

Further Reading

Here are a few resources that you may enjoy if you enjoyed this one – some because they riff on similar themes, others because they fill in the gaps that I’ve left. First is a general overview of useful materials. After that, a topic-by-topic breakdown of some of the books, websites, magazines and blogs that I consulted during the writing of this book. This isn’t a comprehensive or academic list, but a snapshot that I hope will serve as a starting point for your own investigations as you travel along tangents through the culture. If you need more help tracing back to the source of specific references in this book, you can contact me via my website: rubytandoh.co.uk

General

For the history of British food, *English Food* by Diane Purkiss is invaluable. Also: *All Manners of Eating* by Stephen Mennell, *Good Things in England* by Florence White and *The English at Table* by Jill Norman. Digging into the last seventy-five years of British eating, *The British at Table* by Christopher Driver, *The Bad Food Guide* by Derek Cooper and various back issues of the *Good Food Guide*, especially those from the eighties and edited by Drew Smith. Looking at London specifically, *London Feeds Itself*, edited by Jonathan Nunn, and *Food Lovers’ London* by Jenny Linford both offer loving and exceptionally detailed snapshots of a food scene in constant flux.

As for general books about American food culture, they’re already far better recorded than British ones, so I won’t expand on them here except to say that Toni Tipton-Martin’s *The Jemima Code* is unmissable, and I found *Paradox of Plenty* by Harvey Levenstein informative. To learn things that you never ever knew you were curious about, journals, magazines, websites and Substacks tend to be more specialised and reactive than books. *Petits Propos Culinaires*, proceedings from the Oxford Food Symposium and *Gastronomica* are excellent for academic deep dives and hyper-niche research. Back issues of now defunct publications like Tom Jaine’s *Twelve Times a Year*, *Lucky Peach* and *Fire and Knives* have all been helpful to me too. *Vittles* (now also a print magazine) is one of many Substack newsletters that cover the minutiae and the big picture of food culture today. Jonathan Gold’s old reviews, many viewable through the *L.A. Weekly* and *Los Angeles Times* backpages or via archive.org, are evergreen reminders of the beauty, sinew and physicality of food.

The finest food writers are often only accidentally that. Ntozake Shange’s *If I Can Cook, You Know God Can* is one of the most lyrical food books of the last fifty years. Nora Ephron’s many essays about the hopes and contradictions of foodies. Reyner Banham’s reminders about the architecture of food spaces. Laurie Colwin’s kitchen chronicles in

Gourmet. Some of the most enticing food descriptions I've read in recent years were from Hilary Mantel's *Wolf Hall* trilogy.

For contemporary writers who cover food culture either specifically or incidentally but with great insight, I can recommend: Helen Rosner's kitchen dispatches and restaurant reviews in the *New Yorker*; Aaron Timms' essays about food, capital and influence; Rebecca May Johnson's writing about cooking and kitchens; Jessica Carbone on American food culture; Tammie Teclemariam, Chris Crowley, Pete Wells and Ryan Sutton's dispatches from the food and culture of New York City. Yemisi Aríbísàlà is one of the most brilliant and stylish writers on food today.

If you want the joy of reading about petty food-industry gripes and score settling: *Is There a Nutmeg in the House?* by Elizabeth David and edited by Jill Norman; *Out to Lunch* by Paul Levy; *The Official Foodie Handbook* by Ann Barr and Paul Levy; *Crazy Salad & Scribble Scribble* by Nora Ephron.

Finally, you'll find dozens of cookbooks mentioned here, most of which are easily available through second-hand bookshops, and many of which you can borrow from some- where like archive.org. I won't list them all again now, but I will say that if you're interested in going beyond what's available on the shelves of Waterstones, the British Library, Oxford Brookes and the Brotherton Library at Leeds University all have excellent food collections.

Craving content

A lot of my research for this chapter was conducted online, in the constantly renewing websites and social media feeds of recipe factories like Mob, the *Guardian*, *The New York Times* and *Bon Appétit*, not to mention chancing upon some of the many hundreds of individual recipe creators, blogs and Substacks online. But in order to understand the particular energy of what's happening right now, you also need to understand where recipes came from and how they used to work. To this end, a number of resources are helpful: Polly Russell's articles for the *Financial Times*; *Culinary Pleasures* by Nicola Humble; *Eat My Words* by Janet Theophano and *The Recipe Reader* by Janet Floyd and Laurel Forster. Anthropologist Arjun Appadurai's essay 'How to Make a National Cuisine' can be found online and is informative on the geopolitical role of cookbooks.

