



Medium Raw: A Bloody Valentine to the World of Food and the People Who Cook (P.S.)

By Anthony Bourdain

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Medium Raw marks the return of the inimitable Anthony Bourdain, author of the blockbuster bestseller *Kitchen Confidential* and three-time Emmy Award-nominated host of *No Reservations* on TV's Travel Channel. Bourdain calls his book, "A Bloody Valentine to the World of Food and the People Who Cook," and he is at his entertaining best as he takes aim at some of the biggest names in the foodie world, including David Chang, Alice Waters, the *Top Chef* winners and losers, and many more. If Hunter S. Thompson had written a book about the restaurant business, it could have been *Medium Raw*.

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Medium Raw: A Bloody Valentine to the World of Food and the People Who Cook (P.S.) By Anthony Bourdain Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

No one really expected Bourdain to top his wildly popular *Kitchen Confidential*, even Bourdain himself: several critics wrote that he seems alternately awed and appalled by his own celebrity. Those parts of *Medium Raw*--more of a collection of essays than a streamlined narrative--that seemed to grow out of that celebrity, such as Bourdain's feuds with food critics and celebrity chefs, impressed reviewers the least. But they still found much to savor, particularly Bourdain's biting personality, his own humorous self-deprecation, his ability to bring out the unknown elements of the restaurant industry, particularly the kitchen and service staff who might otherwise be ignored, and, not least of all, the well-written (if often vulgar) and compelling stories. In the end, though *Medium Raw* will best be appreciated by foodies, it is "generally an entertaining read, compelling more for [Bourdain's] passion than his mean streak" (*Kansas City Star*).

From [Booklist](#)

Bourdain, who broke into the collective food consciousness with *Kitchen Confidential* (2000) and has since cemented his place as one of our foremost food commentators, offers the kind of book you can write only if you've achieved the level of fame at which you can assume that people care about about whatever you have to say (which they do, and should): a loose, sometimes repetitive, always entertaining, and even at times enlightening collection of food-related ramblings and name-naming hit-pieces. The result is more or less the book equivalent of finding yourself sharing plates at a communal table with a chatty, witty, unapologetically profane, knowledgeable and well-connected member-observer of the restaurant big leagues. If, like him, you see the world's greatest chefs as somewhere between rock and porn stars, there's no way you wouldn't spend hours listening to him chew your ear off with stories of that coke-fueled weekend (or was it a month?) trapped on an island with the world's most insufferably wealthy food posers and with diatribes on how annoying Alice Waters is and how critic Alan Richman is a "douchebag" (the nicer of the two things Bourdain calls him) for trashing the New Orleans food scene with the city still reeling from Katrina—and then turn on a dime to deliver an impassioned ode to Vietnamese pho and an admiring portrait of perhaps the world's finest fish-portioner at Le Bernardin. It might have been a narcissistic, condescending, and overly insiderish collection if it weren't for Bourdain's consistently disarming self-awareness that he's "the very picture of the jaded, overprivileged 'foodie' (in the worst sense of that word) that he used to despise." On seeing himself through the eyes of a hungry young chef who still has to actually cook just to barely survive, he says, "Look at me and my nice fucking jacket, standing there all famous and shit." Sure, others may cook better than he does, but no one can dish like he can. --Ian Chipman

Review

"Bourdain has insight, access and good taste, and he's a naturally engaging writer...Bourdain is a hopeless romantic when it comes to food and the people who cook. The subtitle's real valentines are two elegantly written profiles." (New York Times Book Review)

"Like a stinky fish sauce from his beloved Vietnam, [Bourdain's] appeal among the food die-hards has only grown stronger and more pungent over time, and this book will only solidify that adoration." (Austin American-Statesman)

"This is Bourdain at his best. His food-porn vignettes are guaranteed to make your mouth water." (Miami Herald)

“Compulsively readable.” (New York Magazine's Grub Street)

“The food orbit is [Bourdain's] element, and chapters on today's leading figures—from chef David Chang to critic Alan Richman—display his access, outspokenness and comedic gifts.” (Wall Street Journal)

“The KITCHEN CONFIDENTIAL author is a father now, but he hasn't cleaned up his language, lost his zesty appetite or his critical zing.” (Time Magazine)

“Bourdain is back with more intriguing food fights, moving further from the kitchen into the eating industry. [Bourdain's] dissections...are still as hilarious, as scatological and as spot-on as ever....his fare—and his prose—is still quite spicy.” (BookPage)

“Full of things everybody in the food world thinks but nobody will say...If [Bourdain's] sharp eye and his wicked tongue have brought him acclaim, what's kept him in the spotlight is his heart. Like Oscar Wilde, he's a moralist in the guise of a libertine. Long may he prosper.” (Denver Post)

“Mr. Bourdain is a vivid, bawdy and often foul-mouthed writer. He thrills in the attack, but he is also an enthusiast who writes well about things he holds dear.” (Wall Street Journal)

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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