everyday lives of people living throughout the Mediterranean. Also included is a global selection of recipes featuring olives and olive oil that showcase the fruit's culinary diversity. A concise appendix of popular olive varieties, organized by country, rounds out this informative account. Featuring a wealth of historical detail, useful descriptions, and delicious recipes, this book

will change how you think about that bottle of Extra Virgin Olive Oil you reach for out of habit and swirl into the pan.

Vanilla

Intoxicating and evocative, vanilla is so much more than a spice rack staple. It is a flavor that has defined the entire world—and its roots reach deep into the past. With its earliest origins dating back seventy million years, the history of vanilla begins in ancient Mesoamerica and continues to define and enhance today’s traditions and customs. It has been used by nearly every culture as a spice, a perfume, and even a potent aphrodisiac, while renowned figures from Louis XIV to Casanova and Thomas Jefferson have been captivated by its aroma and taste. Featuring recipes, facts, and fables, *Vanilla* unravels the delightfully rich history, mystery, and essence of a flavor that reconnects us to our own heritage.

Tea

From chai to oolong to sencha, tea is one of the world’s most popular beverages. Perhaps that is because it is a unique and adaptable drink, consumed in many different varieties by cultures across the globe and in many different settings, from the intricate traditions of Japanese teahouses to the elegant tearooms of Britain to the verandas of the deep South. In *Tea* food historian Helen Saberi explores this rich and fascinating history. Saberi looks at the economic and social uses of tea, such as its use as a currency during the Tang Dynasty and 1913 creation of a tea dance called “Thé Dansant” that combined tea and tango. Saberi also explores where and how tea is grown around the world and how customs and traditions surrounding the beverage have evolved from its legendary origins to its present-day popularity. Featuring vivid images of teacups, plants, tearooms, and teahouses as well as recipes for both drinking tea and using it as a flavoring, *Tea* will engage the senses while providing a history of tea and its uses.

Dumplings

From gnocchi to pierogi to wonton, the dumpling has become synonymous with comfort food around the world. Whether stuffed or unfilled, steamed or boiled, many countries have their own version of the dish. In this book, Barbara Gallani looks at the differences and similarities between the ways dumplings are prepared in a variety of cultures, addressing the contrast between the dumpling as an everyday meal and as a food for festive occasions. First examining the etymology of the word and examining just what makes a dumpling a dumpling, Gallani moves on to recount the many ways we have come to love this simple comfort, sometimes even offering up monuments and poetry in its honor. Including traditional recipes for readers to make at home, she shows us what makes the dumpling special in so many ways. A great resource for food and history enthusiasts alike, *Dumplings* reveals unique insights into this widely consumed and celebrated food.

Figs

Lusciously sweet and with a complex texture, figs are both a nutritious culinary delicacy and an important symbol in religion and culture. Associated with Christmas since the time of Charles Dickens—not to mention Dionysus or the Garden of Eden—the fig is steeped in history. In this account of the festive fruit, David C. Sutton places the fig in its historical context, examining its peculiar origins and the importance it has garnered in so many countries. Sutton begins by describing the fig’s strange biology—botanically, it is not a fruit, but rather a cluster of ingrowing flowers—then considers its Arabian origins, including the possibility that the earliest seeds were transported from Yemen to Mesopotamia in the dung of donkeys. Exploring the history of the fruit in fascinating detail, Sutton postulates that the “forbidden fruit” eaten by Adam and Eve was not an apple, but a fig; and he discusses the role figs played for the Crusaders and guides readers toward the wonderful fig festivals held today. Chock full of tasty recipes, intriguing facts, and bizarre stories, *Figs* is a toothsome book of delights.

Pomegranate

Supple but crunchy, sweet but tart—with its strange construction of seeds filled with delicious garnet juice so vibrant it’s hard not think it is some otherworldly blood—no wonder the pomegranate has appealed so much to the human imagination throughout the centuries. Holding aloft this singular fruit in the light of human history, Damien Stone offers a unique look at an alluring fruit that has figured in our culinary consciousness from the gardens of the ancient world to the health-food section of supermarkets. Stone takes us back to the early polytheistic religions and the important role that pomegranates had in their rituals. From there he shows how they came to be held in high esteem in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam alike, examining exciting new findings that further cement their importance: for instance, many historians believe now that it was a pomegranate, not an apple, that was the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. Stone examines the allure that the pomegranate has had to a fascinating cast of famous figures, from ancient Assyrian King Ashurnasirpal to Tudor Queen Anne Boleyn, from Sandro Botticelli to Salvador Dalí. Drawing on text, image, and taste, *Pomegranate* is a cornucopia of strange and fascinating stories about a very special fruit.

