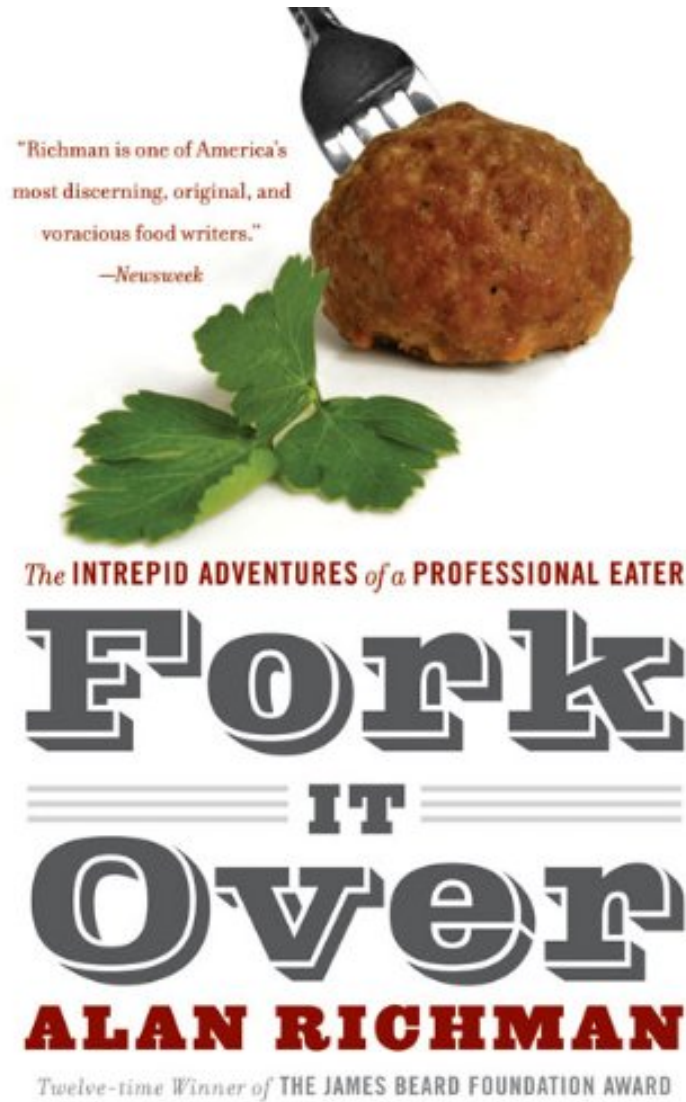


(Download free pdf) Fork It Over: The Intrepid Adventures of a Professional Eater

Fork It Over: The Intrepid Adventures of a Professional Eater

Alan Richman

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Alan Richman : Fork It Over: The Intrepid Adventures of a Professional Eater before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Fork It Over: The Intrepid Adventures of a Professional Eater:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Sing for your supperBy Christopher (o.d.c.)Alan Richman was one of the regular columnists who made Art Cooper's GQ such a great magazine, and I remember many of these articles from their first appearance at the turn of the millennium. They were a pleasure to read again, although they may be factually out of date.Here is a sample of Mr. R's humor:A joint has no high concept. It just is. It is a safe haven in a

