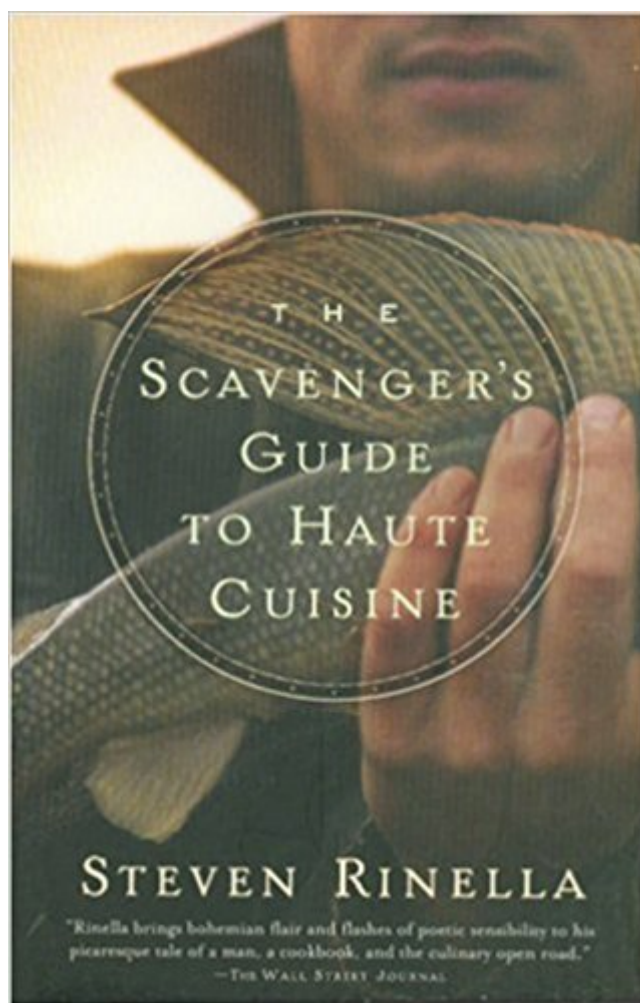


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The Scavenger's Guide To Haute Cuisine



Synopsis

A hybrid of memoir, cookbook, and travelogue, and a love song to hunting and fishing and the American wild, *The Scavenger's Guide to Haute Cuisine* is about one man's quest to live off the land and recreate the recipes from Escoffier's *Le Guide Culinaire*, the 1903 magnum opus. Nature writer Steven Rinella embarks on a yearlong journey across America, trying to locate the bizarre, often esoteric ingredient of *Le Guide Culinaire*. His adventures take him fishing for stingrays on a Florida beach; skinning eels with an upstate New Yorker who keeps an emu as company; and hunting mountain goats on the snow-covered cliffs of Alaska's Chugach Range. Praised by reviewers for its lyrical prose and humor, *The Scavenger's Guide to Haute Cuisine* is a narrative that opens up a deeper understanding of the things we eat and our place in the natural world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The review in *Publisher's Weekly* made me curious about Rinella's book, and I must say, I was pleasantly surprised. Given the title, I had half expected the book to be a collection of hunting stories, but what I found instead was an engaging narrative about one man's dedication to live responsibly off the land and to respect the passions and lifestyles of others, no matter how eccentric or random they might seem. Along with Rinella's often humorous and personal insights, he also weaves in social and scientific history to create a really fascinating read. I highly recommend that you put this book on your summer reading list!!