Coffee

Most of us can’t make it through morning without our cup (or cups) of joe, and we’re not alone. Coffee is a global beverage: it’s grown commercially on four continents and consumed enthusiastically on all seven—and there is even an Italian espresso machine on the International Space Station. Coffee’s journey has taken it from the forests of Ethiopia to the fincas of Latin America, from Ottoman coffee houses to “Third Wave” cafés, and from the simple coffee pot to the capsule machine. In *Coffee: A Global History*, Jonathan Morris

explains both how the world acquired a taste for this humble bean, and why the beverage tastes so differently throughout the world. Sifting through the grounds of coffee history, Morris discusses the diverse cast of caffeinated characters who drank coffee, why and where they did so, as well as how it was prepared and what it tasted like. He identifies the regions and ways in which coffee has been grown, who worked the farms and who owned them, and how the beans were processed, traded, and transported. Morris also explores the businesses behind coffee—the brokers, roasters, and machine manufacturers—and dissects the geopolitics linking producers to consumers. Written in a style as invigorating as that first cup of Java, and featuring fantastic recipes, images, stories, and surprising facts, *Coffee* will fascinate foodies, food historians, baristas, and the many people who regard this ancient brew as a staple of modern life.

Banana

Sweet but starchy, soft but toothsome—and so easy to peel they just beg to be devoured—bananas are one of our favorite foods, found everywhere from gas station counters to Michelin star restaurants. Yet for as versatile and ubiquitous as this fruit is today, its history is a turbulent one, entangled in colonial domination, capitalist exploitation, sexual politics, and even horrific violence. Delving into the banana’s past, this book traces the complex circumstances of global modernity that perfectly aligned to grant us, often at tremendous costs, a treat we all now take for granted. Beginning with the banana’s origins in New Guinea, Lorna Piatti-Farnell follows its pathways to South East Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, and the Americas, binding together a millennium of history into one digestible bunch. Focusing especially on the banana’s recent past, she shows how it rose from a regional staple to a global commodity, on par with coffee and sugar. She examines the ways it has been advertised, sold, and incorporated into popular culture, moving from nineteenth-century medical manuals to cookbooks, songs, slapstick comedy, and problematic figures like Miss Chiquita. Wide-ranging but pocket-sized, *Banana* is a culinary and cultural account of a peculiar little fruit that is at once the icon of exoticism and one of the most familiar foods we eat.

Cheese

Take a slice of bread. It’s perfectly okay in and of itself. Maybe it has a nice, crisp crust or the scent of sourdough. But really, it’s kind of boring. Now melt some cheese on it—a sharp Vermont cheddar or a flavorful Swiss Gruyere. Mmm, delicious. Cheese—it’s the staple food, the accessory that makes everything better, from the hamburger to the ordinary sandwich to a bowl of macaroni. Despite its many uses and variations, there has never before been a global history of cheese, but here at last is a succinct, authoritative account, revealing how cheese was invented and where, when, and even why. In bite-sized chapters well-known food historian Andrew Dalby tells the true and savory story of cheese, from its prehistoric invention to the moment of its modern rebirth. Here you will find the most ancient cheese appellations, the first written description of the cheese-making process, a list of the luxury cheeses of classical Rome, the medieval rule-of-thumb for identifying good cheese, and even the story of how loyal cheese lover Samuel Pepys saved his parmesan from the great Fire of London. Dalby reveals that cheese is one of the most ancient of civilized foods, and he suggests that our passion for cheese may even lay behind the early establishment of global trade. Packed with entertaining cheese facts, anecdotes, and images, *Cheese* also features a selection of historic recipes. For those who crave a pungent stilton, a creamy brie, or a salty pecorino, *Cheese* is the perfect snack of a book.

