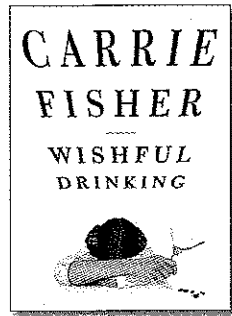


★ **Wishful Drinking**

Carrie Fisher. Simon & Schuster, \$21 (152p)
ISBN 978-1-4391-0225-1

Fisher has fictionalized her life in several novels (notably *Postcards from the Edge*), but her first memoir (she calls it "a really, really detailed personals ad") proves that truth is stranger than fiction. There are more juicy confessions and outrageously funny observations packed in these honest pages than most celebrity bios twice the length. After describing how she underwent electroshock therapy for her manic depression, Fisher then sorts through her life as her memories return. She predicts that by the end of the book, "you'll feel so close to me that you'll want to divorce me." At one point, this daughter of Debbie Reynolds and Eddie Fisher ("one an icon, the other an arm piece to icons") hilariously diagrams her family tree of Hollywood marriages and remarriages to make sure her daughter's potential date is not a relative. Revealing that at 15 she got a vibrator for Christmas from her mother, she writes, "You might be thinking that a lot of the stories I'm telling you are over the top... but you can't imagine what I'm leaving out." With acerbic precision and brash humor, she writes of struggling with and enjoying aspects of her alcoholism, drug addiction and mental breakdowns. Her razor-sharp observations about celebrity, addiction and sexuality demand to be read aloud to friends. (Dec.)



tsunamis, great floods, "vile winds, tropical cyclones and tornadoes," plagues and pandemics continue to threaten human survival. De Villiers's conclusion, contrarian and more controversial than calming, is that despite the fight against global warming, "the planet is always changing, and so must we." (Jan.)

★ **In the Footsteps of Marco Polo: A Companion to the Public Television Series**

Denis Belliveau and Francis O'Donnell. Rowman & Littlefield, \$29.95 (256p) ISBN 978-0-7425-5683-6

The harrowing route of Marco Polo's 13th-century trek from Venice to ancient Cathay over the traditional Silk Road to Kublai Khan's territories consumed 24 years of the famous explorer's life. Award-winning photographer Belliveau and sculptor/lecturer O'Donnell, a former marine, spent two years retracing the journey, to "[t]raverse the world's largest land mass and back, climb its highest mountains, cross its most desolate deserts and seas." The curious, intrepid risk-takers forgo air travel to recreate the 25,000-mile experience, facing rolls of red tape, internecine politics, horrendous climates, language barriers, civil war and border authorities while traveling through what is now Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Tibet, China and Mongolia, among others. The authors have a remarkable ability to form relationships in varied cultures, as with a group of rough Afghan soldiers: "All had in common... losses so terrible that we had stopped asking questions about families." Fascinatingly, many of the customs, locales and physical landscapes are identical, 700 years later, to Polo's descriptions. Alongside Belliveau and O'Donnell's enthusiastic narrative are marvelous full-color photos that bring the travelogue to vivid life. (Dec.)

Lifestyle

Food
Pizza: Grill It, Bake It, Love It!

Bruce Weinstein and Mark Scarbrough. Morrow, \$17.95 paper (304p) ISBN 978-0-06-143445-7

According to Weinstein and Scarbrough, authors of the Ultimate cookbook series, Americans eat more than 46 slices

of takeout pizza per year. On a mission to enable pie lovers to make fresh, quality pizza at home, the duo has created 100 recipes ranging from classics like four cheese and sausage and pepper to more inventive concoctions such as one made with squash and chard and another with duck confit. A primer chapter includes easy-to-follow instructions for a variety of doughs, including semolina and gluten-free dough that can be mixed and matched with recipes throughout the book. An eight-step "Road Map for Pizza" is a simple and effective guide to pizza making for all level of cooks. Options for using prepared crusts, as well as those made on pizza stones, baking sheets or the grill, give the home cook a desirable flexibility with crust preparation. Worthy chapters on deep-dish and salad-topped pizzas round out the book. (Jan.)

