

Julie's Food-Related Book List

When I was in 3rd grade, my family went to live on top of a mountain, where we were routinely snowed in for weeks at a time. Every other week, my mom would drive in to town for groceries, and drop me at the County Library, where I was allowed to check out one grocery bag full of books.

That's the origin of both my reading habit and a profound interest in food. One of the reasons we moved to the mountain was that popular '70s pastime, "going back to the land," which invariably involved long discussions about what was righteous to eat.

So, what should you read after *Diet for a Small Planet* and *The Omnivore's Dilemma*? Here are a few suggestions, in a variety of directions. Enjoy!



Davis Food Co-op
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Candy Freak by Steve Almond

As the title implies, everything you'd ever want to know if you had the "kid in the candy store" opportunity to research candy.

Delights and Prejudices by James Beard

A very nice autobiographical work from one of the originators of the modern food world. Sure, it's a little self-important, and perhaps not entirely truthful, but fun!

I'm Just Here for the Food by Alton Brown

Another writer with a very scientific approach to cooking, Alton Brown is a good deal more accessible than McGee.

Kitchen Confidential by Anthony Bourdain

Very entertaining if you've ever worked in a kitchen – explores the whole chef-cowboy mystique.

Heat: An Amateur's Adventures As Kitchen Slave, Line Cook, Pasta Maker, And Apprentice To A Dante-Quoting Butcher In Tuscany by Bill Buford

Loads of fun for everyone who's ever contemplated tossing a career in favor of restaurant work.

Home Cooking by Laurie Colwin

One of the best food writers ever, Laurie Colwin wrote regrettably few books before her death.

An Omelet and a Glass of Wine by Elizabeth David

This is one of the classics of food writing, and a very good foundation book for learning about cooking.

The Art of Eating and ***A Stew or a Story*** by MFK Fisher

Mary Frances Kennedy Fisher was, without a doubt, the best food writer ever. *The Art of Eating*, a collection of 5 of her shorter, earlier books, is a must read for anyone who wants to learn about food or eating. *A Stew or a Story* is a 2007 collection of previously unpublished works, many of them essays about her life in California.

Spoiled: The Dangerous Truth About A Food Chain Gone Haywire by Nicols Fox

Really engrossing book about food borne illness. Not for the squeamish.

A Chef's Tale by Pierre Franey

Interesting autobiographical piece from one of the founders of modern cuisine.

Waiting by Debra Ginsberg

Life as a waitress. Well-written, and fascinating if you've ever worked in food service.

Dirty Sugar Cookies by Ayun Halliday

This book is hip, laugh-out-loud funny, and a comforting read for anyone trying to feed children.

Best Food Writing 2001 – 2006 edited by Holly Hughes

I mark my calendar every year in anticipation of this collection of food writing. Holly Hughes is a particularly good editor, and it shows in the fine selection of essays for this series.

Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year Of Food Life by Barbara Kingsolver

Wonderful personal essays on food and family from one of the best writers around.

The Curious Cook by Harold McGee

McGee is kitchen science at it's best, but a little densely written for some.

Hungry Planet: What The World Eats by Peter Menzel and Faith D'Aluisio.

The most fascinating food picture book I've ever seen – families from all over the world, photographed with their food for the week.

What to Eat by Marian Nestle

This is the most sensible all-around food guide that I've ever read. If you only have time for one book off this list, pick this one!

The Shortcut Cook by Jacques Pepin

A truly worthwhile cookbook, with quick meals that *don't* start with "take a can of mushroom soup."

Comfort Me with Apples and ***Tender at the Bone*** by Ruth Reichl

Beautifully written autobiographical books on food from the Editor of Gourmet magazine.

Garlic and Sapphires by Ruth Reichl

A super-fun romp through the world of restaurant reviewing.

Toast by Nigel Slater

An entertaining autobiography with food.

Consumed: Why Americans Love, Hate, And Fear Food by Michelle Stacey

Americans and food. Fascinating.

It Must Have Been Something I Ate by Jeffrey Steingarten

A dry wit and a love of good food.

American Gourmet by Jan and Michael Stern

Jan and Michael Stern travel a lot, looking for the best food in America. They crack me up. So does the subject matter – classic American foods, from church supper to the diner.

The Best thing I Ever Ate by Sallie Tisdale

Sallie Tisdale is a lyrical writer, and pairs that skill with good research to produce a particularly readable book on the development of American foodways.

Alice, Let's Eat and ***American Fried*** by Calvin Trillin

Readable, though not remarkable, food essays.

Stuffed: Adventures Of A Restaurant Family by Patricia Volk

Good account of growing up in a restaurant family.

Talking with my Mouth Full by Bonny Wolf

NPR fans may recognize Wolf's wit and love of food.