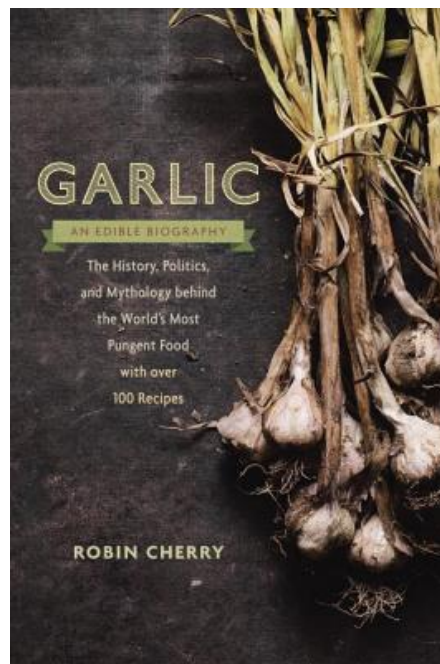




Garlic, an Edible Biography: How the World's Most Pungent Food Changed the Course of History, Medicine, and Cuisine

Robin Cherry

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From Reader Review Garlic, an Edible Biography: How the World's Most Pungent Food Changed the Course of History, Medicine, and Cuisine for online ebook

Laura Chase says

Fascinating look at a wonderful spice.

Amanda says

When I saw this book on NetGalley, I knew I needed a review copy. I'm a passionate home chef with a love of garlic and a never-ending interest on the history of food. This book's title indicated it would hit all three of those interests, and its content did not let me down.

The book is divided into two parts. Part One focuses on everything but the recipes. Part Two is the recipes. Part One's chapters cover the history of using garlic for health and for food, garlic in legends and lore, and how to grow your own. This is the section that most entertained my friends and fiancé, as they found themselves the recipients of random facts about garlic. One friend received an email of all of the types of garlic that originated in the country of Georgia; another a tip that growing some near her fruit tree might be beneficial for the tree.

Part One ends with tips on how to cultivate garlic and a selection of the various types of garlic, including notes on where they grow best, how they look, and how they taste. Garlic may be broadly divided into hardnecks and softnecks, but there are subvarieties within these two main ones. (Softnecks are the ones that you can braid). My one criticism of Part One is that I wish it had gone more in-depth into the history of garlic all over the world. It left me wanting more. Perhaps there isn't more, but I certainly wish there was. I would additionally note that, although I personally enjoyed reading about the many varieties of garlic and took copious notes, some readers might find the listing of the types a bit tedious to read and may not be expecting it in a book of this nature.

Part Two is the recipes. It starts with notes on how to handle and prepare garlic. The recipes are then divided into: dips, sauces, and condiments; bread, pizza, and pasta; soups; salads and salad dressings; appetizers; poultry; lamb; beef; seafood; vegetarian; side dishes; dessert; and historical recipes. I marked off a total of 19 recipes that I definitely want to try, which is quite a lot for me. Often I'll read a cookbook and only be interested in one or two of the recipes. The recipes cover a nice variety of cuisines, and the historic recipes are fascinating, although most readers will probably not try them as they require things such as fresh blood. Besides the historic recipes, the dessert ones are probably the most surprising. I actually did mark one off as one I'd like to try—Roasted Garlic Creme Brulee.

I have managed to make one of the recipes so far: Garlic Scape Pesto (loc 1649). For those who don't know, garlic scapes are the green stalks that grow out of the bulbs. They must be trimmed (on most varieties). They taste a bit like a cross between garlic and leeks. Our local produce box happened to give us a bunch of them right around when I read the book, and I'm a big pesto fan, so I decided to try the recipe.

The recipe is supposed to make 2 cups. I halved it, and somehow still wound up with 2 cups of pesto. The recipe suggests storing the leftovers under a layer of olive oil. I found that unnecessary. My extra kept in the fridge in a tupperware container for a week without adding a layer of protective oil. The pesto was truly

delicious though. I partially chose it since I have made garlic scape pesto before, and I must say I found this one much more delicious than the other recipe that I tried. I am looking forward to trying the others I am interested in, although I will probably continue to halve the recipes, as I am only cooking for two.