To get a sense of how food photography has evolved, I turned to: *Food in Vogue*, with an introduction by Arabella Boxer; *A Visual Feast* by Arabella Boxer and photographer Tessa Traeger; *The Cookbook Book*, by Florian Böhm and Annahita Kamali; as well as old issues of British *Vogue*, *Marie Claire*, the *Observer*, the *Guardian* and *À La Carte* (the late-eighties British fever-dream magazine). That said, the greatest resource is just cookbooks, lots of them, many hideous.

It's often fruitful to look at past cookbooks not from here and now, but through the eyes of the people who had to endure the worst of their hype. Michael Field's old cookbook reviews in the *New York Review of Books* clarified my views on a few books that are now considered classics. The *Times* and *Guardian* newspaper archives are occasionally useful for this, too, as well as *The Official Foodie Handbook* by Ann Barr and Paul Levy.

On the seventh day, they cooked

The best way to research supplements is to read supplements. Most can be found online and in the British Library. Many of the older *Observer* magazines have not been digitised, but I found the *Guardian* and *Observer* archives useful in those cases. Helpfully, newspaper supplement recipes often end up recycled in books, which makes things easier. From Jane Grigson, *Good Things* as well as the *Observer Guide to British Cookery* are a couple of her compilations. Margaret Costa's *Four Seasons Cookery Book* does the same, as well as Robert Carrier's *Great Dishes of the World* and, much later, *Real Good Food* from Nigel Slater. For background on the supplements, the newspapers have self-mythologised in their own coverage, and you can also consult 'Supplemental Income', a paper by Richard Farmer in *Media History* journal. *Lifestyle Revolution* by Ben Highmore is a broader look at changing taste and class in post-war Britain.

Allrecipes

The OG internet slips like water through our fingers. Luckily, sites like archive.org are working hard to catalogue and preserve web pages so that you can travel back in time and see a site like Allrecipes as it was in the early days. And to understand its social underpinnings, check out *Recipes for Reading* – all about community cookbooks – by Anne L. Bower. Christopher Kimball's essay 'Gourmet to All That' in *The New York Times* remains an object of grim fascination for me.

The critic hits the road

Dining Out, by Katie Rawson and Elliott Shore, is a good primer for how restaurants have changed over time, including in relation to changes in travel and tourism. So are *Paradox of Plenty* by Harvey Levenstein and *Fast Food: Roadside Restaurants in the Automobile Age* by John A. Jakle and Keith A. Sculle. *Duncan Hines*, by Louis Hatchett, is the best biographic resource for the great eater, while Damon Talbott's paper 'Recommended by Duncan Hines' is an excellent discussion of Hines' place in the broader culture. Not much has been written about Keith Lee so far, save for C. T. Jones' profile in *Rolling Stone*. Frank Norris' paper 'Courageous Motorists: African American Pioneers on Route 66' gives a little more background on Victor Hugo Green. Perhaps

predictably, the restaurant guides of both Green and Hines went quickly out of date and are now very hard to find, but some are viewable online and others periodically appear on second-hand book sites.

Robert Sietsema's article 'Everyone Eats' for *Columbia Journalism Review* is illuminating on the state and future of criticism, as are a great many of Pete Wells' articles for *The New York Times*. On Craig Claiborne, there's *The Man Who Changed the Way We Eat* by Thomas McNamee.

You can find old Craig Claiborne reviews in *The New York Times* archives, but there are also some lesser-known gems available to those who seek – Clementine Paddleford, Gael Greene, Nigella Lawson, Jonathan Meades, Michael Winner, scattered across various newspaper archives and fan sites, the good, the bad and the ugly. The best was of course Jonathan Gold, whose writing you can find very easily and should read if you're at all interested in restaurants or, indeed, in writing.