culinary world that swirls with inconsistencies. It is a respite from fast food, small food, tall food, and fancy food. Nothing is flamed in a joint except accidentally, should there be a grease fire. While the food in a joint is usually native-born American, the people who work in them are more likely to have been naturalized. English is always spoken, but not necessarily by the employee assigned the job of answering the telephone. And here is some of his restaurant reviewing: The matre d of the restaurant was continually trying to brighten my mood, announcing cheerily, Very light today, only two courses. Then out would come food on plates so large they appeared seaworthy. One of the very light today meals started with the signature dish of the restaurant: zucchini, turnips, fennel, carrots, and cabbage cooked with olive oil and black truffles. The baby vegetables in this assemblage were soft and impossibly succulent, bound up with the chopped truffles and olive oil. The dish was so savory I could imagine never needing meat again. It was also so oversize I could imagine never eating again. Next came veal, and never before had I tasted veal this tender and yet this flavorful, slice after slice of delicately pink loin, so many slices this was no mere dish of veal. This was a vista of veal, veal that seemed to go on forever, fading into the horizon, and surrounding the veal were spinach-flecked potato gnocchi in a black truffle sauce. Cerutti came out and applied the coup de grace, shaving black truffles over the dish. I ate every bite of the best vegetables I'd ever had in my life, and then I ate every bite of the best veal I'd ever had in my life, and then I stumbled into the kitchen, barely able to remain upright. Humor: By selecting the eastern North Carolina sandwich as the beau ideal of barbecue, I was placing it above pork ribs and beef brisket, the industry favorites. I had no qualms about my commitment, for this sandwich is barbecue at its most sublime. I believe the reason it has never received proper acclaim is that it is little known outside the coastal regions of North Carolina, which are seldom visited, except by devastating hurricanes. Food: The tables had brown Formica tops, the chairs had brown vinyl seats, and the floor had brown-speckled tile. A couple of Rubbermaid Brute garbage cans stood in one corner. All these ambiance issues became immaterial the moment I bit into the sandwich. I couldn't stop myself. I ate it so fast I had to go back and get another one right away. The pork was creamy and soft. The crunchy bits of skin were done just right, which meant they encompassed the yin and yang of barbecue, the crackle of caramelization and the ooze of fat. The vinegar was barely noticeable, and the presence of hot sauce was undetectable until it touched the back of my throat, leaving a tiny burn like the finish of a Napoleon Cognac. The coleslaw was fresh, elegant, and fine, containing a hint of mustard, so little that it seemed to influence the color more than the taste. I tried to eat my second sandwich slowly, but I gulped it, too, and I was too full to have a third. Some of the cities Alan Richman eats his way through: Montreal, Havana, Shanghai, Saigon, Naples, the Hamptons. Some topics to which he devotes an essay apiece (including some arduous research): Jewish waiters, sushi (he eats fugu, the fish of death), haggis, working as a sommelier, "My Beef with Vegans" (that title alone deserves a Pulitzer), truffles, and (one more quote), why he quite French cooking school: The world of the pastry chef is alien to me. It is a place where French meringue and Italian meringue and Swiss meringue are all different, where a biscuit is not a biscuit, and where ice-cold cream poured into caramelized sugar will explode. Every preparation requires enormous amounts of time, effort, and meringue. And yet the pastry chef suffers like no other man. His delicacies are either thoughtlessly popped in the mouth, as though they were Chiclets, or refused by overstuffed diners who have gorged on a tasting menu and decided to skip dessert. My final pastry humiliation occurs when Chef Alain fires up a blowtorch and prepares to caramelize something. I failed shop when I was in junior high school and cannot imagine such a weapon in my hands. Dare I say it? The book is a veritable feast. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great book for foodies and for those that appreciate humor. By Karrot I definitely recommend this book, there are hilarious stories that are also touching in the author's witty style of writing. It's a book that would be appreciated by those who like to critique their meals. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Entertaining Fun. By Jeremy Krantz Well written, funny and entertaining from front to back. Easy to read, somewhat short paragraphs and has a good pace. Well worth it.

A hilarious series of culinary adventures from GQ's award-winning food critic, ranging from flunking out of the Paul Bocuse school in Lyon to dining and whining with Sharon Stone. Alan Richman has dined in more unlikely locations and devoured more tasting menus than any other restaurant critic alive. He has reviewed restaurants in almost every Communist country (China, Vietnam, Cuba, East Germany) and has recklessly indulged his enduring passion for eight-course dinners (plus cheese). All of this attests to his herculean constitution, and to his dedication to food writing. In *Fork It Over*, the eight-time winner of the James Beard Award retraces decades of culinary adventuring. In one episode, he reviews a Chicago restaurant owned and operated by Louis Farrakhan (not known to be a fan of Jewish restaurant critics) and completes the assignment by sneaking into services at the Nation of Islam mosque, where no whites are allowed. In Cuba, he defies government regulations by interviewing starving political dissidents, and then he rewards himself with a lobster lunch at the most expensive restaurant in Havana. He chiffonades his way to a failing grade at the Paul Bocuse school in Lyon, politely endures Sharon Stone's notions of fine dining, and explains why you can't get a good meal in Boston, spurred on by the reckless passion for food that made him "the only soldier he knows who gained weight while in Vietnam" and carried him from his neighborhood burger joint to Le Bernardin. Alan Richman, once described as the "Indiana Jones of food writers," has won more major awards than any other food writer alive, including a National Magazine Award, eight James Beard Awards for restaurant reviewing,

and two James Beard M.F.K. Fisher distinguished writing awards. The all new cover will emphasize Richman's globetrotting persona and attract a wide audience

