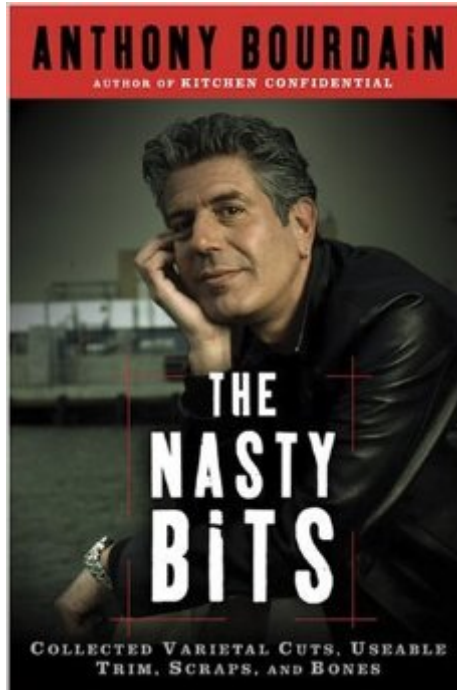


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The Nasty Bits: Collected Varietal Cuts, Usable Trim, Scraps, And Bones



Synopsis

The good, the bad, and the ugly, served up Bourdain-style. Bestselling chef and No Reservations host Anthony Bourdain has never been one to pull punches. In *The Nasty Bits*, he serves up a well-seasoned hellbroth of candid, often outrageous stories from his worldwide misadventures. Whether scrounging for eel in the backstreets of Hanoi, revealing what you didn't want to know about the more unglamorous aspects of making television, calling for the head of raw food activist Woody Harrelson, or confessing to lobster-killing guilt, Bourdain is as entertaining as ever. Bringing together the best of his previously uncollected nonfiction—and including new, never-before-published material—*The Nasty Bits* is a rude, funny, brutal and passionate stew for fans and the uninitiated alike.

Book Information

Hardcover: 288 pages

Publisher: Bloomsbury USA; First Edition edition (May 16, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1582344515

ISBN-13: 978-1582344515

Product Dimensions: 6.4 x 1.1 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (173 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #101,320 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #25 in [Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Beverages & Wine > Wine & Spirits > Wine Tasting](#) #188 in [Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Cooking Education & Reference > Essays](#)

Customer Reviews

'The Nasty Bits' by chef, novelist, and culinary bad boy TV and print journalist, Tony Bourdain is a collection of thirty-six (36) non-fiction pieces and one fictional fragment from various American and Australian English language culinary journals and other miscellaneous mags such as 'Playboy' and 'Rolling Stone'. The pieces are cleverly, if somewhat arbitrarily divided into six chapters, titled by the five flavors on the tongue, Salty, Sweet, Sour, Bitter, and Unami, plus 'A Taste of Fiction'. Many of the pieces are an update to the subjects Tony covers in his best known book, the memoir, 'Kitchen Confidential', plus commentaries on his adventures while doing various TV shows and personal appearances since he hung up his toque as executive chef of Les Halles in New York City a few years ago. I am happy to say that while I was never very impressed by the few Bourdain pieces I

read in 'Gourmet', almost all of these pieces have something interesting to say to the lover of culinary gossip. Bourdain is almost unique among the current crop of culinary celebrities. I have often seen it written that he is a better writer than he was a chef. In my reading, I think this is quite true, since I find his pieces as engaging as the very spicy memoir from Gael Greene and 'almost' as literate as the writing of the great M. F. K. Fisher. His one cookbook of recipes from Les Halles is worth reading more for the way Bourdain writes about his very simple recipes than for the recipes themselves. Bourdain's primary interest is as an iconoclast and as a guide to the dirty underbelly of the culinary world.

Art-cuisine one-upsmanship is increasingly out of hand. Showcase restaurants are more and more divorced from the roots of good eating: the economical, parsimonious, and HUNGRY tradition of farm, field, and woods. When Anthony Bourdain writes, whether it be about commercial kitchens, or Bistro food, or artsy platings, or variety meats, or his adventures to the culinary hinterlands, he is always criticizing one thing: the sissifying of food [and chefs] in the art-cuisine market. He disdains the fussy, the hyper-refined, and the decorative. His criticisms in *Nasty Bits* are just as spot-on damning and funny as we've come to expect after reading *Kitchen Confidential* and *The Les Halles Cookbook*. He enthusiastically celebrates the simple pleasures of skillfully-prepared simple dishes, returning time and again to our hunger and our need for sustenance and flavor. In *Nasty Bits* he travels the world in search of intense and intimate food adventures. He eats seal with an Inuit family, and his description is alive to the newness and immediacy of the experience. But these world travels do not, by any means, lead to an embrace of 'fusion' cuisine with all of its forced assimilations and jarring collisions. He is a food realist: he operates within the larger economy, as nearly all of us do, but with a real regard for the basic dishes that evolved out of specific places before refrigeration and multinationals. Without indulging in specious pseudo-intellectual arguments, pro or con, as so many food writers-cum-cultural critics do, he references appetite and taste. These are certainly the first and second reasons we eat. What he disparages so eloquently are all the OTHER reasons we eat: to impress, to be seen, to scratch the itch of dilettantism, to celebrate our wealth, etc.

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