



Twain's Feast

Audible Originals , Nick Offerman (Narrator)

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Mark Twain, beloved American writer, performer, and humorist, was a self-proclaimed glutton. With the help of a chef and some friends, Nick Offerman presents the story of Twain's life through the lens of eight of Mark Twain's favorite foods. As we explore these foods' role in Samuel Clemens' life, we also discover a surprising culinary and ecological history of America. The biggest celebrity of his time, Twain was a witness to a transforming country, and with historian and writer Andy Beahrs as a guide, Beahrs and Offerman take documentary excursions across America, illuminating each dish and bringing to life a broad sampling of Twain's writing. Twain's Feast is a rollicking information-packed journey into the rich culinary history of America, with the sharp eye and unmistakable wit of Mark Twain himself.

This production contains hilarious and racy content that may not be suitable for children.

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From Reader Review Twain's Feast for online ebook

B.A. Wilson says

This Audible original was so random, in the most fascinating and delightful sort of way. It was not at all what I expected, but I definitely enjoyed the commentary on Mark Twain, food, race, and environmental issues. I didn't expect to get all of that out of this short listen, but it really delivered.

Pages: 5

Tricia Culp says

Fun and fascinating for a Twain fan.

John says

Typical millennial half-assery. This Audible Original purports to be a recreation of a feast Twain dreamed about upon returning to the US from international travel (A Tramp Abroad). I was expecting a literate discussion of the food of that period, much like Mark Kurlansky would do (Cod, Salt, The Big Oyster, etc.). Instead I get a hipster chef creating the meal from a food truck and serving such Mark Twain "experts" such as Nick Offerman, Wanda Sykes, and Jeff Tweedy. And of course some of the people were vegan, etc. They why did you accept the invitation when the menu was meat-laden? The idea of the meal quickly went by the wayside, so the producers had to fill with some twain bio, his views on African-Americans, Native Americans etc.

This is in fact a repackaged podcast that is poorly edited (Offerman once mentioned next "episode"; there were many black spaces, as if that is where the commercials should go). Half-assed productions are de rigueur for podcasts, but this was not a cheap podcast to make. I suspect expensive fiascoes like this are what caused Audible to drop their original podcasts.

Avoid. Get a Mark Kurlansky audiobook or book instead.

Stacie says

I wanted to like this. Mark Twain? Awesome! History? Love it! Food? I'm all about that!

And then... and then came 4 hours of lackluster and poorly edited disappointment. I didn't have to spend any money on it but, ugh, can I get my time back?

Eli Fry says

Essentially it looks at a few things in Mark Twain's life, but doesn't give the real picture. It's entertaining, but can be a bit crass. There's stuff you don't hear most places so that's cool though!

Geoff says

The episodes were a little disjointed, but overall this did a good job of capturing Twain the persona, Clemens the man, and the major changes the USA went through in his lifetime. Doesn't shrink too much from controversial topics (listening to the African American producer from Brooklyn reflecting on going on a "coon hunt" and being at a mostly white "Coon Dinner" in the south was riveting) and, probably most importantly, made me want to read more Twain.

Alan says

Not what I was expecting.

Gave up in Chapter 3. Too much politics; not enough food.

It wasn't even "Twain's Feast," because the first two courses were more or less copouts. Can't find prairie chicken? No problem! Here's corn instead. Can't figure out how to cook raccoon? No problem! We'll make a sausage mixed with enough other ingredients that no one can taste the raccoon.

Jonny Parshall says

What a yarn!

What I thought to be a twofold tale of a man and his feast turned out to be so much more. True, both man and feast are well covered here in a culinary biography like no other (see my review for Jim Harrison's *A Really Big Lunch*), but most of all it is a story of America after its Civil War until at the turn of the 20th century. The people of this time and traditions are nearly lost — most especially the food — thanks to prohibition, WWII, rationing, freezing, microwaving, and other great crimes against food. But thanks to the late great Mr Twain, ne Samuel Clemens, we receive a bold snapshot of some of the culinary traditions, and with them, the social traditions of more than a century past.

One without the other and this book would still be good. But tied together, they are great. I especially love the input from the many great Audible guests and collaborators who made this story exceptional.

Stacy GeekRemixALot says

Received this for free as part of my Audible membership!

If you're interested in reading this, I think it's important to know that this book is about a LOT more than just food. It really covers the life and times of Mark Twain, and although the project *centers* around food it also ends up touching on history, climate change, racism, Mark Twain's family life and evolution from Samuel Clemens to MT, and much more.

The style of the Audible version is a lot like an audio documentary, which I enjoyed, but also something to be aware of if that's not something you like!

Admittedly I wasn't the biggest fan of Mark Twain before I read this. I had seen this on Audible and been intrigued, but mostly picked it up because it was included with my membership. That being said, it was an enjoyable listen and I'd imagine if you really enjoyed Twain's books or enjoy the historical take on food and how the US has changed over the past 150 years or so, then you might really like this!

Sarah says

An audible original done right. A great little storyline surrounding Twain, food, race, and environmental issues. I absolutely loved this audiobook.

lit.erary.britt says

Based on Mark Twain's extensive favorite foods list, this audio documentary provides a brief glimpse at American culinary history, discussing many regional cuisines and imparting socioeconomic insight as to why many dishes no longer exist. It's also a snapshot of Twain's life, his writing, and an ever-changing America. This Audible Original is narrated by massive Twain fan Nick Offerman and food journalist Andrew Beahrs, who penned the print version. Very enjoyable!

Roxanne says

This is a truly original piece, centered around a modern-day gathering and seamlessly combined with snippets of Mark Twain's timeless writing as well as interviews with an eclectic mix of individuals. The chapters weave together interesting perspectives of American history, ecology, agriculture, racism, holidays, and day-to-day life. This piece is yet another supporting example that studying food, and the way people use it, truly can be a key to piecing together bits of lost or misunderstood history. It rekindled my interest in reading more of Twain's works, especially those he produced later in life. Offerman's narration is flawless.

Jeff Harris says

The concept of recreating a meal was interesting at first, but they never really followed through with the premise. The stories and details surrounding it though were interesting, especially as I'm not familiar with Twain's background.

Some of the clips that were added to the base narration went on uncomfortably long, almost like they were

trying to fill time.

Joel says

A peculiar listen, that is incredibly difficult to follow at times, especially while being a recording in a room full of people talking. I liked the idea but it felt slapdash and incomplete, and left me a bit disappointed.

Charlene says

not my cup of tea