From 2005-2008, I didn't read for pleasure. I read a great deal, but it was all about breaking into my chosen career field- investments and finance (great idea, eh?). Actually, it has worked out pretty well, and as I've gotten back some time to myself to start reading things for fun, I have not been able to become the voracious fiction reader I once was..About two months ago, I was heavily into reading cookbooks. Not like your average Rachel Ray joint, but books about the fine art of cooking- sous vide, haute cuisine, old french techniques, etc. I came across a curious book called The Scavenger's Guide to Haute Cuisine. I hesitated to order it, in the way that someone who hesitates to pay more than \$.01 + \$3.99 for a book hesitates before pushing the buy button, but I did, and it's probably the best decision I've made in years. The Scavenger's Guide is without a doubt the best book I've read in recent memory. It's a joyous pursuit of a meal to end all meals; a 3 day fest featuring the 100 year old recipies of Auguste Escoffier, a noted French chef. While it's interesting from the culinary perspective, what was more important about it is what Steven Rinella represents. It's the exposition of the hunting and fishing lifestyle he lives that really grabbed me and reminded me of who I am, not what I have become. Now I am a redneck. I was born in Virginia, grew up in Alabama, and have hunted and fished with the best of them for many, many years. During the last few years though, something has nagged me about the "culture" surrounding hunting, and Rinella made me understand finally what that is. You see, I don't begrudge the modern redneck lifestyle, but it's just not me. There was a time when I wore cowboy boots and hats, drove a truck, listened to country music, and used camouflage as a fashion accessory. Over time though, I realized that that persona didn't fully fit me, and again, while I don't have a problem with the classic southern redneck simulacrum, it will never be me. My betrayal of that lifestyle made me feel disingenuous around those that live their lives that way, and I think my perception of what a "proper" hunter should be made me feel that I didn't belong in their world. What Steven Rinella made me understand is that there are people out there like me. People who feel attached to the land, to the animals, and to the human role as apex predator. People who know they will never fit in with those that identify with the intro to "Huntin' the World Southern Style." People who know they will also never fit in with the Sierra Club or any other "conservationist" organizations because of their backwards interpretation of what nature is all about. People who can appreciate spending a year gathering wild ingredients to a 3 day feast using 100 year old French recipies. And people who might risk a great deal of time and money, as well as their lives, to pursue an American Buffalo in Alaska (see American Buffalo: In Search of a Lost Icon, Rinella's other triumph). Bottom line, people who would rather spend 5 days in the woods wandering around than spending a moment wondering exactly who they fit in with. People like Steven Rinella are the true conservationists, not Ashley Judd. His two books have

spurred me to action. Since reading them, our family has spent almost every weekend out in the woods, somewhere in Eastern Kentucky. I have joined a shooting range and begun scouting for deer, turkey and hog lands in the state. I have optimistically put in for an Elk tag in Kentucky, as Elk hunting has gone from something completely off the radar screen to something near the top of my list. And don't get me wrong- I love rednecks and good old southern folks as much as anyone. My point is just that all aspects of the stereotypical culture don't resonate with me like they once did. Especially when I know there are Steven Rinellas out there. I scoured the internet looking for more info on Mr. Rinella, but have been unable to come up with much- maybe by choice. If you read this, Steven, please don't hesitate to look me up. If nothing else, I can provide you with a hunt in the excellent public lands of eastern Kentucky, and give you a chance to chat with someone who identifies deeply with what you represent.

I found this book in the bookstore at the Culinary Institute of America while I was waiting for the college's tour to begin. The title caught my attention, and the first paragraph hooked me. After reading parts of it for 10 minutes, I bought it and finished reading it over the next three days. I took my time, savoring each chapter, each conversation, each morsel offered up by this delightful young author. I have never hunted and rarely eat red meat, but I have backpacked and experienced nature in the raw. Reading Rinella's book, I felt so engaged, so alive, so thrilled with his adventures that it seemed I was living them myself. His sense of humor and his insightful observations about wide-ranging subjects [history, technology, human nature, wilderness, ecology, hunting and survival skills, animal behavior, the culinary arts] increased my pleasure. This was one of the most enjoyable books I've ever read.

I don't read outdoor books, and am only mildly interested in food writing, but I really admire renegade DIY personalities. This book is all about people doing things their own way. From the author to the crazy characters he encounters, this book will inspire you to think about doing things yourself rather than having them done for you. Which is an interesting way of life, to say the least. Maybe I won't build an eel weir anytime soon, but I'm glad to have read about somebody who did.

This is the best book I've read in years. I had been hearing all the hype about it, and I wondered if I would like it since I don't normally read hunting and fishing books. But the author drew me in with his sense of humor, his elegant prose, and his deft way of weaving European history with his personal history. The narrative is gripping, the characters entertaining, and the concept brave and

unique. If you read one book this year, read this one. It is a trip!

A fascinating and entertaining read. Rinella is a great storyteller, his descriptions are very detailed. Many funny parts too. Not for the squeamish though....I hunt for food too so these parts were familiar and comfortable for me.

I can't say enough good things about this book. In fact, once I picked it up I could not put it down. I even took a day off from work to read it. I am an avid hunter and cook and this book brings all of that together. Each chapter is a new location and a set of hunts as author Steven Rinella travels North America gathering ingredients for the grand finale of a large feast spanning 3 days for his closest friends. My friends and fellow hunters have adapted a mini version of this into our lives each year and it has become a solid tradition. I recommend all of his other books as well.

I just finished this book yesterday and can not say enough about how much I enjoyed it. The story line is fast paced and it is hard to put down. Steven does a great job of captivating his audience with this book. If you are looking for recipes in this book, you will find some, but this book is all about his year-long quest to harvest the ingredients for his 3 day feast. If you are a fan of the author's show, you will not be disappointed with this book.

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