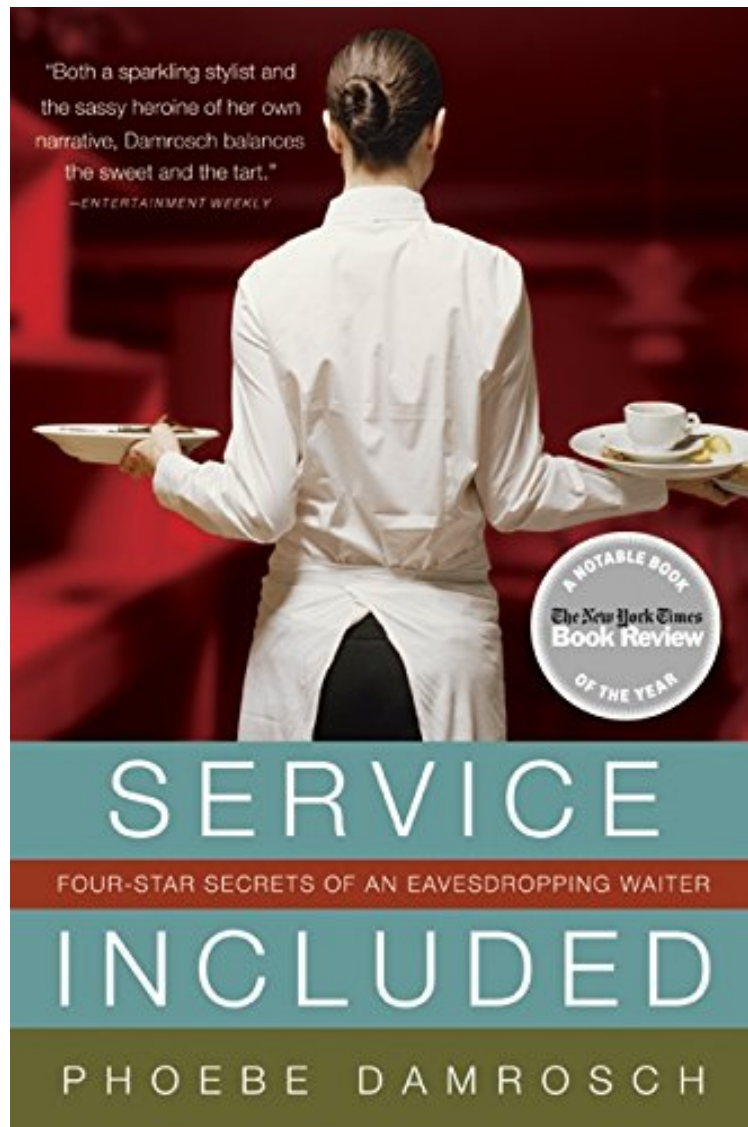


[Download] Service Included: Four-Star Secrets of an Eavesdropping Waiter

## Service Included: Four-Star Secrets of an Eavesdropping Waiter

*Phoebe Damrosch*

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**Phoebe Damrosch : Service Included: Four-Star Secrets of an Eavesdropping Waiter** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Service Included: Four-Star Secrets of an Eavesdropping Waiter:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A fair first effort, but leaves you wanting so much more. By M. Hsu I was initially going to write an awful review of this memoir but, after reading some of the other harsh customer reviews, I must say that SERVICE INCLUDED is not as terrible as some reviewers make it out to be. For starters, I don't think the Damrosch claims or pretends that this book will be a gossip column about all of the scandals witnessed