★ **The New Mediterranean Diet Cookbook: A Delicious Alternative for Lifelong Health**

Nancy Harmon Jenkins. Bantam, \$35 (512p)
ISBN 978-0-553-38509-0

This nutritionally sound, flavor-savvy cookbook, first published in 1994, was arguably ahead of its time—at least for American readers. Of course, a wave of American dieters and nutritionists have since come to advocate Mediterranean eating habits, including a largely plant-based diet with modest amounts of proteins and plenty of good fats. Jenkins's updated and revised version will surely reach a wider audience. Jenkins, an American who has lived in Italy, France, Lebanon, Cyprus and Spain, zeros in on the dietary patterns that link these nations. Yet Jenkins's approach is hardly prescriptive; she prefers to gently encourage good habits rather than lay out a daily regime. The 250 recipes are largely traditional dishes, some of which may be novel to her readership, such as Provençal chickpea soup; Moroccan lamb tagine with apricots; and kourabiedes, Greek butter almond cookies. Jenkins has removed the nutritional data from the previous edition, which allows for a greater emphasis on the food itself. Jenkins's recipes are reliable, and though dishes like pizza made from scratch re-

quire extra time and effort, the payoff is in the "slow food," Mediterranean approach: an overall respect and enjoyment for what we eat that translates into greater health. Jenkins is an effective ambassador for this way of thinking about food, and her cookbook is a wonderful resource for anyone considering it. (Dec.)

★ **Glorious One-Pot Meals: A Revolutionary New Quick and Healthy Approach to Dutch Oven Cooking**

Elizabeth Yarnell. Broadway, \$17.95 (224p)
ISBN 978-0-7679-3010-9

Sometimes the simplest-seeming cookbooks yield the most surprising revelations, as in nutritionist Yarnell's guide to one-pot cooking. Yarnell's signature "infusion" method, cooking in a dutch oven at a very hot temperature renders layered vegetables, starches and proteins like tandoori salmon and kale with butternut squash over basmati rice, into a surprisingly well-textured, hearty meal. (It's also foolproof: when you smell the aroma of dinner, you're three minutes from the end of the cooking time.) Dishes like citrus

brief essays, well-known figures from every conceivable field demonstrate why it's a prerogative of all thoughtful people to change their mind once in a while. Technologist Ray Kurzweil says he now shares Enrico Fermi's question: if other intelligent civilizations exist, then where are they? Nassim Nicholas Taleb (*The Black Swan*) reveals that he has lost faith in probability as a guiding light for making decisions. Oliver Morton (*Mapping Mars*) confesses that he has lost his childlike faith in the value of manned space flight to distant worlds. J. Craig Venter, celebrated for his work on the human genome, has ceased to believe that nature can absorb any abuses that we subject it to, and that world governments must move quickly to prevent global disaster. Alan Alda says, "So far, I've changed my mind twice about God," going from believer to atheist to agnostic. Brockman, editor of *Edge.org* and numerous anthologies, has pulled together a thought-provoking collection of focused and tightly argued pieces demonstrating the courage to change strongly held convictions. (Jan.)

★ **The End: Natural Disasters, Manmade Catastrophes, and the Future of Human Survival**

Marq de Villiers. St. Martin's/Dunne, \$25.95 (352p) ISBN 978-0-312-36569-1

Without discounting the very real impact of climate change, de Villiers (*Wind-swept*) steps back from global warming brinkmanship to suggest that, in fact, "we've been living in a little bubble of stability in a great sea of chaotic change" and that cataclysm is the universe's normal condition. He casts back billions of years to report that mass extinctions have at times wiped out 96% of all species living in the seas, the world has cycled through several monumental ice ages, collisions with comets and asteroids have altered life on Earth (in 1996 a three-quarter-mile-long asteroid passed within four hours of our planet) and land-shattering earthquakes have a transformed continents. More recently in known history, massive volcanic explosions have dramatically influenced global temperatures and human life half a dozen times, most recently Krakatoa in 1883 and Pinatobu in 1991, and notes that noxious gases, mammoth

