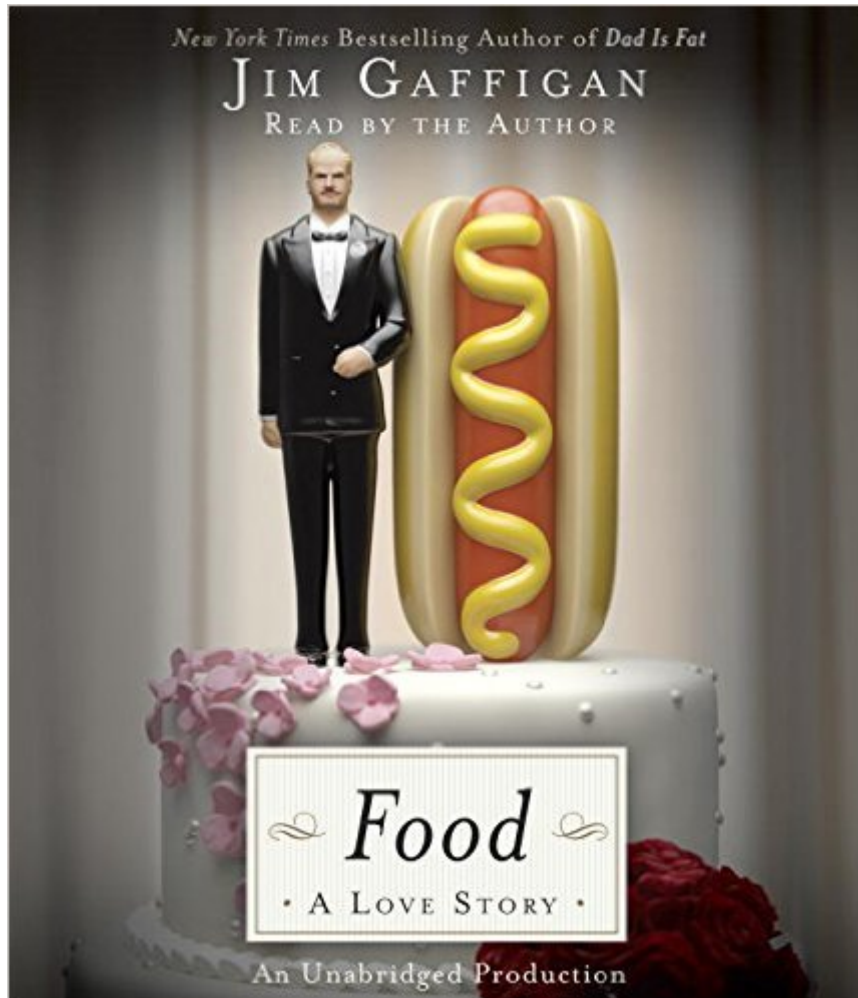


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Food: A Love Story



Synopsis

“What are my qualifications to write this book? None really. So why should you read it?

Here’s why: I’m a little fat. If a thin guy were to write about a love of food and eating I’d highly recommend that you do not read his book.” • Bacon. McDonalds. Cinnabon. Hot Pockets. Kale. Stand-up comedian and author Jim Gaffigan has made his career rhapsodizing over the most treasured dishes of the American diet (“choking on bacon is like getting murdered by your lover”) and decrying the worst offenders (“kale is the early morning of foods”). Fans flocked to his New York Times bestselling book *Dad is Fat* to hear him riff on fatherhood but now, in his second book, he will give them what they really crave—“hundreds of pages of his thoughts on all things culinary(ish). Insights such as: why he believes coconut water was invented to get people to stop drinking coconut water, why pretzel bread is #3 on his most important inventions of humankind (behind the wheel and the computer), and the answer to the age-old question “which animal is more delicious: the pig, the cow, or the bacon cheeseburger?” •