Anatomy of a queue

Food and Social Media: You Are What You Tweet, by Signe Rousseau, is a good overview of how blog culture helped to create a world of online food hype, but it came out before the Instagram heyday and long before TikTok. For analysis of these newer platforms, *Filterworld* by *New Yorker* writer Kyle Chayka is helpful, as is the writing of Aaron Timms. But for the most part, these foods are inextricable from their native media, and you have to get hands on with the blogs, geriatric Tumblr accounts, Instagram grids and TikTok demagogues to really understand what's happening. What I found particularly illuminating were the rare moments of overlap between establishment food media and the insurgents – some food writers and critics, like Pete Wells and Helen Rosner, cover these intersections with particular care. If you want a cautionary tale about being tech-reactionary, search newspaper archives for 'food bloggers' scare pieces from the late noughties and see how well they've aged.

I like bubble tea

Much of the media about bubble tea follows digital pathways: through TikTok videos, on Instagram, in deep-archive blog posts and Flickr posts from 2011. Some writers who have written about bubble tea with care and insight include Angela Hui for Vice, and Jenny G. Zhang for Eater, while Clarissa Wei has talked about the drink's Taiwanese origins. For general explorations of East and South East Asian food cultures in the UK, Jenny Lau's *An A-Z of Chinese Food* is informative, as is Angela Hui's memoir *Takeaway*.

Dream home

The *Ebony* archives are accessible across certain corners of the internet and I'd encourage you to see them for yourself – Freda DeKnight's writing is best understood in its contexts, where it gains particular resonance. To learn more about Black magazines in the United States, *Ladies' Pages: African American Women's Magazines and the Culture That Made Them* by Noliwe M. Rooks is crucial, while *The New Noir* by Orly Clerge is a compelling examination of Black suburbia and its socio-economic drivers, as is *Places of Their Own* by Andrew Wiese. Katharina Vester has written about *Ebony* magazine's food pages in the anthology *Dethroning the Deceitful Pork Chop*, edited by Jennifer Jensen Wallach.

The seminal history of Black American recipe culture remains *The Jemima Code* by Toni Tipton-Martin. *Vibration Cooking* by Vertamae Smart-Grosvenor is a wonderful, lyrical exploration of cooking both within and beyond the domestic kitchen. Smart-Grosvenor also writes about food in *The Black Woman*, an anthology edited by Toni Cade Bambara. For other writing on food, bodies and Blackness, I strongly recommend *Eating While Black* by Psyche Williams Forson and *Fearing the Black Body* by Sabrina Strings. *Black Hunger* by Doris Witt is also useful. *Turning the Tables*, edited by Sue O'Sullivan, is a feminist recipe collection and a wonderful look at how the form can be subverted. There are echoes of this in Rebecca May Johnson's *Small Fires*.

How not to use a cookbook

You may want to refer back to some of the resources referenced above for 'Craving content', many of which I also used in researching this chapter. If you want to learn more about Elizabeth David, there's an abundance of (some would say too much) literature on her life and work, including countless essays, and biographies by Artemis Cooper and Lisa Chaney, but the best resources remain her own writing – in her cookbooks, but also scattered across her journalistic work. Many of her essays have been compiled by her editor, Jill Norman, into books: *An Omelette and a Glass of Wine* and *Is There a Nutmeg in the House?* For extra background on the series she co-edited for André Deutsch, see *Stet* – the autobiography of editor Diana Athill, who worked with David on the project. The full collection of Sainsbury's cookbooks can be found in the Sainsbury Archive in London. Sales figures from *The Times* bestseller lists, the *Bookseller*, *Publisher's Weekly* and Nielsen Bookscan are all useful references if you want to separate out the food writing that is good from the writing that actually sells. These are seldom, I'm sorry to say, the same.

‘Cook remaining 100 lobsters’

You will probably not be able to find a cheap copy of Martha Stewart’s 1982 classic, *Entertaining*, but this should not stop you from trying. After months of obsessing, I eventually got one on eBay for £40. I wish you the same good fortune. To understand the deep insanity of dinner party culture, you will want to look through old copies of *Gourmet* magazine, many of which are (for now, blessedly) available on archive.org. *Martha Stewart Living* magazine back issues are also fruitful. As far as secondary sources go, Nora Ephron’s ‘Gourmet Magazine’ and ‘The New Porn’ essays in *Crazy Salad & Scribble Scribble* are all you need.

