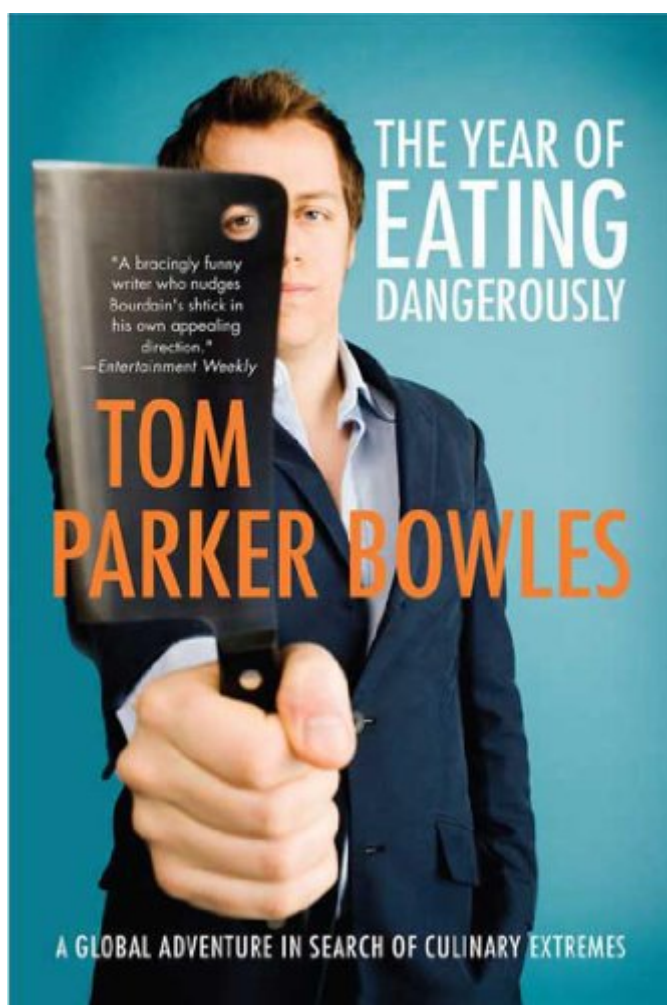


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The Year Of Eating Dangerously: A Global Adventure In Search Of Culinary Extremes



Synopsis

Fugu. Dog. Cobra. Bees. Spleen. A 600,000 SCU chili pepper. All considered foods by millions of people around the world. And all objects of great fascination to Tom Parker Bowles, a food journalist who grew up eating his mother's considerably safer roast chicken, shepherd's pie and mushy peas. Intrigued by the food phobias of two friends, Parker Bowles became inspired to examine the cultural divides that make some foods verboten or "dangerous" in the culture he grew up with while being seen as lip-smacking delicacies in others. So began a year-long odyssey through Asia, Europe and America in search of the world's most thrilling, terrifying and odd foods. Parker Bowles is always witty and sometimes downright hilarious in recounting his quest for envelope-pushing meals, ranging from the potentially lethal to the outright disgusting to the merely gluttonous "and he proves in this book that an open mouth and an open mind are the only passports a man needs to truly discover the world.

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Customer Reviews

I love food memoirs. This one was ok, up until the chapter about the moral and ethical dilemma of eating dog. Wasn't comfortable with it, didn't enjoy reading about it, didn't enjoy the author's

dithering about whether he was comfortable with it. Didn't enjoy the descriptions of the conditions and methods used to get "dog" as a food item to the appropriate state of yang for consumption. Also didn't enjoy reading about the many endangered species illegally for sale at the local markets in many Asian countries. The rationale of, they're poor and have to eat whatever they can to survive, doesn't help me feel ok about it. There are many arguments to be made for and against the previous statements, but it boiled down to: I was disturbed by it, the book would have been better, for me, without it, and I wish I could go back and not read it. When I want food voyeur escapism, I don't read Food, Inc. (great book, but you know you're getting into heavy subject matter when you open it. This book is supposed to be lighthearted beach fare.) that being said, most of the chapters are well written and entertaining. Read and enjoy the book, just skip all chapters that take place in 3rd world countries and the animal lovers out there should be ok.

A quirky and interesting volume. . . . Tom Parker Bowles takes time out of his life to search out "extreme food," to engage in culinary adventures. In his words, this book is about (page xx) ". . . a fascination with the world's diverse cuisines." He (page xx) "wanted to sample everything however gruesome, to try and establish some kind of culinary context." And the book features much information (even wittily presented) about cultures throughout the world, as an even greater context for cuisine. Places that he explores include England, New Mexico, China, Nashville, Tokyo, Korea, Laos, Spain, and Sicily. Sometimes, he experiences genuine surprise, in that Laos clearly represents one of his best eating stops--much against what he had guessed. And, to repeat, it is witty. I was actually laughing as he serves as a judge at a barbeque context in Lynchburg Tennessee (although the chapter is entitled Nashville!). He describes the disappointment at poor products, prepared lovingly by cooks; he revels in the delights that were cooked to perfection. Other chapters, to exemplify his treatment. In Laos, he began with rather low expectations. He describes weird dishes (at least weird to Westerners), such as live shrimp as a kind of salad--looking horrific and tasting great. He ate in Vientiane and in Luang Prabang, experiencing very different cuisine; however, he enjoyed and appreciated each. And, as always, he provides history, refers to written works on the country, and surrounds his discussion of the food with an appreciation of the larger society. His description of cities in New Mexico is quite negative, and presented in a manner that aficionados will call witty and New Mexico residents snide. Nonetheless, he is there for the The National Fiery Foods and Barbeque Show in Albuquerque. He had always enjoyed chili and other hot foods. So he was desperate to check out a well known (at least to him) festival in New Mexico. Again, his writing is hilarious as he talks about eating some chili dish that is way hotter than he

would have wanted. The richness of the discussion of chili and other hot substances and the experts who gathered at the festival is really quite compelling. Then, the story of elvers. . . . But enough of the specifics. Readers can explore the pages of this volume and determine which episodes are most interesting. I would recommend this book as much for its depiction of cultures and the food as part of these cultures as for its description of some generally strange foods. A nice read.

Lack of dangerous eating. Has a lot of information but I don't see how judging a bbq contest is dangerous. The guy is obviously a food writer but has never worked with food. The entire chapter on chile's was about hot sauces not the actual chile's. A disappointment and lack of dangerous food.

Not what I expected.

Arrived quickly and in great condition. This is a great book, very well written and changes how you think about the food we eat.

Actually, Mr Parker-Bowles' book goes far deeper than my trite title. He really provides a cultural backdrop during each trip and the reasons behind his culinary explorations for that country. I found his perceptions and experiences funny, educational, and drool-worthy.

This is a terribly written book written by a well-to-do who really knows nothing about life as you and I know it. Save your dinero.

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