Dates

In *Dates*, Nawal Nasrallah draws on her experience of growing up in the lands of ancient Mesopotamia, where the date palm was first cultivated, to explore the history behind the fruit. Dates have an important role in their arid homeland of the Middle East, where they are a dietary staple and can be consumed fresh or dried, as a snack or a dessert, and are even thought to have aphrodisiac qualities. In this history, Nasrallah describes the central role the date palm has played in the economy of the Middle East. This informative account of the date palm’s story follows its journey from its land of origin to the far-flung regions where it is cultivated today. Along the way, Nasrallah weaves many fascinating and humorous anecdotes that explore the etymology, history, culture, religion, myths, and legends surrounding dates. For example, she explains how the tree came to be a symbol of the Tree of Life and associated with the fiery phoenix bird, the famous ancient goddess Ishtar, and the moon, and how the medjool date acquired its name. This delightful and unusual book is generously illustrated with many beautiful images, and supplemented with more than a dozen delicious date recipes for savory dishes, sweets, and wine.

Bread

It is difficult to think of a food more basic, more essential, and more universal than bread. Common to the diets of both the rich and the poor, bread is one of our oldest foods. Loaves and rolls have been found in ancient Egyptian tombs, and wheat has been found in pits where human settlements flourished 8,000 years ago. Many anthropologists argue that the ability to sow and reap cereals, the grains necessary for making bread, could be one of the main reasons why man settled in communities, and even today the concept of “breaking bread together” is a lasting symbol of the uniting power of a meal. Bread is an innovative mix of traditional history, cultural history, travelogue, and cookbook. William Rubel begins with the amazing invention of bread approximately 20,000 years ago in the Fertile Crescent and ends by speculating on the ways in which cultural forces and advances in biotechnology may influence the development of bread in the twenty-first century. Rubel shows how simple choices, may be responsible for the widespread preference for wheat over other bread grains and for the millennia-old association of elite dining with white bread. He even provides an analysis of the different components of bread, such as crust and crumb, so that readers may better understand the breads they buy. With many recipes integrated with the text and a glossary covering one hundred breads, *Bread* goes well beyond the simple choice of white or wheat. Here, general readers will find an approachable introduction to the history of bread and to the many forms that bread takes throughout the world, and bread bakers will discover a history of the craft and new ways of thinking that will inspire experimentation.

Nuts

From almonds and pecans to pistachios, cashews, and macadamias, nuts are as basic as food gets—just pop them out of the shell and into your mouth. The original health food, the vitamin-packed nut is now used industrially, in confectionary, and in all sorts of cooking. The first book to tell the full story of how nuts came to be in almost everything, *Nuts* takes readers on a gastronomic, botanical, and cultural tour of the world. Tracking these fruits and seeds through cultivation, harvesting, processing, and consumption—or non-consumption, in the case of those with nut allergies—award-winning food writer Ken Albala provides a fascinating account on how they have been cooked, prepared, and exploited. He reveals the social and cultural meaning of nuts during various periods in history, while also immersing us in their modern uses. Packing scrumptious recipes, surprising facts, and fascinating nuggets inside its hardcover shell, this entertaining and informative book will delight lovers of almonds, hazelnuts, chestnuts, and more.

Offal

“Offal” has the same pronunciation as “awful”—an appropriate homophone, given that offal comprises the whole spectrum of an animal’s glands, essential organs, skin, muscle, guts, and every unmentionable in between. Yet as Nina Edwards shows in this intriguing history, offal has been consumed and enjoyed across ages and continents, often hidden by the rich variety of terms—like foie gras and sweetbread—that have evolved to veil their origins. Edwards dissects the complicated relationship we have with offal and the extreme reactions it inspires, asking if we can enjoy a pig’s heart, a cow’s eyes, or a sheep’s brain when it reminds us so viscerally of our own flesh and blood. She explores the offal dishes that are specific to regional cuisines and holidays, such as Scottish haggis, Jewish chopped liver, and Southern states’ chitterlings. As she reveals, offal is a food of contradictions—it is high in nutrients but also dangerously high in cholesterol, and it can range from expensive haute cuisine to a cheap alternative for the impoverished. From tongue in Sichuan and gizzard stew in Rio de Janeiro to spicy cartilage in Calcutta, *Offal* sheds new light on the sometimes stomach-churning foods we consume.