Overall, foodies with a love of garlic will find this book both fascinating and a source of new recipes to try. Some readers may wish for more information, while others may find themselves a bit more informed on the varieties of garlic than they were really looking for. All will find themselves chock full of new information and eager to try new ways to use garlic...and perhaps even to start growing some heirloom varieties for themselves.

Check out my full review, featuring quotes and a picture of my pesto! (Link will be live August 27, 2015).

Note: I received a free copy of this book in exchange for my honest review.

Wart Hill says

You can read this and other reviews at [Things I Find While Shelving](#)

I received a free ARC via NetGalley

I love garlic.

I grew up eating homemade pasta sauce (my grandmother's recipe, perfected by my mother). I learned early on that garlic tends to make everything better. My mom has a dip recipe that she puts plenty of garlic in. If we can't smell garlic through the whole house when she's making sauce, there isn't enough yet.

So obviously I had to read this book.

And it's good!

Cherry gives a history of garlic, from its medicinal uses and curative properties to its use in foods and its role in folklore - yes, she talks about vampires. Pretty sweet.

Everything in this book is really interesting, and I'm so glad it exists. And there are recipes (which I admit I haven't looked at yet because I hate reading recipes on ebooks 'cause it winds up frustrating me, long story). I also didn't read the 4th chapter but only because I'm not interested in growing my own garlic - but I'm sure it's just as interesting and informative as the rest!

Love garlic? Read this book!

Doug says

Received a completed copy thru the Goodreads First Reader Giveaways and the kindness of Roost Books.

I love, love, LOVE garlic...and will put it in almost anything...so this book was quite a treat. Being a fan of the Gilroy Garlic Festival, I celebrate garlic and its many forms and uses annually (at least!) Although as others have noted, the first section on the history of and various uses of garlic can be a bit dry and pedantic, I

also DID learn some facts I didn't know... and yes, the 'recipe' section could benefit from some photos.... but the recipe section DID highlight some unusual foreign cuisines I was unfamiliar with, and I WILL be investigating several of them in future... Well done!

Kevintipple says

If you ever wanted to know more about garlic the book *Garlic, An Edible Biography* might be the book for you. As the subtitle makes clear the book is about The History, Politics, and Mythology behind the World's Most Pungent Food with over 100 Recipes. Written by Robin Cherry, travel writer and historian, the book is split into two sections regarding history and recipes.

After an introduction from author Robin Cherry on how important and meaningful garlic has been to her, it is on to "Part One: The Story Of Garlic." The four chapters in this section of over 100 pages explain the history of garlic in food, health, and literature, modern uses, and how to grow your own. Also included in this section are short bios of all the various garlic types which number far more than what you will ever find in your local store or produce market.

"Part Two: Recipes" begins on page 117 with a 4 page recipe list of all the recipes and their corresponding page numbers. That is followed by three pages on how to properly handle garlic before one moves on to "Dips, Sauces and Condiments" on page 125-130. All of that prepares you for "Bread, Pizza, and Pasta" (pages 141-146), "Beef" (pages 197-202), "Side Dishes" (pages 227-232) and more. Each recipe has an intro that often features a cooking tip or other advice that might include another history lesson, a list of ingredients needed, and instructions that include information on number of servings.

An acknowledgement page, a two page bibliography, an 11 page index, and a one page short author bio bring this 265 page book to a close.

While *Garlic, An Edible Biography* is interesting it suffers from two significant drawbacks. Surprising it does not contain any pictures of the various garlic types the book covers nor does it contain any pictures of the finished dishes. In addition to the lack of pictures that would have helped break up the bland and very dry text, there is zero nutritional information regarding fat/salt content or other possible dietary restrictions or needs.

Garlic, An Edible Biography is quite the garlic resource. With the noted forgoing limitations, if you want to know quite a lot more about garlic and how to use it, this is a book worthy of your consideration.

Garlic, An Edible Biography: The History, Politics, and Mythology behind the World's Most Pungent Food with over 100 Recipes

Robin Cherry

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Library System.

