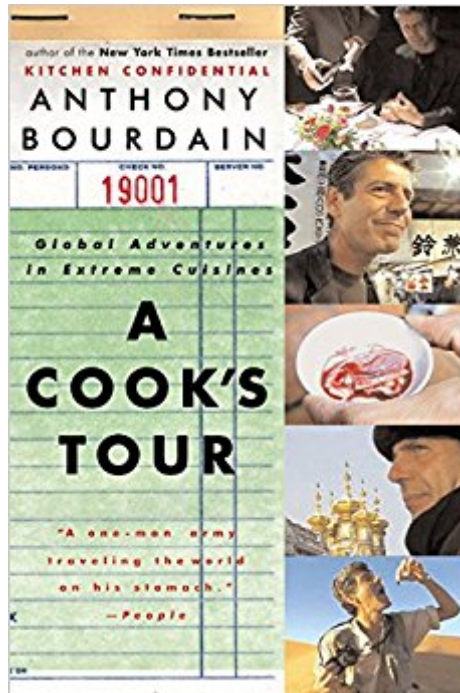


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# A Cook's Tour: Global Adventures In Extreme Cuisines



## Synopsis

From the star of No Reservations, Anthony Bourdain's *A Cook's Tour* is a New York Times bestselling chronicle of travelling the world in search of the globe's greatest culinary adventures. The only thing "gonzo gastronome" and internationally bestselling author Anthony Bourdain loves as much as cooking is traveling. Inspired by the question, "What would be the perfect meal?," Tony sets out on a quest for his culinary holy grail, and in the process turns the notion of "perfection" inside out. From California to Cambodia, *A Cook's Tour* chronicles the unpredictable adventures of America's boldest and bravest chef. Fans of Bourdain will find much to love in revisiting this classic culinary and travel memoir.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*A Cook's Tour* is the written record of Anthony Bourdain's travels around the world in his search for the perfect meal. All too conscious of the state of his 44-year-old knees after a working life standing at restaurant stoves, but with the unlooked-for jackpot of *Kitchen Confidential* as collateral, Mr. Bourdain evidently concluded he needed a bit more wind under his wings. The idea of "perfect meal" in this context is to be taken to mean not necessarily the most upscale, chi-chi, three-star dining experience, but the ideal combination of food, atmosphere, and company. This would take in fishing villages in Vietnam, bars in Cambodia, and Tuareg camps in Morocco (roasted sheep's testicle, as it happens); it would stretch to smoked fish and sauna in the frozen Russian countryside and the French Laundry in California's Napa Valley. It would mean exquisitely refined kaiseki rituals in

Japan after yakitori with drunken salarymen. Deep-fried Mars Bars in Glasgow and Gordon Ramsay in London. The still-beating heart of a cobra in Saigon. Drink. Danger. Guns. All with a TV crew in tow for the accompanying series--22 episodes of video gold, we are assured, featuring many don't-try-this-at-home shots of the author in gastric distress or crawling into yet another storm drain at four in the morning. You are unlikely to lay your hands on a more hectically, strenuously entertaining book for some time. Our hero eats and swashbuckles round the globe with perfect-pitch attitude and liberal use of judiciously placed profanities. Bourdain can write. His timing is great. He is very funny and is under no illusions whatsoever about himself or anyone else. But most of all, he is a chef who got himself out of his kitchen and found, all over the world, people who understand that eating well is the foundation of harmonious living. --Robin Davidson, .co.uk

In this paperback reprint, swashbuckling chef Anthony Bourdain, author of the bestselling *Kitchen Confidential* (which famously warned restaurant-goers against ordering fish on Mondays), travels where few foodies have thought to travel before in search of the perfect meal: the Sputnik-era kitchen of a "less-than-diminutive" St. Petersburg matron, the provincial farmhouse of a Portuguese pig-slaughterer and the middle of the Moroccan desert, where he dines on "crispy, veiny" lamb testicles. Searching for the "perfect meal," Bourdain writes with humor and intelligence, describing meals of boudin noir and Vietnamese hot vin lon ("essentially a soft-boiled duck embryo") and 'fessing up to a few nights of over-indulgence ("I felt like I'd awakened under a collapsed building," he writes of a night in San Sebastian hopping from tapas bar to tapas bar). Goat's head soup, lemongrass tripe, and pork-blood cake all make appearances, as does less exotic fare, such as French fries and Mars bars (deep fried, but still). In between meals, Bourdain lets his readers in on the surprises and fears of a well-fed American voyaging to far-off, frugal places, where every part of an animal that can be eaten must be eaten, and the need to preserve food has fueled culinary innovation for centuries. He also reminds his audience of the connections between food and land and human toil, which, in these sterilized days of pre-wrapped sausages, is all too easy to forget. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Although I'd heard the name "Anthony Bourdain" I'd never read any of his books or watched his shows. We read this in book club, and now I'm definitely a fan. After reading the book, which is very well written, we watched his show "Parts Unknown" and we really like the documentary style of the show. The food is almost a footnote sometimes. I find each place Anthony writes about to be well studied and presented with just the right amount of flair for the dramatic.