Pudding

Pudding usually brings to mind flavors like chocolate, vanilla, and tapioca, but prepackaged pudding cups don’t even scratch the surface of global pudding varieties—the term can denote dishes containing candied fruits and nuts or even frugal blends of little more than flour and suet. *Pudding: A Global History* explains how puddings developed from their early savory, sausage-like mixtures into the sweet and sticky confections we are now familiar with, and he describes how advances in kitchen equipment have changed puddings over time. Tackling blood, bread, rice, batter, and vegetable puddings, Jeri Quinzio describes the diverse ways cooks around the world make their puddings and how versions from different countries vary—England’s rice pudding, for instance, is flavored with vanilla, nutmeg, or cinnamon, whereas in India it is made with nuts or raisins. In addition to investigating the history of puddings on the dining table, Quinzio also looks at the prominent place puddings have had in novels, poems, songs, and cartoons. He shows how authors and artists like Anthony Trollope, Robert Burns, and George Cruikshank have used puddings to illustrate their characters’ sorrows, joys, and even political leanings. Bursting with choice morsels about puddings past and present, this is a book for fans of blood pudding and plum pudding alike.

Chillies

There are some of us who can’t even stand to look at them—and others who can’t live without them: chillies have been searing tongues and watering eyes for centuries in innumerable global cuisines. In this book, Heather Arndt Anderson explores the many ways nature has attempted to take the roofs of our mouths off—from the deceptively vegetal-looking jalapeno to the fire-red ghost pepper—and the many ways we have gleefully risen to the challenge. Anderson tells the story of the spicy berry’s rise to prominence, showing that it was cultivated and venerated by the ancient people of Mesoamerica for millennia before Spanish explorers brought it back to Europe. She traces the chilli’s spread along trading routes to every corner of the globe, and she explores the many important spiritual and cultural links that we have formed with it, from its use as an aphrodisiac to, in more modern times, an especially masochistic kind of eating competition. Ultimately, she uses the chili to tell a larger story of global trade, showing how the spread of spicy cuisine can tell us much about the global exchange—and sometimes domination—of culture. Mixing history, botany, and cooking, this entertaining read will give your bookshelf just the kick it needs.

Ice Cream

Be it soft-serve, gelato, frozen custard, Indian kulfi or Israeli glida, some form of cold, sweet ice cream treat can found throughout the world in restaurants and home freezers. Though ice cream was once considered a food for the elite, it has evolved into one of the most successful mass-market products ever developed. In *Ice Cream*, food writer Laura B. Weiss takes the reader on a vibrant trip through the history of ice cream from ancient China to modern-day Tokyo in order to tell the lively story of how this delicious indulgence became a global sensation. Weiss tells of donkeys wooed with ice cream cones, Good Humor-loving World War II-era German diplomats, and sundaes with names such as “Over the Top” and “George Washington.” Her account is populated with Chinese emperors, English kings, former slaves, women inventors, shrewd entrepreneurs, Italian immigrant hokey-pokey ice cream vendors, and gourmand American First Ladies. Today American brands dominate the world ice cream market, but vibrant dessert cultures like Italy’s continue to thrive, and new ones, like Japan’s, flourish through unique variations. Weiss connects this much-loved food with its place in history, making this a book sure to be enjoyed by all who are beckoned by the siren song of the ice cream truck.

Yoghurt

Yoghurt: A Global History is a fascinating look at the rich history of yoghurt, from its earliest awakenings in Neolithic times to the modern-day culinary phenomenon it has become. The book delves into its nutritious properties, analyzes worldwide consumption, and explores the new developments in yoghurts, including non-dairy varieties, on-the-go options, and its impact in China, Europe, and North America. Highlighting scientific studies and offering practical guidance, June Hersh helps us better understand the plethora of yoghurt products available. She also provides step by step instructions on how to make foolproof homemade yoghurt, as well as mouthwatering international recipes.

Hot Dog

In his history of the hot dog, Bruce Kraig examines the origins of the dish, with the arrival of European sausages in the 19th century, and its place in American culture today. He also explore's the US's numerous regional varieties, from New England examples served with Boston Baked Beans to Southern corn dogs.

