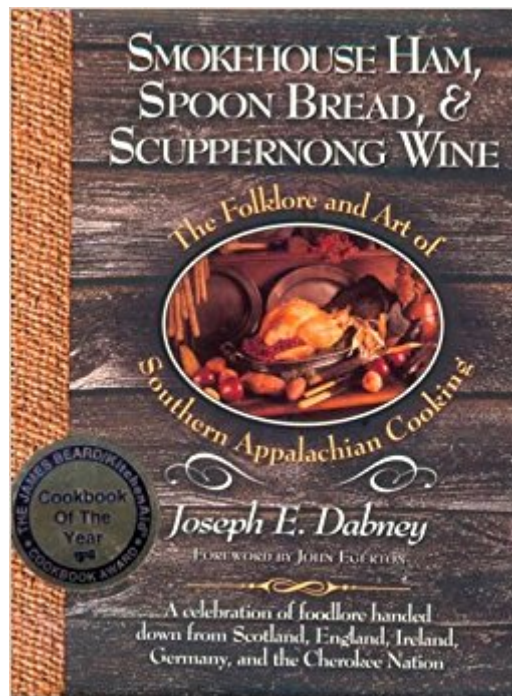


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Smokehouse Ham, Spoon Bread, & Scuppernong Wine: The Folklore And Art Of Southern Appalachian Cooking



Synopsis

Winner of the James Beard Foundation Cookbook of the Year Award! Smokehouse Ham, Spoon Bread, & Scuppernong Wine is a scrumptious slice of Smoky Mountain and Blue Ridge hill country foodlore handed down from Scotland, England, Wales, Ireland, Germany, and the Cherokee Nation. In addition to generous helpings of folklore, the text highlights and embraces the art of Appalachian cuisine from pioneer days to the present, providing insights that will fascinate readers everywhere. Divided into four sections - The Folklore, The Art, The Foods, The Blessings - the book is packed with authoritative folklore and authentic Appalachian recipes, as well as old-timey photographs in the Foxfire fashion: fireplace and wood-stove cooking, hog killing, bear hunting, shuck-bean stringing, apple-butter partying, dinner on the grounds, and much more. The Folklore includes chapters on the people, seasons, and social life as it pertains to food. The Art includes chapters on growing, gardening, farming by the signs, food preparation, and food preservation. The more than 200 recipes are accompanied with stories of how the foods have been passed from generation to generation. And the Blessings include numerous hill country invocations. All in all, the book contains 61 fascinating chapters and almost one hundred sidebars on special topics. Among the 23 chapters of recipes: Corn Bread: Mountain Staff of Life From Catheads to Angel Biscuits Moonshine: Mountain Water of Life Hog-Killing Day: Mountain Celebration Smokehouse Ham and Red-Eye Gravy. The result of years of research and interviews, Smokehouse Ham, Spoon Bread, & Scuppernong Wine will remind readers of the Foxfire series of an earlier generation.

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Customer Reviews

One of my true regrets in life is that I did not write down the treasured "old timey" way of doing things before my grandparents passed away. Things like making homemade apple butter and planting by the signs are now, sadly, a thing of the past. I want to thank the author for recording these things from others in my grandparent's generation. I am truly indebted.

Great recipes and great stories. Truly reflects the relationship between food, culture and the heritage of the region. Even if I do not want to make a particular dish, I enjoy reading about its local historical importance. I read this book to immerse myself in the "feeling" of the region. I have about 200 cookbooks, but this is one of my favorites -- I sent it to my cousin in West Virginia so that she can better understand the background of her neighbors. To summarize: I just love this book.

Years ago I lived in Virginia, and this cookbook brings back a lot of memories of something rooted to the land. It's about the people, the hills, and the lifestyle -- all intertwined inseparably from the food. There's something rich going on here -- and I don't mean in dollars. The author's done a fine job. The recipes presented are not abundant (the first recipe doesn't appear until page 103), but they are as "American" as you can imagine, if not exactly contemporary. Included are country recipes with names that will intrigue many of us now: elderberry wine, pot likker dumplings, Cherokee hominy, Blue Ridge fried corn, cherrylog scuppernong pie, sorghum taffy, and mule ears. I don't know how many of these recipes I'll make, but boy do I love reading this book!

This book is filled-brimming with knowledge, page after page, and not one page is wasteful! Filled with lore, Filled with recipes. My God, filled with information I couldn't believe existed! Do you know what a syllabub is? I did, we have an original syllabub, one that actually survived the Civil War. This cookbook describes in detail what they were used for, and the greatest of recipes for syllabub-the milk and wine mix. This book is a history book, listing TRUE History! How our ancestors ticked, and why you have that inclination to go back to those old traditional ways, because you have it in your genes, you are a descendant of these tough and true-grit individuals that fought and survived the most brutal of wars. This book will make you proud, you won't be inclined to ever loan it out, because even if you let grandma borrow it, it probably won't be returned. I forewarned you- don't loan it out! Keep it, read it, and if tempted, just buy another one to loan, it's worth the price paid. Hurry now, before they read this review and decide to raise the cost! (too bad I couldn't make that smaller print)

The author of this folksy, breezy book is obviously in love with his subject. Unfortunately, he sometimes does not seem to know what he's writing about. On page 189 with a photo of hams hanging hock up, he quotes a mountain sage who says hams should be 'hung with the hocks down', but apparently does not notice the discrepancy. Five pages later he gives his 'modern update' to a traditional recipe: boil ham in water in a deep pan (not a pressure cooker) at 300 degrees. Funny, I can't get my boiling water above 212 degrees. Although he has a deep love of the subject, he does not appear to have a deep knowledge. There are many examples of inconsistencies. On page 313 and following, he describes a mountain personage Aggie Ross Lossiah and then on page 327 and following, he describes the same person, but calls her Angie Ross Lossiah. (These are not just typos; at each place he uses the name multiple times.) In the chapter on sorghum syrup, he says 'it is known in the mountains as "long sweetenin'." This is in contrast to "short sweetenin'" -- refined sugar.' Then in the chapter on honey, he says 'honey was considered the much-loved mountain "long sweetening" while sorghum was "short sweetening".' The main purpose of the recipes in the book seem for entertainment. Many are cute, but most are either trivial and obvious, or else carelessly presented; for example, a recipe for blackberry dumplings calls for four ingredients: 1 qt blackberries, 1 1/4 c sugar, 2 c water, and "Berry mix". I have not figured out where to get the "Berry mix" (is that a commercial product?) or when to add it -- it was not mentioned in the directions. Also, there's that problem of boiling water at 300 degrees. Nevertheless, I found the book enjoyable and evocative of my own experiences in and with the people of the Southern Appalachians.

All I can say is this book is AWESOME. You must get it. I have never seen such quality, and old time cooking, and history wrapped up in one cookbook like this. I wish there were more books like this one. If we don't write down the knowledge these people had, and how they survived, and lived...we are making a tragic mistake. I cannot wait to start making some of the food listed from their recipes! I just saw this book last night at a bookstore in town. Don't hesitate to get this book, you won't be sorry.

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