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Customer Reviews

In an overfed country, it might be difficult to get enough distance and perspective to make fun of our food obsession. For Jim Gaffigan it is as easy as rolling out of bed at the crack of noon. He has divided the country into food clichés, coffee in the northwest, cheese in the Midwest, seafood in the northeast, and attacked with gusto and green chiles. And cheese. Always cheese. Cheese is the highest form of edible in Creation. The rest of the book is devoted to comfort foods and purveyors of them. The worse the better. The research for this book alone would have killed me. Gaffigan has

packed this book with wonderful takeaways I don't want to forget. My faves:-I try to stick to three meals a day and then another three at night.-I like to think coffee comes from beans; therefore it's a vegetable.-You know what would be good on this hamburger? A ham sandwich.-Doctor (to patient who drinks KFC gravy straight): I have your cholesterol levels here ... Okay, you're aware your blood is not moving?-Going to the gym for an hour is the American way of fasting.-Based on the appearance of the hippo, it is surprising it is not indigenous to the Midwest.-Maybe Canadian explorers made it to Alaska and saw the Eskimos eating blubber and thought: "Oh, the Americans already got here."-I don't know much about grammar, but I think kale salad is what they call a double negative. (Compare to cheesecake, a double positive.)Food - A Love Story is peppered, if that is the right word, with photos of the Gaffigans, eating, everything, everywhere. There is just one recipe, an excruciatingly detailed and tortured procedure for preparing a hot dog. There has been a rash of collections like these, many of them crossovers from internet blogs to print. At 341 pages, this is twice the size of most of them, and an order of magnitude above them all, in its conception, its construction, and the genuine laughs it engenders. It is clear Jim Gaffigan did not get tired of writing this book. It goes from peak to peak. The pacing is relentless. When anthropologists look back to determine how America declined and fell, Food - A Love Story will be a key reference work. David Wineberg

QUOTE: "I love the phrase "I have a sweet tooth." I always want to say, "You're ordering it for your tooth? That's interesting, because it's going straight to your butt. I think your butt owed your tooth an explanation."

• Jim Gaffigan has done it again. After reading his first book, Dad is Fat, I have found a new respect for this comedian. This food definitely describes the unhealthy relationship with food that most of people have but do not want to be honest with themselves about the problem. Either way, I absolutely loved and need to get a physical copy of this ASAP!

QUOTE: "When a thin person announces, "Here's a great taco place," I kind of shut down a little. How do they know it's so great? From smelling the tacos? If they only ate one taco, the taco could not have been that great."

• Audiobook Notes. INCREDIBLE! Jim Gaffigan narrated the book himself so you know it's going to be good since he is a stand-up comedian. Worth the try!

If you like Gaffigan's comedy, you'll love this book. I am terrified of flying and brought this on a plane ride to help distract me from the bumps. I didn't know if it would work--I am psychotically scared of flying. I ended up reading about a hundred pages out loud to my husband (and the pleasant couple

from Rhode Island that was sitting behind us). Some of the jokes are familiar, but most of it was new. It read as part stand up and part behind the scenes with Jim and his victuals. I completely loved *Dad is Fat* and I may like this one even better.

Food: A Love Story is the second book by Jim Gaffigan, the stand-up comedian/bestselling author. After *Dad is Fat* rushed up the New York Times Bestseller list a year ago, the comedian was quick to write another book about what he knows best. Gaffigan is a very successful comedian who sells out theatres around the world. Much of this success is due to his love of food and his ability to make fun of food culture and his obsession with eating. In fact, his catchphrase, which is referenced in the book, is "Hot Pockets". Fans of Gaffigan's are familiar with the premise of these jokes where he explains what happens after you eat the microwaveable bread wrapped meal and then sings the jingle, which is just the name, "Hot Pockets" that follows three descending notes. In addition to the famous "Hot Pocket" jokes, Gaffigan has made a living off of other funny and relatable observations on food. Given how much we have laughed at his stand-up/food comedy, this book came highly anticipated and it did not disappoint. Often when reading books written by comedians, it can be hard to find the voice of the comic. In the case of Gaffigan's writing, this is not the case. Written with his wife, Jeannie, as they do with his stand-up material, Gaffigan's voice comes through loud and clear. Oftentimes, the reader can hear Jim's voice and it is easy to catch yourself reading it in the rhythm that the comedian uses when performing on stage. This is a big reason why the book works so well. Not only is the content funny, but it is like reading a stand-up set. Each chapter reads like a bit that could be performed on stage. In fact, some of the chapters, like the one on fish, for example, shares similarities with some of the material that Jim Gaffigan performs in his act. This doesn't mean that you shouldn't read the book if you have seen Jim perform in a theatre near you. In the papery book form, Jim is able to delve deeper into some topics. Not restricted to time and able to more fully flesh out topics, *Food: A Love Story* includes bonus jokes. The book also includes some material that Jim likely performed in cities on tour that wouldn't necessarily make its way into a stand-up special. We had a chance to see Gaffigan in Ottawa this spring and his references to jokes that were made in that set were fun. The book includes numerous references to local delicacies that people in each locale will find enjoyable, if for no other reason than to laugh at themselves. *Food: A Love Story* features many short chapters that focus on different foods and places where it can be purchased. Much of the humor that Gaffigan finds in food relates to his own unhealthy relationship (even if he doesn't like something, it seems that he will eat it), the nutritional value of certain foodstuffs, and the experience that one has when eating food. Many chapters give consideration to whether or not the