Lemon

You can squeeze it, zest it, slice it, juice it, pickle it, or even take a bite out of it as Sicilians do. Adding freshness and flavor to food and drinks, this versatile sour fruit, also known for resolving diverse health and household troubles, has long been considered vital to Mediterranean and European cookery and cuisine. Lemon: A Global History tells the story of the remarkable adventure of the lemon, starting with its fragrant and mysterious ancestor, the citron, adored by the Greeks and Romans for its fine perfume and sacred to many of the world's great religions. The lemon traveled with Arabs along ancient trade routes, came of age in Sicily and Italy, and sailed to the New World with Columbus. It was an exotic luxury in seventeenth-century Europe and later went on to save the lives of thousands of sailors in the British Royal Navy after being recognized as a cure for scurvy. The last century saw the lemon's rise to commercial success in a California citrus empire as well as the discovery of new varieties. This book also includes delicious recipes for sweet and savory dishes and beverages.

Sugar

It's no surprise that sugar has been on our minds for millennia. First cultivated in New Guinea around 8,000 B.C.E., this addictive sweetener has since come to dominate our appetites—whether in candy, desserts, soft drinks, or even pasta sauces—for better and for worse. In this book, Andrew F. Smith offers a fascinating history of this simultaneously beloved and reviled ingredient, holding its incredible value as a global commodity up against its darker legacies of slavery and widespread obesity. As Smith demonstrates, sugar's past is chockfull of determined adventurers: relentless sugar barons and plantation owners who worked alongside plant breeders, food processors, distributors, and politicians to build a business based on our cravings. Exploring both the sugarcane and sugar beet industries, he tells story after story of those who have made fortunes and those who have met demise all because of sugar's simple but profound hold on our palates. Delightful and surprisingly action-packed, this book offers a layered and definitive tale of sugar and the many people who have been caught in its spell—from barons to slaves, from chefs to the countless among us born with that insatiable devil, the sweet tooth.

Pancake

Round, thin, and made of starchy batter cooked on a flat surface, it is a food that goes by many names: flapjack, crêpe, and okonomiyaki, to name just a few. The pancake is a treasured food the world over, and now Ken Albala unearths the surprisingly rich history of pancakes and their sizzling goodness. Pancake traverses over centuries and civilizations to examine the culinary and cultural importance of pancakes in human history. From the Russian blini to the Ethiopian injera, Albala reveals how pancakes have been a perennial source of sustenance from Greek and Roman eras to the Middle Ages through to the present day. He explores how the pancake has gained symbolic currency in diverse societies as a comfort food, a portable victual for travelers, a celebratory dish, and a breakfast meal. The book also features a number of historic and modern recipes—tracing the first official pancake recipe to a sixteenth-century Dutch cook—and is accompanied by a rich selection of illustrations. Pancake is a witty and erudite history of a well-known favorite and will ensure that the pancake will never be flattened under the shadow of better known foods.

Potato

From obscure Pre-Columbian beginnings in the Andes Mountains to global popularity today, the story of the potato is one of rags to riches. In Potato, esteemed culinary historian Andrew F. Smith reveals the captivating story of a once lowly vegetable that has changed—and continues to change—the world. First domesticated by prehistoric people in the Andes, the potato has since been adopted by cultures around the globe. For instance, the potato was aggressively adopted by cooks in India and China, where it has become a dietary staple. In fact, these two countries now stand as the world's largest potato producers. Nonetheless, despite its popularity, in this era of both fast food and health consciousness, the potato is now suffering negative publicity regarding its low nutritional value. Its health benefits continue to be debated, especially considering that the potato is most often associated with the ubiquitous but high-calorie french fry. Potato is a captivating read that provides a concisely written but thoroughly researched account of the history, economy, politics, and gastronomy behind this beloved starch—as well as recipes. As loaded with goodies as a well-dressed baked potato, this book is comforting and satisfying.

