



The Pleasures of the Table

Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin

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Epicure and gourmand Brillat-Savarin was one of the most influential food writers of all time. His 1825 book *The Physiology of Taste* defined our notions of French gastronomy, and his insistence that food be a civilizing pleasure for all has inspired the slow food movement and guided chefs worldwide.

From discourses on the erotic properties of truffles and the origins of chocolate, to a defence of gourmandism and why 'a dessert without cheese is like a pretty woman with only one eye', the delightful writings in this selection are a hymn to the art of eating well.

This edition is part of the Great Food series designed by Coralie Bickford-Smith.

The Pleasures of the Table Details

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Author : Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin

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From Reader Review The Pleasures of the Table for online ebook

Kaye says

I read The Physiology of Taste, from which this is excerpted, several years ago. This is a quick romp through the highlights.

Nabilah says

Such a cute little book by the popular gourmand, Brillat-Savarin. It is actually the condensed version of the Physiology of Taste. This little book contained his thoughts and anecdotes on food. Some might be outdated since he is from the 18th century after all, but it is still an interesting read. I recommend this book for anyone who want to be familiar with this famous gourmand or anyone who want to be a gourmand.

Nanditha Sankar says

The Pleasures of the Table is a tribute to gourmands and gourmandism. Written by a connoisseur of the finest edibles, the book is set in the 18th century. Brillat Savarin begins with various kinds of meat, birds and goes on to delve into truffles.(I was ignorant of anything but truffles for dessert until I read about these tubers, which are even supposed to be aphrodisiacs!) The book covers various aspects of eating, cooking and even provides trivia on the first possible restaurant, glimpses of the first restaurateurs from the late 1700s. It is quite a different take on food and eating considering we live in an era of mass-produced, chemically modified edibles.

The reader's interest tends to fizzle out somewhere midway possibly because it is somewhat difficult to connect to the times of Savarin. Nevertheless, it is a delightful read, best accompanied with a dessert in hand for the book definitely makes the tummy rumble.

Tracy Empson says

This selection of writings from Brillat-Savarin's "The Physiology of Taste" will amuse and delight. You might expect a book from 1825 to be outdated, but this book is proof that "the more things change, the more they stay the same." Brillat-Savarin's thoughts on everything from turkeys (better wild-caught than farm-reared) to coffee (don't drink too much) to obesity (caused by genetics and overeating) still ring true today, with some hilariously notable exceptions (sugar water being a most wholesome drink). Whether you fancy yourself a gourmand, a history-buff, or both, you are sure to enjoy this light and charming little read!

Meredith says

A charming introduction to the man, with whom I feel it would have been great fun to join at a groaning

board, if only for his tales about turkey hunts and farmer's daughters in Connecticut. Full of wit and color, and not lacking in emphatic opinion, a treat to read. N.b. declaration of gourmandism, and "careless persons, whom heaven has not blessed with the sacred flame...".

Ape says

The Pleasures of the Table: or the ramblings of a pompous French food-snob. Wow what this guy must have enjoyed the sound of his own voice, and I could imagine if he had the wind in his sails, he could have made for dull company. However, that's just my point of view. I can certainly understand why this was included in a great food collection (and what a chilling thought that this is just an excerpt book - this is A LOT more of this out there) and I suppose for the food fans or food historians, this is 'interesting' and certainly an insight into the French foodie mind of the 1800s. But I grew tired of him.

There are no recipes in here. This is a Frenchman prattling on about various food related themes, from his opinions on obesity, the correct way to fry, various types of meat, restaurants, other ingredients, drink.... there's one bit that made me physically wince, when he was talking about the different types of birds you can eat and why they're great for various reasons; then he got on to eating tiny birds like warblers. I mean, they're so tiny there can't be anything on them. Who could want to eat a poor wee bird like that?

I think this little excerpt book has been enough of a taste of Brillat-Savarin for me.

emily says

totally enjoyable condensed version of the seminal classic "pleasures of the table". brillat-savarin is witty, intelligent and insightful regarding the eating habits of his day. and let it be known that he called the whole "carbs cause obesity" theory first.

Sophia says

For those who enjoy their foie gras guilt free. This English translation of an 18th Century book, is notably politically incorrect by today's standards. Like savouring anything a little naughty, this book is amusing, refreshing and satisfying.

A fitting testimony to gastronomy!