health benefits (or lack thereof) should factor into the decision whether or not to eat a certain item. In most cases, the answer is no. This is not a surprise for Jim Gaffigan is always willing to forgo a little bit of nutrition for the sake of taste. This is part of how he has managed to develop his particular physique, which is not quite obese, but is not entirely healthy either. Jim Gaffigan sees so many things that no one else sees. This is what makes him a great comedian and an even better food observationist. He doesn't consider himself a food critic, but his opinions on all food from McDonald's (it may be embarrassing to be seen in there, but how about those fries?) to fine dining (this is mostly enjoyable until the time that the cheque arrives) are hilarious. Gaffigan is in a unique position given that he gets to (or has to depending on your perspective) eat at so many different places at a variety of times of the day. He shares his thoughts on eating fast food, in Waffle Houses late at night, and even in airports. Many of us have had these experiences, but it is when you become an experienced veteran of eating on the road like Jim is that you identify some of the odder aspects of food. Many of the food experiences that Jim has to experience due to his chosen profession are ones that he does not necessarily enjoy, but he just can't help himself. Readers will relate to a lot of these experiences. A great example is Cinnabon. He knows it's bad for him, he doesn't really want to eat it, yet he finds himself in line often at airports and immediately begins to question what he's doing. The way that the short stories in *Food: A Love Story* are told, there will be something in the book for everyone. If you're a vegetarian, there may be less for you or you may not agree with everything that Jim says, but that doesn't mean that the things he says are not true. For Jim Gaffigan, it is clear that food is about more than sustaining life or even tastiness. It is definitely about those things, but in *Food: A Love Story*, readers will see how important food is for relationships. Anyone who has sat at a Thanksgiving dinner (we do the Canadian one that Jim finds particularly peculiar) knows that overeating or any eating for that matter is a time to connect with family. Jim draws in experiences with his folks, his kids, his wife, and his friends. He says that he hasn't gone hungry in years and that might partially be caused by him wanting to spend time with those who mean the most to him. Some of these stories are touching (the time he spends with his kids at Katz's Deli is very sweet) and often very funny. This doesn't mean that people around him are immune from his sense of humor. He points out that his mother may not be the best at preparing certain foods like corned beef, but there is obviously an appreciation for eating time with his family. You might be worried that *Food: A Love Story* will leave you drooling. That might be the case at times. The New York bagel chapter, for example, might have you looking at plane tickets to La Guardia. However, much of the book focuses on foods that miss the mark or restaurants that leave much to be desired. Gaffigan is an equal observationist when it comes to food. He always finishes

the chapter letting the reader know what he does and does not like on plates that are put in front of him (or delivered to his door) and most of this is just funny. Will you learn something when reading Food: A Love Story? Definitely. If you want to eat like Jim Gaffigan, this book is like a road map to passable meals that will ultimately leave you moderately overweight. Over 330+ pages, Gaffigan does a wonderful job of laying out the best foods that can be purchased at the best places at the best times. There are cautionary tales as well, but there is one constant. Whether the food gets the Jim Gaffigan stamp of approval or not, you'll be laughing at what he has to say. You'll lose count of the number of times that you laugh out loud when reading this book and you'll also be nodding along in agreement when Jim eloquently describes the things that many of us have felt when eating, but have not been able to put into words.www.fourthmic.com

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