Edible Insects

From grasshoppers to grubs, an eye-opening look at insect cuisine around the world. An estimated two billion people worldwide regularly consume insects, yet bugs are rarely eaten in the West. Why are some disgusted at the thought of eating insects while others find them delicious? *Edible Insects: A Global History* provides a broad introduction to the role of insects as human food, from our prehistoric past to current food trends—and even recipes. On the menu are beetles, butterflies, grasshoppers, and grubs of many kinds, with stories that highlight traditional methods of insect collection, preparation, consumption, and preservation. But we not only encounter the culinary uses of creepy-crawlies across many cultures. We also learn of the potential of insects to alleviate global food shortages and natural resource overexploitation, as well as the role of world-class chefs in making insects palatable to consumers in the West.

Champagne

From the smash of a bottle on the side of a new ship to the pop of the cork at a New Year’s Eve party champagne signals celebration, fun, and camaraderie all over the world. Bubbly, as we affectionately call it, is a symbol of luxury and decadence and the go-to drink whenever there is an important toast. This history from Becky Sue Epstein is a celebration of the world’s most celebratory drink. Here, Epstein chronicles champagne’s story, from the world’s first sparkling wine, produced in Limoux, Languedoc, in 1531 by monks at an abbey in Saint-Hilaire to the celebrities who made champagnes famous and continue to do so today— from Dom Perignon to the widow Veuve Cliquot. Most important, Epstein fully explains the distinction between champagne and sparkling wine. In this informative chronicle, she answers whether French champagne is really better than other sparkling wines and elucidates the science behind that characteristic fizz and bubble. She takes the reader on a tour of vineyards in wine regions around the world and teaches the correct techniques for storing and serving champagne and sparkling wines. Whether you prefer magnums of Cristal or the affordable thrill of Cold Duck, Champagne is an invaluable complement to any bubbly glass and an informative, elegant gift for connoisseurs, beginners, and wine lovers of all kinds.

Brandy

Made from distilled wine, brandy has a long, noble tradition of refined consumption, but it has also recently experienced a surge in popularity thanks to new cocktail trends. Brandy chronicles the history of this very popular spirit, traveling from medieval alchemists to present-day drink mixologists and exploring brandy’s production and consumption from the Middle Ages to today. Delving into brandy’s fascinating story, Becky Sue Epstein reveals that many cultures have contributed to the history of the beverage, from the Dutch calling the drink “burnt wine” to the Spanish colonials in Peru and California who produced the first brandies in the New World. She also explores the distillation and aging processes, and she discusses the spirit’s many varieties, including the elegant, amber Cognac and the more overlooked Armagnac. In addition, Epstein offers advice on buying, storing, and serving brandy, while also providing recipes for both classic and new cocktails. Taken neat or mixed in a sidecar, Brandy is a tasty book for both connoisseurs and first-time drinkers to enjoy.

Caviar

Served up with a mother of pearl spoon and alongside a crystal flute of champagne, caviar is the ultimate culinary symbol of wealth, luxury, and decadence. But how did tiny fish eggs—which many might regard as an unwanted, throwaway food—become such an international delicacy? In *Caviar: A Global History*, renowned food writer Nichola Fletcher answers this curious question, examining the rise of caviar as an indulgence and its effect on the lives of the people who seek and sell it today. Fletcher takes the reader on a tour of the main areas of caviar production—Russia, Iran, Europe, and America—and investigates how the industry has contributed to the decline of the sturgeon population, the fish most associated with caviar. As Fletcher details, many efforts are underway to create sustainable sturgeon farming, which would make it possible to enjoy caviar with a clear, environmental conscience. Featuring vibrant illustrations and many fascinating anecdotes, *Caviar* also offers advice on purchasing and serving caviar. This is the perfect food book for everyone in need of a little opulence and glamour.

Beef

Hamburgers, pot roast, stew, steak, brisket—these mouthwatering dishes all have cows in common. But while the answer to the question, “Where’s the beef?” may be, “everywhere,” links to obesity and heart disease, mad-cow disease, and global warming have caused consumers to turn a suspicious eye onto the ubiquitous meat. Arguing that beef farming, cooking, and eating is found in virtually every country, *Beef* delves into the social, cultural, and economic factors that have shaped the production and consumption of beef throughout history. Lorna Piatti-Farnell shows how the class status of beef has changed over time, revealing that the meat that was once the main component in everyday stews is today showcased in elaborate dishes by five-star chefs. She considers the place beef has occupied in art, literature, and historical cookbooks, while also paying attention to the ethical issues in beef production and contemplating its future. Featuring images of beef in art and cuisine and palate-pleasing recipes from around the world, *Beef* will appeal to the taste buds of amateur grillers and iron chefs alike.