.com It seems like Alan Richman has been writing about food--certainly in GQ--like, forever. Turns out he made the switch from sports writing to food, primarily restaurant reviews, a mere 14 years ago. Fork It Over is his first collection of essays published in those years. He has a charming, easy voice; self-deprecating humor; well-honed wit; and a defined sense of what he does and does not like--about food, restaurants, cities, hotel rooms, waiters, and just about everything else. You are a passenger along for the ride, a willing listener of road stories. The car is decidedly American, the upholstery fine leather. The collection is laid out like a classic menu of French parentage. In Amuse-Bouche, we are treated to "The Eating Life," an essay written for the book that establishes the writer-critic credentials and ground rules. His mother was a terrific cook; the author can't boil water, nor sees any need to. He's a regular guy from a regular background who can wax as poetic about Philly cheese steak as he can the most delectable and exotic of delicacies. From that point on--through Appetizers, Entrees, Sides, Cheese, Wine, and Gratuity--the reader is escorted from one side of the world to the other, to high-end restaurants and low-end dives. As the fellow traveler, the reader is never allowed to wander off from Richman's voice and perspective. He is, in fact, the axis mundi around which each and every essay revolves. Which is to say, Fork It Over is much more a book about Alan Richman than it is about food. The essays that comprise Fork It Over appeared in major monthly magazines, one at a time. To read this body of work cover to cover is to run the risk of losing one's appetite in the middle of the meal. It's rich stuff. Delectable. Charming. And a little bit goes a long way. --Schuyler IngleFrom Publishers WeeklyAs GQ's longtime food critic and an 11-time James Beard Award winner, Richman has eaten a lot of fancy food. But the best essays in this collection culled mainly from his work for magazines don't speak of foie gras or truffles. The accounts of Richman's escapades eating at places like Alain Ducasse's three Michelin-starred Le Louis XV, and even his reminiscences of meals at dives like the Pantry in Los Angeles, become repetitive when grouped together. The two standouts are the essays about Richman's parents. In "A Mother's Knishes," he achieves the quasi-miraculous feat of finding something fresh to say about a food-crazed Jewish mother, in this case by recounting her loss of identity as she descends into senility and loses her culinary skills. The second, the hilarious "Miami Weiss," investigates the "Early Bird" tradition of South Florida. When the doors open at 5 p.m. at the Fort Lauderdale restaurant Fifteenth Street Fisheries, Richman writes, "It's a sort of Geriatric Olympics." The essays are arranged in menu-like fashion under such headings as "Appetizers," "Entrees," etc. The "Palate Cleansers" are unsatisfactory, brief pieces, with titles like "Ten Commandments for Diners," which come off as condescending. Also, Richman's attitude toward women is archaic to say the least ("she was a woman who knew how to eat like a man"), which may turn off a good number of readers. Agent, Kathy Robbins. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From BooklistA compilation of Richman's magazine columns across the last decade, this volume brings together critic Richman's deftly worded ruminations on food and restaurants. Richman's storytelling ability serves him well, especially in such essays as his description of a historic New York City Jewish deli, whose waiters' Yiddishisms constituted a form of theater, bestowing insults on all comers, foreign and domestic. Typical of restaurant critics everywhere, Richman's dislikes make for the most striking and most memorable reading: bad pizza in Naples, inedible Chinese food in Shanghai, overpriced sushi in Los Angeles, dreadful service in the Hamptons. In an original, clever, courageous, and well-reported piece, Richman delves into both food and culture at Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam restaurant and mosque, surviving the experience intact despite his Jewish origins. A survey of cuisine in Montreal says as much about the region's politics as about the food. As with most anthologies of food criticism, the book lacks immediacy, since restaurants tend to be ephemeral, passing all too quickly into history. Mark KnoblauchCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved