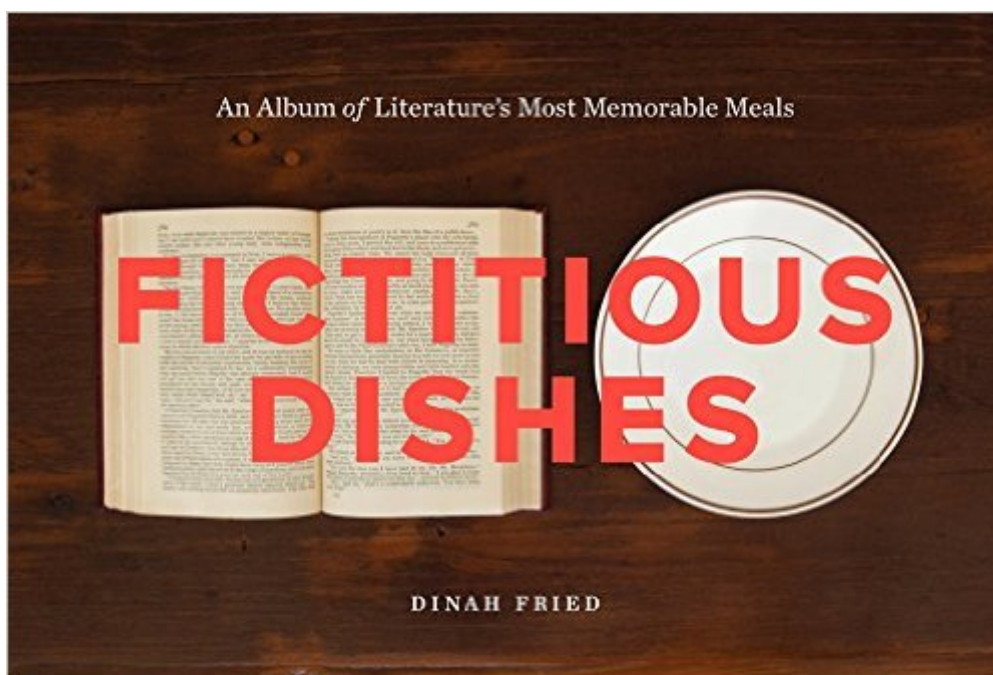


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Fictitious Dishes: An Album Of Literature's Most Memorable Meals



Synopsis

Fifty Iconic Culinary Scenes from Literary Classics Sure to Delight Readers, Foodies, and Photo-Junkies Alike Fictitious Dishes serves up a delectable assortment of photographic interpretations of culinary moments from contemporary and classic literature. Showcasing famous meals such as the madcap tea party from Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, the watery gruel from Oliver Twist, the lavish chicken breakfast from To Kill a Mockingbird, the stomach-turning avocado-and-crabmeat salad from The Bell Jar, and the seductive cupcakes from The Corrections, this unique volume pairs each place setting with the text from the book that inspired its creation. Interesting food facts and entertaining anecdotes about the authors, their work, and their culinary predilections complete this charming book, which is sure to whet the appetites of lovers of great literature and delicious dishes.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I wish offered the option of half stars as I would have given this a 3 1/2 star rating. I absolutely loved the concept of the book, the selection of stories, the fun tips/facts, and the excerpts, but admit I was a bit disappointed by the actual execution of the photos. For starters, I was definitely expecting this to be a full-size book for displaying on a coffee table or the like. It's actually small--about the size of a paperback novel. I could forgive that, but honestly, the photos also feel a bit dull--they lack the vibrancy and style I typically expect from modern day food photography. I'm a food blogger and writer, so I spend much of my days reading blogs and cookbooks; I felt like most of these photos

didn't really measure up to the quality of work that is available out there. The styling and colors were a bit retro and simple, which worked for some pictures, but not others (especially the ones that were meant to show abundance or wealth). There was no excitement in the photos--fine for the bowl of gruel in *Oliver Twist*, but certainly not what I'd expect from some of the other books. Most bothersome was the way that the photos didn't always match the descriptions. The bright yellow American cheese in Holden Caulfield's Swiss cheese sandwich was an obvious discrepancy. I have no idea what the dish in the *American Psycho* picture was meant to be. It reminds me a little bit of that disappointment you get when a movie based on a book doesn't quite live up to the original words.

As both a lover of literature and a professional chef, I was excited by the potential of this book, but completely underwhelmed and disappointed in its execution. The author obviously has little regard for accuracy or actual appreciation of the literature, or the food for that matter. The photos are ok, but in the age of foodie-ism and Instagram one can view many better foodie photos with a few clicks of the mouse. As mentioned by several reviewers, there is a lot lost in translation from text to image, namely the food pictured is frequently not the food described. I suppose the images are just "inspired" by these works of literature, since they are most definitely not accurate representations. But why go through the trouble of recreating these literary meals if you aren't going to do it right or well? If someone is going to take creative license, they should push it to another level -- beyond mediocrity -- and really make it their own. I guess the editor at HarperCollins is as much to blame as the author. There also appears to be very little ethnographic/food-historical/geographic research in the preparation of the meals as well. i.e. *To Kill A Mockingbird*: When someone in the south during the Great Depression mentions beans, they're most certainly not referring to green beans, maybe pole beans, or butter beans, or lima beans, or even field peas. And the tomatoes wouldn't have been hothouse beefsteaks so artificially red and perfectly round. They would have been mottled and irregularly shaped like today's heirlooms. And scuppernongs are not just any supermarket variety of green grapes. They are plump, leathery, golden-green globes. Likewise, I think Holden Caulfield would have been appalled by the artificiality of American Cheese... phony by definition! It makes me doubt the author actually read or understood any of the books. This is a prime example of a great idea poorly executed.

I loved that this book inspired me to go back and re-read some of my favorite books and pick up those I have yet to read. I will definitely carry the author's images with me. It also has changed the

way I read new books... whenever a meal is described I imagine how it would be styled. Note to the author/designer... I am reading *The Prague Cemetery* by Umberto Eco right now and a new meal is described on every page! I am just putting it out there... in case you need new material for a sequel.

This book was a big disappointment. The concept piqued my interest but it was not executed well. The pictures are tedious and all taken from the same angle. The author describes herself as an amateur table setter, and the pictures are more about the table setting than the food. I do not feel that there was enough written about the food either. The trivia about the book or the author are in small print and difficult to read.

I bought this for a gift for a cook. Didn't give it to her because it is more for a reader. (Unless the cook is fond of recipes featuring four graham crackers and a mug of milk - total.) The fault is in my expectations. I thought the book would be much larger. It is downright tiny. (Read the dimensions, *Doofus*.) I also expected recipes from real meals of literature. None. Clearly the author had fun gathering the props for overhead shots of place settings and food -- of sorts. (See graham crackers.) These were for a design-school project and have that clever-undergraduate look. Nicely arranged but not particularly creative. No real surprises or aha moments. The title is the best feature of the book. Enjoy it in passing. But pass.

I love this book. It pairs favorite literary moments with creative design and delicious food. I highly recommend this book to others who are interested in literature, food, design or just want something beautiful to look at.

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