Pizza

Originally a food for the poor in eighteenth-century Naples, pizza is a source of national and regional pride in Italy as well as of cultural identity. In the twentieth century, pizza followed Italian immigrants to America, where it became the nation's most popular dish and fuelled the rise of successful fast-food corporations such as Pizza Hut and Domino's. Along the way, pizza has been adapted to local

cuisines and has become a metaphor for cultural exchange. Today pizza is one of the world's best-loved and most adaptable dishes.\"--
BOOK JACKET.

Mustard

Whether grainy or smooth, spicy or sweet, Dijon, American, or English, mustard accompanies our food and flavors our life around the globe. It has been a source of pleasure, health, and myth from ancient times to the present day, its tiny seed a symbol of faith and its pungent flavor a testimony to refined taste. There are stories of mustard plasters used to treat melancholy, runners eating mustard to prevent cramps, and Christians spreading mustard seeds along pilgrimage trails. In this delightful global history of all things Grey Poupon and gleaming yellow, Demet Güzey takes readers on a tour of the ubiquitous mustard, exploring its origins, its use in medicine and in the kitchen, its place in literature, language, and religion, and its strong symbolism of sharpness, perseverance, and strength. Packed with entertaining mustard facts and illustrations as well as a selection of historic and modern recipes, this surprising history of one of the world's most loved condiments will appeal to all food history aficionados.

Tomato

In the history of food, the tomato is a relative newcomer outside its ancestral home in Mesoamerica. And yet, as we devour pizza by the slice, dip French fries in ketchup, delight in a beautiful Bolognese sauce, or savor tomato curries, it would now be impossible to imagine the food cultures of many nations without the tomato. The journey taken by the tomato from its ancestral home in the southern Americas to Europe and back is a riveting story full of culinary discovery, innovation, drama, and dispute. Today, the tomato is at the forefront of scientific advances in cultivation and the study of taste, as well as a popular subject of heritage conservation (heirloom tomato salad, anyone?). But the tomato has also faced challenges every step of the way into our gardens and kitchens—including that eternal question: is it a fruit or a vegetable? In this book, Clarissa Hyman charts the eventful history of this ubiquitous everyday edible that is so often taken for granted. Hyman discusses tomato soup and ketchup, heritage tomatoes, tomato varieties, breeding and genetics, nutrition, tomatoes in Italy, tomatoes in art, and tomatoes for the future. Featuring delicious modern and historical recipes, such as the infamous “man-winning tomato salad” once featured in *Good Housekeeping*, this is a juicy and informative history of one of our most beloved foods.

Pickles

From the fiery kimchi of Korea to American dill spears; from the spicy achar of India to the ceviche of Latin America; from Europe's sauerkraut to brined herrings and chutneys, pickles are unquestionably a global food. They are also of the moment. Growing interest in naturally fermented vegetables—pickles by another name—means that today, in the early twenty-first century, we are seeing a renaissance in the making and consumption of pickles. Across continents and throughout history, humans have relied upon pickling to preserve foods and add to their flavor. Both a cherished food of the elite and a staple of the masses, pickles have also acquired new significance in our health-conscious times: traditionally fermented pickles are probiotic and said to possess anti-aging and anti-cancer properties, while pickle juice is believed to prevent muscle cramps in athletes and reduce sugar spikes in diabetics. *Nota bene*: It also cures hangovers. In *Pickles*, Jan Davison explores the cultural and gastronomic importance of pickles from the earliest civilizations' brine-makers to twenty-first-century dilettantes of dill. Join Davison and discover the art of pickling as mastered by the ancient Chinese; find out why Korean astronaut Yi So-yeon took pickled cabbage into space in 2008; learn how the Japanese pickle the deadly puffer fish; and uncover the pickling provenance of that most popular of condiments, tomato ketchup. A compulsively consumable, globe-trotting tour sure to make you pucker, Davison's book shows us how pickles have been omnipresent in humanity's common quest not only to preserve foods, but to create them—with relish.