This book, like most of Anthony Bourdain's books, spares no one, not even himself. By the time this book was written, I was watching his show on CNN, Parts Unknown. I have seen many of the shows this book is written about, but, trust me, getting his final word about the show off-camera makes it even more . . . meaningful, hilarious . . . choose your own adjective. I find myself looking for other books he has written. I started reading him with his biography of "Typhoid" Mary. I was interested in her as I am a microbiologist, first spending my working years in enteric bacteriology. His book was a well-thought out tome, and I could understand how a cook would also be interested in such a personality. His other books about cooking are more autobiographies, and they are equally interesting. If you like his show on CNN, you'll probably really love his books.

"A Cook's Tour" by the wonderfully worldly and well-traveled Anthony Bourdain, is a book about food like no other, and it is simultaneously entertaining, exciting, and revolting. Tony travels the world in search of the perfect meal; it's an exciting quest for any chef to ponder, but along the way he comes across numerous local delicacies that can be best described as only for the strong of heart. Although he encounters several problems with dishes from around the world (the Mexican sautéed ant eggs and Scottish deep-fried haggis with curry sauce and deep fried egg stand out), the most stunning for my money are the things he eats in Asia, and especially Vietnam. I for one would not be able to eat the traditional Vietnamese breakfast of soft-boiled duck embryo complete with feathers, followed by a steaming bowl of "chao muk", a hearty soup made from ginger, sprouts, cilantro, shrimp, squid, chives, pork-blood cake, and croutons; later Tony enjoyed some braised bat ("imagine braised inner tube, sauced with engine coolant"). Even worse than that, though, is the concept of eating a still-beating cobra heart, after a very special snake disemboweling ceremony. While Vietnam takes the proverbial cake, the book features other gastronomic nightmares from around the globe, with Japan coming in second in the contest for unusual and disturbing foodstuffs. The foodie tour of Japan started out benignly enough, with an appetizer of "amuse-gueule of hoshigaka goma-an" (dried persimmon and fried soy curd with sesame paste), but quickly progressed to things like "suppon-dofu" (a soft-shell turtle in egg pudding with green onion and turtle broth), and culminated in the classic and beloved Japanese delicacy, "natto", which Bourdain describes as "an unbelievably foul, rank, slimy, glutinous, and stringy goop of fermented soybeans". After the natto, Bourdain finished with a dish described as "mountain potato": of this he said, "I could only handle a single taste. To this day, I have no idea what it really was.... The small, dark, chewy nugget can only be described as tasting like salt-cured, sun-dried goat

rectum". Throughout the book, Bourdain maintains his wry, sarcastic sense of humor, possibly as a survival tool to get him through his next meal. He mocks a vegan potluck dinner as the "real heart of darkness", discusses fabled and exotic foods such as the unbelievably rank durian fruit, and always manages to do it while being respectful of local traditions and cultures very different from his existence in New York City. This is a great book for anyone interested in foods and cultures of the world, and I recommend it highly!

This is a closer, behind the scenes look at Tony's experiences getting the series going and illuminating his perceptions. I read his first book and have enjoyed the episodes in the TV series. This book filled in some of the pieces for me in a personal way as Tony wrote about why he did some things, shared his reactions to people, places, food and explained the sometimes complex realities of hosting a food/travel program. As a foodie, I enjoyed the read and even more, appreciated the multi layered personality that emerged from these pages. I have not only recommended the book, but I bought it as a gift so someone else could enjoy it.

Another great read by Bourdain. The book follows his first TV series but from the point of view how he really feels about his escapades. It read quick and I enjoyed it. I would say if you like his TV or his first book to pick it up and give it a flip.

I may be the wrong person to ask because I love everything Bourdain does. An excellent purchase

My fiancée & I love to travel & love interesting foods- so of course we're big Bourdain fans. We love watching & re-watching his shows but until buying this book, I'd never read any of his books. It's a great read with fun insight on the behind-the-scenes of his first show. Highly recommend if you're an Anthony Bourdain fan.

This is definitely one of my favorite books. This book is basically a "behind the scenes" of No Reservations, but I think it was written at the same time that they shot the first season. Bourdain manages to write in his trademark sarcastic and dry sense of humor, while also maintaining unwavering respect for the people and cultures he comes across in his travels. It's a pretty quick read, but also definitely engaging.

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