



The Cook's Book

By Howard Hillman

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Kirkus' Review A juicy, king-sized portion of information on foods: background, availability, and best uses. Hillman lists foods alphabetically (Iguana follows Ice cream) and adds to the basic format as necessary: some entries (Bitters, Fermented black beans, Yams) occupy a few lines, others are much longer (Chicken gets 30 columns). In the Oil entry, he includes heat, flavor, and nutrition data, and tells why oil makes a poor substitute for butter in most baking. The Lemon entry includes kitchen tips--a cold lemon gives less juice--and equivalents: an average lemon gives 3-4 Tb. of juice, (apple) tsp. of grated peel. Hillman covers nearly everything you can think of--standard foods, not-so-standard foods (Horsemeat, Fiddlehead ferns), foreign and domestic exotica--and his taste is sure: he favors fresh Parmesan over the powdery approximation on store shelves and he invariably rejects processed substitutes (dried onions, bacon bits) over the real thing. This won't tell you How to Cook a Wolf (although M.F.K. Fisher is in the fine bibliography) but you can find out how to choose a honeydew, clean leeks, or carve a leg of lamb.

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