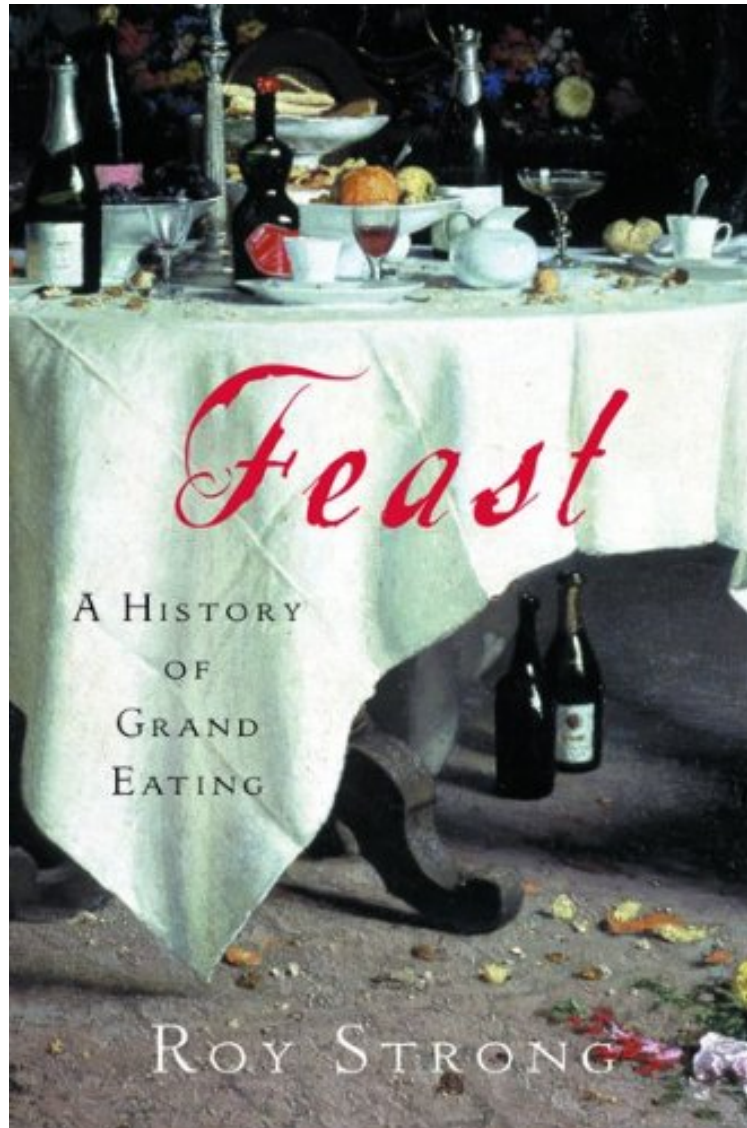


[Ebook free] Feast: A History of Grand Eating

Feast: A History of Grand Eating

Roy Strong

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Roy Strong : Feast: A History of Grand Eating before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Feast: A History of Grand Eating:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Sir Roy Strong is a wonderful historical writer at gives a lot of detail without ...By Lucia BakemeyerIt is fascinating look at eating habits through the ages. Well researched and very interesting. Sir Roy Strong is a wonderful historical writer at gives a lot of detail without being boring. Loved it.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy IreneGreat condition0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Desert_WindUnique book.

Sharing a grand meal has always been a complex social event. Feasts have been used to celebrate significant occasions, to parade rank and hierarchy, and to flatter and influence people. There has always been a theatrical element to the feast as well—from the nude dancers who entertained dinner guests in ancient Greece to the restrained rigors of the Victorian dinner party. Sir Roy Strong examines this cultural phenomenon with knowledge, wit, and style—beginning with the ninth century B.C., when a Babylonian emperor discreetly invited seventy thousand guests for a ten-day celebration, and ending early in the twentieth century, by which time feasts had become somewhat more modest. Always attuned to how these celebrations mirror the societies that hold them and to the way they reflect shifts in power and class, this beautifully illustrated book offers a lively and illuminating history of grand eating..

.com What occurs when we gather to dine? More than just eating, says Roy Strong, whose remarkable *Feast: A History of Grand Eating* reviews sumptuous dining from ancient Greece to the present. What is discovered, again and again, is that "the meal, and everything connected with it has been, and still is, a vehicle for determining status and hierarchy--and also aspiration--no matter what pattern of society prevails." To illustrate, Strong takes readers on a journey that encompasses the banquets of ancient Rome, which, preceding their decadent excesses (Caligula liked dinner with decapitations), were models of civilized entertainment; to the Christian and Renaissance eras, a transformation of dining from symbolic ecclesiastical ritual to splendid high-court ceremony; to a newly hierarchical world which, in counter-distinction to French Revolution commonalities, yielded the 19th and early 20th-century's defining status event, the dinner party; and finally to our own dispiriting time, in which the erosion of traditional forms has left us with TV-snacking, grazing, and the restaurant as surrogate rank-delineator, once society's task. Strong is a master distiller who keeps a sharp academic lookout while proving a companionable, entertaining guide. It's hard to imagine anyone who could more pithily explore, for example, the evolution and meaning of manners (from courtly ritual to aspiring-class impediment); the invention of the dining room (which required a permanent dining table, long in coming); sugar's pivotal role (as a baroque sculptural medium!); and the history of cookbooks (keen mirrors of class). For anyone interested in what it has meant to use a fork (first a status marker then, supplanting the knife, the only approved implement for carrying food to mouth) among much else, this is a perfect read. --Arthur Boehm
From Publishers Weekly
British historian Strong (*The Story of Britain*) turns his attention to the history of feasting and the grand occasion. Formal eating has historically been a complex way of uniting and dividing people on many social levels. Power, position and the dishes served indicated status or lack of it throughout the centuries, Strong notes. From ancient times to the Victorians, encompassing the Romans, the medieval court, the Renaissance, French pomp and ostentation, food and the ceremony of dining provided a theater for marking marriages, victories, coronations and funerals, or for influencing and impressing. Strong thoroughly tackles the complex mechanisms of this social area of life, imbuing it with atmosphere while conveying enough scholarly detail to make this a comprehensive and authoritative history. He depicts not only the food eaten but also the setting, from the design and development of rooms for dining to the clothes, utensils, people and etiquette. Dividing the volume into eras, Strong describes the emergence of cooks and cookbooks in the Middle Ages, the advent of service la française, the decline of formal eating during the French Revolution (Napoleon ate his dinner in 10 minutes) and the re-emergence of the formal dinner party in Victorian times and service la russe, which we would recognize today. Drawing on contemporary sources and liberally sprinkled with illustrations, the volume fills a gap in social history, and while seeming pompous at times, it's sure to charm and inform. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. U. K.
PRAISE FOR FEAST
"One of Britain's Living National Treasures . . . Strong is an acute observer of social nuance, and never less than a congenial companion through these millennia of convivial excess. Only the puritan-or the seriously dyspeptic-could fail to enjoy this book." -The Independent
"Strong has dug up these gems from what must have been a blizzard of documents and books, but his clear, scholarly eye has focused on the telling detail rather than showy frippery." -The Daily Telegraph