Kevin R. Tipple ©2015

Veronika Elde says

some parts made me laugh, and all parts made me hungry! didn't know anything about garlic till I read this book!!

listed several other texts as further reading resources, which I added to my to-read list right away.

Rose says

While fun and nicely written, the "biography" of garlic only takes up 80 pages and there are no illustrations. Some of the recipes look very tasty.

Courtney Lake says

I recieved a copy of this book through GoodReads Giveaways.

Long Story Short: Good begining, reads like a textbook, wish it had more picturese.

I really liked the first part of the book. You can really get a sense of the authors passion for garlic. However the longer you read, the more dry and factual the pages become. Several times during the "benefits of garlic" section I found myself rolling my eyes because it sounded like a commercial you see at 3Am for a miracle pill. We get it, Garlic does great things for you, lets not talk about the thing the ancient egyptians thought it did like its proven scientific fact.

When I was in High School, we had to write a very long and involved book report using note cards that we wrote "facts" from our "research" down on. And thats how this felt. She found a whole bunch of facts on garlic, wrote them on note cards, laid them out on the table and then typed them up. They were interesting facts, but I didn't feel any connection to the words.

The recipes looked good though, I will certainly be trying a few of them.

Virginia says

Very interesting bits on the folklore of garlic, vampires of course. Detailed instructions on the growing of garlic and its many varieties. Best part is an extensive recipe section.

SHH says

I feel like some topics were repeated in the book and there are some typos throughout so you have to guess which word it really should have been. The recipe section: I made the Garlic, Cheddar and Ale soup only to find out that the paprika calls for a tbsp and not a tspn. I had to toss the whole mess. I should have known better to put a whole tablespoon of paprika in ANYTHING. I just lowered my rating to 2 from 3 stars

Anthony says

The first half of this book gives a history of garlic which is interesting if, like me, you are a slightly obsessed garlic lover. The second half of the book is filled with garlicky recipes. I'm glad I read it, if only for the recipes. Unfortunately I found the book a bit dry for pleasure reading.

Chava says

This book was very good for a number of reasons. The author explored many aspects of garlic - history, recipes, mythology, agriculture, and culture. This comprehensive view was presented with a keen sense of humor. While vampires were definitely included, the more interesting parts of the book to me were how many different varieties of garlic there are, where they grow, and how they vary in taste.

The recipes were representative of all the cultures that use it in cooking - Italian, Chinese, Indian, former Soviet Republics, etc. The medicinal uses were interesting, and I ended up doing more research to find Talmudic references and legends of vampires.

Tracey says

skimmed over the history part (though some of the anecdotes were amusing), then I skimmed over the recipes part. I guess I am not as interested in garlic as I thought I was.

Erin says

Are you a garlic lover? Can't get enough? If so, this book is for you. Robin Cherry pulls together all sorts of historical tidbits and anecdotes of garlic. The first half of the book takes the reader through the medicinal uses of garlic, the use of garlic in food and cooking, and garlic in lore and the supernatural. There is a section on growing your own garlic which is extremely informative. Types of garlic are described both in origin, aesthetic/color, and flavor; the climates in which the type of garlic grows best is also discussed.

The second half of the book is full of recipes. Some of the contemporary recipes that caught my eye were Garlic Cheddar Ale Soup, Green Garlic Risotto, Garlic Brittle and Chocolate Chip Cookies. There were also quite a few historic recipes shared such as Goat Stew with Fat, Garlic, Onions, Sour Milk and Blood (I think I will be passing on this one!).

I received this book through NetGalley for an honest review.

Rk Stark says

This book is worth reading, but I didn't find myself really devoted to it. I could definitely put it down and walk away from it. I love micro histories, and while this book is not boring, it's also not a very engaging read. I think it could have gone deeper into some of the history and the social aspects of this amazing food, and I also didn't like that the citations weren't provided in the body of the book. It's great if you're going to provide a bibliography, but it's much more useful if you indicate where you are getting your information as you state it in the body of the book. Also, about 1/3 of this book is recipes. Which is not bad, but I would have much more preferred more history. I did learn a lot and I think one of the most useful aspects of this books is how to properly plant garlic and the descriptions of all of the different kinds of garlic.
