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Devoured: From Chicken Wings to Kale Smoothies - How What We Eat Defines Who We Are

Sophie Egan

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A provocative look at how and what Americans eat and why—a flavorful blend of *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, *Salt Sugar Fat*, and *Freakonomics* that reveals how the way we live shapes the way we eat.

Food writer and Culinary Institute of America program director Sophie Egan takes readers on an eye-opening journey through the American food psyche, examining the connections between the values that define our national character—work, freedom, and progress—and our eating habits, the good and the bad. Egan explores why these values make for such an unstable, and often unhealthy, food culture and, paradoxically, why they also make America's cuisine so great.

Egan raises a host of intriguing questions: Why does McDonald's have 107 items on its menu? Why are breakfast sandwiches, protein bars, and gluten-free anything so popular? Will bland, soulless meal replacements like Soylent revolutionize our definition of a meal? The search for answers takes her across the culinary landscape, from the prioritization of convenience over health to the unintended consequences of "perks" like free meals for employees; from the American obsession with "having it our way" to the surge of Starbucks, Chipotle, and other chains individualizing the eating experience; from high culture—artisan and organic and what exactly "natural" means—to low culture—the sale of 100 million Taco Bell Doritos Locos Tacos in ten weeks. She also looks at how America's cuisine—like the nation itself—has been shaped by diverse influences from across the globe.

Devoured weaves together insights from the fields of psychology, anthropology, food science, and behavioral economics as well as myriad examples from daily life to create a powerful and unique look at food in America.

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