at Per Se. It is a memoir about her life, bookended by her experience at the esteemed restaurant. 'Foodies' who are interested in what happens behind the scenes will get a firsthand account of what it is like to train and work at a four-star restaurant, including the pressure, camaraderie, pride, and self-doubt that comes with it. Damrosch has tales of Chef Keller and staff's generosity and absurdly high standards. Those who are interested only in celebrity gossip will be disappointed. The book is ultimately about a young woman at a crossroads in her life, who is trying to figure out who she is, and happens to be working at one of the world's best restaurants while doing so. I must admit that Ms. Damrosch's writing style sort of annoyed me, but I think the main failing of her memoir is that she isn't genuinely vulnerable in her accounts of her experience. She doesn't make herself out to be more exceptional than she is, but she doesn't let us in on her true feelings either. After describing in great detail the personal dedication necessary and the consuming nature of working at Per Se, Damrosch says that a period in her life was "defined" by two failed relationships without going into any of the emotional detail that would enable us as readers to connect with the experience. Similarly, she mentions her father's infidelity which leads to the dissolution of a decades-long marriage to her mother without exploring how that felt to her -- betrayal? relief? We don't know. Damrosch is guarded while masquerading as transparent, and her readers are thereby kept at arms length from the deep emotions of her soul which we so long to understand and empathize with. As such, the (very interesting) details of Thomas Keller's prestigious restaurant are all we have to hold on to. Damrosch relies on our fascination with that mysterious world to sell this tale, tragically unable to see that we'd genuinely like to know the woman behind the collar as much as the wizard behind the kitchen door. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Interesting read. By omaomaoma Enjoyed the book when I read it several years ago. This was a purchase for a gift. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Loved it! By Margaret Sallay Extremely hard to put down. Great prep for dining at Per Se. Only wish it was longer so I could still be reading. :)

Warning: May contain material offensive to vegans, pharmaceutical lobbyists, and those on a low-sodium diet. Animals were harmed during the writing of this book. While Phoebe Damrosch was waiting for life to happen, she supported herself by working as a waitress. Before long she was the only female captain at the four-star New York City restaurant Per Se during its first year. *Service Included* is the story of her obsession with food, her love affair with a sommelier, and her amusing, eye-opening, and sometimes shocking experiences in the fascinating, frenetic, highly competitive world of fine dining. Sitting down at a restaurant table will never be the same.

From Publishers Weekly A charming debut by a former waiter at the New York City restaurant Per Se slips in some high-end tricks of the trade. Vermont-bred foodie Damrosch was a few years out of Barnard College when she landed a job at chef Thomas Keller's Per Se. Fast-talking and prone to do her homework, in this case assiduously absorbing Keller's *French Laundry Cookbook*, Damrosch starts as a backserver, and her training is intensive: attending food seminars, memorizing the acreage of Central Park and learning how not to interrupt dining couples holding hands. In a few months, she's elevated to captain (a rare job for a woman), which entails navigating guests through the elaborate menus and essentially learning the subtleties of putting the guest at ease. Anticipating desire becomes Damrosch's role, as well as making sure New York Times food critic Frank Bruni has the best meal of his life. (Indeed, the place receives four stars.) She begins a romance with Andre the sommelier. Much of the latter half of this youthful, exuberant memoir is overtaken by their burgeoning affair, although the most delightful chapter, *I Can Hear You*, is full of vignettes of Damrosch's real-life waiting, i.e., the delivery of the Fabergé egg as a marriage proposal, and the parade of celebrities she meets along the way. (Oct.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Damrosch details her brief, yet remarkably fulfilling, career as a waiter and lays bare for readers the intimate workings of restaurant table service. Damrosch's ascent through the ranks at chef Thomas Keller's Midtown Manhattan's Per Se offered her a unique glimpse into high-end dining. Demystifying the hierarchy of captains, waiters, and busboys, Damrosch gives the uninitiated a crash course in those management and organizational issues that keep food streaming in perfect synchronization from kitchen to table. Although maintaining perfect service is a good restaurant's habit, success flows equally from good publicity. So Damrosch describes the frenzy produced in the kitchen by every sighting of a critic in the dining room. Without naming names, Damrosch also offers tales of overbearing, self-involved celebrities and their dining foibles. Tips on how to earn a waiter's respect (don't be a no-show; don't send back an entrée that you've nearly finished) pepper the text. Knoblauch, Mark About the Author Phoebe Damrosch is a graduate of Barnard College at Columbia University and holds an M.F.A. from Sarah Lawrence College. She lives in New York City and no longer waits on tables.