
Let Us Eat Cake: Adventures in Food and Friendship

by Sharon Boorstin



About the Book

A charming memoir and cookbook that celebrates the connections women make through cooking and food

Every woman has poignant food memories: The first time she helped her mother bake a cake, or helped her grandmother make blintzes, tortillas, or Southern fried chicken. And how about the times she and her girlfriends baked chocolate-chip cookies, or, later, prepared elaborate dinners to impress potential husbands? **Let Us Eat Cake** celebrates these connections.

As a young girl, Sharon Boorstin helped her mother make tuna casseroles; on a college trip to Europe, she and her girlfriends compared men and restaurants with equal zest; after she became a food writer, Boorstin bonded with women in the food world, including Barbara Lazaroff (Mrs. Wolfgang) Puck and Julia Child. Today, after decades of food and cooking, Boorstin and the women in her life cook together for the sheer pleasure of it, and they have come to understand what truly makes for female friendships.

With dozens of delicious recipes and vintage photos, this moving book will inspire readers to remember and cherish their own experiences with food and friends.

Discussion Guide

1. What are our earliest childhood memories related to food? Are they good or bad, and did they influence the way we looked on food and family as we grew up?
2. How are our food memories linked to our mothers? Grandmothers? Our cultural and religious heritage?

3. Do we pass down our food memories, food traditions, and attitudes towards food, to our children?
4. What are the main reasons we cook? Necessity and obligation? Pleasure? Creativity? To nurture?
5. How would we characterize the female friendships we had in our childhood? Our teenage years? Young adulthood? Middle age? Which were the closest, the most meaningful? How have they differed?
6. Why do we bond with some women and not with others? How do our female friendships change during the different stages of life? Why do we stay friends with some women our whole lives, but not with others?
7. How do women in their teens and twenties today differ in their attitudes from earlier generations of women regarding cooking, romantic relationships, and female friendships?

Quotes for Discussion

1. "Women bond over food the way men do over sports."
2. "When I was younger, friendship could be undermined by competitive feelings -- about men, looks, career. Not anymore. Ask any woman over forty if she agrees. Most likely she'll say, 'Competition? We're too old for that!'"
3. "The generation of women born during or just after World War II were raised with old-fashioned notions about what constitutes 'respectable' behavior and our place in society, yet we were just ahead of those who grew up with the freedoms afforded by women's lib."
4. "I never said 'I love you' to my high school and college girlfriends, though what I felt for them was deep, unconditional love. Those three magic words were reserved for the most intimate moments between a woman and a man."
5. "Today I say 'Love you' (not only) to my mother, my sisters, and my grown-up children, but to my girlfriends, and they say it back. Why not? We really do love each other. Having reached middle age, we have learned that we may fall in and out of love with men, but we never stop loving our parents, our children -- and our girlfriends."
6. "When it comes right down to it, a woman really is the sum of all the friends she has had in her life."
7. "Between women, as there is between women and men, sometimes there is just a chemistry."

Author Bio

Sharon Boorstin was the restaurant critic for the *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner* and her articles have appeared in *Bon Appetit*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *Playboy*, *More*, *Food Arts*, *Conde Nast Traveller* (U.K), and *Porthole*. She and her husband have two children and live in Beverly Hills, California.

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