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A History Of English Food



Synopsis

Insightful and entertaining by turns, this is a magnificent tour of nearly a thousand years of English cuisine, peppered with surprises and seasoned with Clarissa Dickson Wright's characteristic wit. In this major new history of English food, Clarissa Dickson Wright takes the reader on a journey from the time of the Second Crusade and the feasts of medieval kings to the cuisine of both good and bad of the present day. She looks at the shifting influences on the national diet as new ideas and ingredients have arrived, and as immigrant communities have made their contribution to the life of the country. She evokes lost worlds of open fires and ice houses, of constant pickling and preserving, and of manchet loaves and curly-coated pigs. And she tells the stories of the chefs, cookery book writers, gourmets, and gluttons who have shaped public taste from the salad-loving Catherine of Aragon to the foodies of today. Above all, she gives a vivid sense of what it was like to sit down to the meals of previous ages, whether an eighteenth-century laborer's breakfast, a twelve-course Victorian banquet, or a lunch out during the Second World War.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"This is a marvellous read ... [Clarissa Dickson Wright's] skill is to make food, even 800 years ago, seem relevant and amusing today" - Country Life "Magnificently eccentric and robustly informative ... an impressive tour of the horizon of a well-stocked mind ... [a] glorious sense of the continuity of English cuisine from the Middle Ages to the present shines from every page of this engaging, funny and admirably entertaining history" - Sunday Telegraph "A learned, serious tome, packed with information and history" - Guardian "Combining her two great passions of food and

history, she takes us on a chatty and fascinating crawl from Medieval times when pigeons, eels and nettles were staples, to the pizzas, baked beans and chips of today ... consistently entertaining and informative" - Daily Mail

Clarissa Dickson Wright (1947-2014) found fame alongside Jennifer Paterson as one half of the much-loved TV cooking partnership Two Fat Ladies. She was the author of the *Spilling the Beans* autobiography, as well as many other books including *Clarissa and the Countryman*, *Clarissa and the Countryman Sally Forth*, *The Game Cookbook*, and *Potty!*

Informative, very thorough and surprisingly clear and readable about what can be (even here, occasionally) a sleepy subject. I hear Clarissa's voice as I read it, with her wit and winks here and there about the origins of food and meals and rituals and royals going all the way back to the twelfth century. If you have an interest in food beyond "Two Fat Ladies" give Clarissa's acumen and accomplishment a shot (as well as post-TFL food specials online) - there was so much more to her than a sidecar.

So much information about English food! Clarissa Dickson Wright knows her English Food Stuff. Fascinating. I am an unabashed fan of The Two Fat Ladies - regularly watch the series for the witty banter as much as the delicious food and recently decided to get their cookbooks before they fall out of print. Clarissa brings the same tone and wit to this book. If you love The Two Fat Ladies, you'll love this. And if you've not yet experienced The Two Fat Ladies, but enjoy learning new things, food and dry wit - this is for you, too. As could be expected, I found my interest waning slightly as the food presented became more familiar, but that's not to say that there wasn't something interesting to be said for our contemporary period of food. I just happened to find it more fascinating to read about how James I/IV was responsible for so much of the evolution of English food - who knew?! And with loads of juicy intrigue asides that made me go do some research. Recommended for anyone interested in food and English history.

Clarissa does it again. For all anglophiles this is a must have. I love English food and she writes with such knowledge and humor. She as a feisty old bird. Such a character. So sad she is no longer around to entertain and cook for us. May she rest in peace in foodie heaven

I am a food history buff and this is BY FAR the best book of its genre I have ever read, and I have

read lots of them. Well researched without being boring; lots of genius-level insights into origin of food trends. Ties a lot of things together that I never thought about but make a lot of sense once she presents it.

Clarissa is an engaging writer, and great storyteller. I used to watch her and Jennifer on Two Fat Ladies as a kid, and was intrigued about how Clarissa always had little snippets of knowledge about history and food. Especially if you're not a fan of your typical history books, this will be a great read for you, because there's plenty of little stories about individual people, and what they ate. Rest in peace, Jennifer.

Clarissa's book is an enjoyable read, filled with information from the high Middle Ages to recent times. She provides insight along with recipes for each main period. Peppered with humour and first hand experiences make this book one of the best I've read this year.

Loved this book! So much fun learning about all this, even though I am not English I really got a kick out of the amazing history involved and the entertaining author. I have seen her in some TV episodes about food in England as well. Lots to digest here!

I have read several of her books as well as own two cookbooks by The Two Fat Ladies. Claissa's intelligence and wit come thru in this book plus the bits of history one is not likely to find in most history books. The history of English food, plus some British history plus some recipes...a great volume to add to your collectoin!

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