Chocolate

Chocolate layer cake. Fudge brownies. Chocolate chip cookies. Boxes of chocolate truffles. Cups of cocoa. Hot fudge sundaes. Chocolate is synonymous with our cultural sweet tooth, our restaurant dessert menus, and our idea of indulgence. Chocolate is adored around the world and has been since the Spanish first encountered cocoa beans in South America in the sixteenth century. It is seen as magical, addictive, and powerful beyond anything that can be explained by its ingredients, and in *Chocolate* Sarah Moss and Alec Badenoch explore the origins and growth of this almost universal obsession. Moss and Badenoch recount the history of chocolate, which from ancient times has been associated with sexuality, sin, blood, and sacrifice. The first Spanish accounts claim that the Aztecs and Mayans used chocolate as a substitute for blood in sacrificial rituals and as a currency to replace gold. In the eighteenth century chocolate became regarded as an aphrodisiac—the first step on the road to today's boxes of Valentine delights. *Chocolate* also looks at today's mass-production of chocolate, with brands such as Hershey's, Lindt, and Cadbury dominating our supermarket shelves. Packed with tempting images and decadent descriptions of chocolate throughout the ages, *Chocolate* will be as irresistible as the tasty treats it describes.

Mushroom

Known as the meat of the vegetable world, mushrooms have their ardent supporters as well as their fierce detractors. Hobbits go crazy over them, while Diderot thought they should be “sent back to the dung heap where they are born.” In *Mushroom*, Cynthia D. Bertelsen examines the colorful history of these divisive edible fungi. As she reveals, their story is fraught with murder and accidental death, hunger and gluttony, sickness and health, religion and war. Some cultures equate them with the rottenness of life while others delight in cooking and eating them. And then there are those “magic” mushrooms, which some people link to ancient religious beliefs. To tell this

story, Bertelsen travels to the nineteenth century, when mushrooms entered the realm of haute cuisine after millennia of being picked from the wild for use in everyday cooking and medicine. She describes how this new demand drove entrepreneurs and farmers to seek methods for cultivating mushrooms, including experiments in domesticating the highly sought after but elusive truffles, and she explores the popular pastime of mushroom hunting and includes numerous historic and contemporary recipes. Packed with images of mushrooms from around the globe, this savory book will be essential reading for fans of this surprising, earthy fungus.

Sausage

When you get right down to it, taking the intestine of an animal and stuffing it with the ground meat of that animal doesn't really seem all that intuitive an approach to food preparation. But, as Gary Allen shows in this rich and engaging history, people worldwide have been making sausage for thousands of years. A veritable alphabet of sausages, from the Cajun andouille—and its less spicy forerunner, a French saucisson of the same name—and Mexican chorizo all the way to the Italian zampone, Allen tells a story of relentless creativity and invention, as different cultures found countless delectable ways to transform these otherwise unappealing pieces of meat. Allen peppers his account with examples from all over the world, as well as antique posters and advertisements, artworks and cartoons; together, they build a picture of a food that has been beloved—even as it's scoffed at—throughout human history, and remains a spicy favorite today.

Eggs

Which came first, the chicken or the egg? In Hindu scripture, the world began as an egg. Laid by a swan floating on the waters of chaos, after a year the egg split into silver and gold halves, with the silver becoming the earth and the gold transforming into the sky. Throughout history, the egg has taken on numerous meanings outside of the famous philosophical dilemma: it was used for curing the evil eye by the Mayans, as protection against lightning in Greece, and to signify rebirth in Christian tradition. In Eggs, Diane Toops offers a fascinating tour of egg history and lore, looking at how its significance has represented the preoccupations of the cultures that consume it. After explaining the many varieties of eggs and the places that favor them, Toops sketches a history of its uses from its origins until the present day, when it has become an integral part of modern cuisine. She explores how eggs are today marketed as a health food and discusses the debates over their nutritional status. Filled with appetizing recipes and beguiling images, this protein-packed book will enthrall anyone with an interest in cuisine or cultural history.

Hamburger

Andrew F. Smith traces the history of the hamburger history, from its humble beginnings as a nineteenth-century American street food, to its present status as one of the world's favourite dishes.

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