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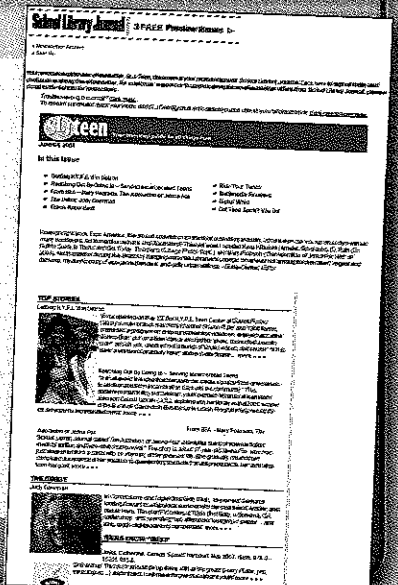
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ginger chicken with root vegetables; penne puttanesca; and fiesta steak are simple choices for busy weeknight dinners. The real genius, of course, is the single pot—Yarnell's all-inclusive meals don't require the usual juggling of oven times to coordinate complementary dishes, and cleanup is simplified even further by a preliminary canola oil spritz on the pot. Her emphasis on whole foods, abundant servings of vegetables, moderate amounts of protein and the incorporation of whole grains like amaranth and quinoa justifies her health claims. Yarnell also guides readers in creating their own custom versions of the one-pot meal, even offering a one-pot meal weekly grocery list. (Dec.)

Sweet!: From Agave to Turbinado, Home Baking with Every Kind of Natural Sugar and Sweetener

Mani Niall. Da Capo/Lifelong, \$18.95 paper (288p) ISBN 978-1-60094-004-0

Niall (*Sweet & Natural Baking*), expands the world of "sweet" to home bakers with his extensive knowledge of natural sweeteners and over 100 recipes. Raw sugar such as turbinado, moist brown sugars like demerara and muscovado, and non-sugarcane options like agave syrup and fruit juice concentrates are incorporated in an enticing selection of recipes for cakes, pies, cookies, entrées and more. Niall spans the culinary world with international choices like Thai sticky black rice and mangoes, dulce de leche sandwich cookies and Vietnamese caramel chicken. American favorites such as sweet potatoes with a sorghum glaze, Meyer Lemon Shaker Pi and caramel applesauce cake can also be found. An informative primer and side notes provide additional recipe options, technique tips and nutritional information. This is a unique addition to the baker's shelf. (Dec.)

Whole Grains for Busy People

Lorna Sass. Crown, \$19.95 (208p) ISBN 978-0-307-40782-5

For those intimidated by cooking with whole grains, veteran cookbook author Sass (*The New Vegan Cookbook; Whole Grains Every Day, Every Way*; etc.) breaks down the "what" and "how" of whole

grains in this accessible title brimming with healthy and appealing dishes. A primer on grains, including where to buy and brand recommendations, prefaces a collection of 125 recipes, each designed to take the home cook under 30 minutes to prepare. Whole grain takes on American classics including quinoa-creamed spinach and skillet macaroni and cheese, are mixed in among versions of well-known international dishes such as barley cioppino, faro risotto and tortilla lasagne. Unique recipes such as popcorn-crusting turkey cutlets with cherry tomato salsa and ham-and-egg couscous round out the list. Speed tips offer additional time-saving advice to the already quick-to-prepare meals. Full-color photos highlight collection standouts. (Dec.)

Home The Best Christmas Decorations in Chicagoland: Your Guide to More Than 200 Spectacular Holiday Displays

Mary Edsey. Voyageur, \$24.99 (192p) ISBN 978-0-7603-3229-0

This volume of winter wonderland of color and light offers a festive tour of downtown Chicago and the surrounding counties. Author Edsey, a Chicago native who has for 10 years hosted holiday bus tours around that city, puts her hometown savvy to excellent use: photos of displays are accompanied by stories about the people who create them, viewing hours, directions and maps. Edsey also provides a history of outdoor holiday decorations, noting that Americans' endeavors echo those of the ancient Romans, who festooned their homes to celebrate the new year. Edsey's visual tour of holiday-themed Chicagoland visits well-known landmarks like Navy Pier and the Art Institute of Chicago, plus neighborhoods like the one that's home to Candy Cane Lane, where, from the mid-1950s to the early 1970s, a parade of 10-foot candy canes stood in residents' front lawns. Readers inspired to create or augment their own display will appreciate the book's many tips—for example, how to disguise floodlights as giant presents—and its appendix of suppliers. (Nov.)

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