Supermarket fugue

On the topic of supermarkets, the Sainsbury and M&S archives are both helpful if you want to see the evolution of packaging, supermarket archives and branding. *Own Label* by Jonny Trunk is a beautiful collection of some of the work of the Sainsbury’s Design Studio. *Supermarket USA* by Shane Hamilton is a wonderful deep dive into the deployment of supermarkets as political propaganda during the Cold War. *Shopping at Giant Foods* by Alfred Yee covers the history of Chinese American supermarkets. *Look at the Lights, My Love*, by Annie Ernaux, is an often problematic but occasionally beautiful look at the experiential qualities of supermarkets. *Carried Away* by Rachel Bowlby and *Grocery* by Michael Ruhlman are both useful histories of modern shopping.

Building Houses Out of Chicken Legs, by Psyche A. Williams-Forsen, touches on the systemic barriers to Black trade and commerce, as does *Black Food Geographies* by Ashanti M. Reese. *Food Co-ops in America* by Anne Meis Knupfer reminds us that there are other ways of doing things. I also came across a small feature in *Ebony* magazine, from September 1955, about Black-owned supermarkets – this is the kind of archival find that a researcher dreams of, and I wish I could have written more on this specific topic. Delightfully, *Letters of the Century, 1900–1999*, edited by Lisa Grunwald, contains Michael Cullen’s initial supermarket-dream pitch in full.

The ice cream age

Licks, Sticks and Bricks by Pim Reinders is the resource for all your ice cream needs, with a focus on Unilever brands. The patent collection at the British Library turns up occasional treasures, such as the Viennetta patent, and is well worth investigating if you want to see more behind the scenes. The Unilever Archives at Port Sunlight contain all back issues of in-house Wall’s magazines and Unilever end-of-year reports – these are invaluable. The London Archives holds a collection of Lyons materials. An exquisitely dry but informative book called *Renewing Unilever: Transformation and Tradition* by Geoffrey Jones filled in a few factual gaps for me, but people’s relationships

with these products are often so strong that the greatest collections of, say, Twister adverts, will be on Facebook throwback groups or fan sites. These are the people's archives.

Tonic waters

Wellness discourse moves faster than most of us can ever hope to keep up with, but there are a few resources to help to make sense of this wild phenomenon. *Maintenance Phase*, a podcast from Aubrey Gordon and Michael Hobbes, is a meticulously researched dive into the contradictions and harms of diet culture, in all its forms. Snaxshot, a Substack from Andrea Hernández, is an incisive resource on post- modern food retail, and gets into the particular weirdness of wellness products better than anywhere else. For work that grapples with bigger ideological shifts, *Doppelganger* by Naomi Klein is instructive if you want to understand some of the political underpinnings of wellness, as is *Trick Mirror* by Jia Tolentino. It was beyond the scope of this essay to get into the broader politics of sugary drinks – from the power of brands like Coca-Cola to racialised ideas about sugar and sweetness – but for a closer read of this side of things, see *Fearing the Black Body* by Sabrina Strings, or *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom* by Sidney Mintz.

The automat is dead

The Robert F. Byrnes collection of automat memorabilia at the New York Public Library is unparalleled. Angelika Epple, Nicholas Bromell and Danya Pilgrim are just three of the people who have written academic papers wholly or partly about automats, and Pilgrim's is particularly interesting for its coverage of modernisations in dining and the Black hospitality trade. Jan Whitaker's website Restaurant-ing Through History is an excellent resource for all kinds of restaurant esoterica, including but not limited to automats. *White Burgers, Black Cash* by Naa Oyo A. Kwate is a book about the racialised inequities of fast-food culture. Fordham University's Bronx African American History Project has a couple of oral histories that touch on life in the age of auto- mats, both sides of the lockers. In *The New York Times* archive you can find coverage of the Horn & Hardart strikes, as well as in Stephen H. Norwood's academic paper 'Organizing the neglected worker: the Women's Trade Union League in New York and Boston, 1930–1950'. Vladimir Nabokov's essay 'Man and Things' can be found in the *New Yorker* archives.

Wimpy

Legacy by Thomas Harding is a great history of Lyons, and you'll find more in the London Archives as well, but really a person needs to experience a Wimpy to understand it. If you want to learn about the strange social geographies of Wimpy, *The Invention of Essex* by Tim Burrows is a good place to start.