

# [PDF] Blood, Bones & Butter: The Inadvertent Education Of A Reluctant Chef

Gabrielle Hamilton - pdf download free book



## Books Details:

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## Description:

: Gabrielle Hamilton's memoir, Blood, Bones & Butter: The Inadvertent Education of a Reluctant Chef, is just what a chef's story should be--delectable, dripping with flavor, tinged with adrenaline and years of too-little sleep. What sets Hamilton apart, though, is her ability to write with as much grace as vitriol, a distinct tenderness marbling her meaty story. Hamilton spent her idyllic childhood on a wild farm in rural Pennsylvania with an exhilarant father--an artist and set builder--and French

mother, both "incredibly special and outrageously handsome." As she entered her teens, however, her family unexpectedly dissolved. She moved to New York City at 16, living off loose change and eating ketchup packets from McDonald's; worked 20-hour days at a soulless catering company; traveled, often half-starved, through Europe; and cooked for allergy-riddled children at a summer camp. The constant thread running through this patchwork tale, which culminates with the opening of her New York City restaurant, Prune, is Hamilton's slow simmering passion for cooking and the comfort it can bring. "To be picked up and fed, often by strangers, when you are in that state of fear and hunger, became the single most important food experience I came back to over and over," Hamilton writes, and it's this poignant understanding of the link between food and kindness that makes *Blood, Bones & Butter* so satisfying to read. --Lynette Mong

### **Guest Reviewer: Anthony Bourdain on Blood, Bones, and Butter**

**Anthony Bourdain** is the author of the novels and , in addition to the bestseller and . His work has appeared in the *New York Times* and *The New Yorker*, and he is a contributing authority for *Food Arts* magazine. He is also the host of the Emmy Award-winning television show *No Reservations*.

Very quickly after meeting Gabrielle Hamilton, I understood why she was a terrific and much-admired chef. I knew that her restaurant, Prune, was ground-breaking, that she seemed to have come out of nowhere, instead of being a product of the "system" (she'd emerged from the invisible subculture of catering), to open one of the most quirky, totally uncompromising, and quickly-embraced restaurants in New York City. Her purportedly (but not really) Franco-phobic menus were intensely, notoriously personal, her early embrace of the nose-to-tail attitude was way, way ahead the times, and chefs--all chefs--seemed to like and respect her. Almost as quickly, it became apparent that this chef could write.

Short pieces appeared here and there over the years and they were sharp, funny, incisive, unsparing of both author and subjects--straight to the point and pretense-free, like Hamilton herself. She could write really well. And she had, from all accounts, a story to tell. So when it was announced that *Blood, Bones, and Butter* was in the works, I was very excited.

It was a long wait.

Five years later, I finally got my hands on an advance copy and eagerly devoured it. It was of course brilliant. I expected it to be. But I wasn't prepared for exactly how goddamn brilliant the thing was, or how enchanted, difficult, strange, rich, inspiring and just plain hard her life and career--her long road to Prune--had been. I was unprepared for page after page of such sharp, carefully-crafted, ballistically-precise sentences. I was, frankly, devastated. I put this amazing memoir down and wanted to crawl under the bed, retroactively withdraw every book, every page I'd ever written. And burn them.

*Blood, Bones, and Butter* is, quite simply, the far-and-away best chef or food-genre memoir...ever. EVER. It certainly kicked the hell out of my *Kitchen Confidential*, which suddenly, in a second, felt shallow, sophomoric and ultimately lightweight next to this...this monster of a book, this--at times--truly hardscrabble life...*Blood, Bones, and Butter* is deeper, better written, more hardcore, more fully fleshed-out; a more well-rounded story than every sunflower-and-saffron account of soft-core food porn in France. It's as bullshit and pretense-free as AJ Leibling--and at least as well written, but more poignant, romantic--even thrilling.

It makes any "as told to" account of famous chef's lives look instantly ludicrous and bloodless. I've struggled to think of somebody/anybody who's written a better account of the journey to chefdom

and can't think of anyone who's come even close.

Writing a memoir of one's life as a chef--or even writing about one's relationship with food--has, with the publication of this book, become much more difficult. Hamilton has raised the bar higher than most of us could ever hope to reach. This book will sell a gazillion copies. It will be a bestseller. It will be an enduring classic. It will inspire generation after generation of young cooks, and anyone who really loves food and understands the context in which it is best enjoyed, NOT as some isolated, over-valued object of desire, but as only one important aspect of a larger, richer spectrum of experiences. Each plate of food--like the menu at Prune--is the end result of a long and sometimes very difficult struggle.

Read this book and prepare to clean your system of all that's come before. It's a game-changer and a truly great work by a great writer and great chef.

--This text refers to the edition.

**From Publishers Weekly** Starred Review. Owner and chef of New York's Prune restaurant, Hamilton also happens to be a trained writer (M.F.A., University of Michigan) and fashions an addictive memoir of her unorthodox trajectory to becoming a chef. The youngest of five siblings born to a French mother who cooked "tails, claws, and marrow-filled bones" in a good skirt, high heels, and apron, and an artist father who made the sets for the Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey Circus, Hamilton spent her early years in a vast old house on the rural Pennsylvania-New Jersey border. With the divorce of her parents when she was an adolescent, the author was largely left to her own devices, working at odd jobs in restaurants. Peeling potatoes and scraping plates-"And that, just like that, is how a whole life can start." At age 16, in 1981, she got a job waiting tables at New York's Lone Star Cafe, and when caught stealing another waitress's check, she was nearly charged with grand larceny. After years of working as a "grunt" freelance caterer and going back to school to learn to write (inspired by a National Book Foundation conference she was catering), Hamilton unexpectedly started up her no-nonsense, comfort-food Prune in a charming space in the East Village in 1999. Hamilton can be refreshingly thorny (especially when it comes to her reluctance to embrace the "foodie" world), yet she is also as frank and unpretentious as her menu-and speaks openly about marrying an Italian man (despite being a lesbian), mostly to cook with his priceless Old World mother in Italy. (Mar.)

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