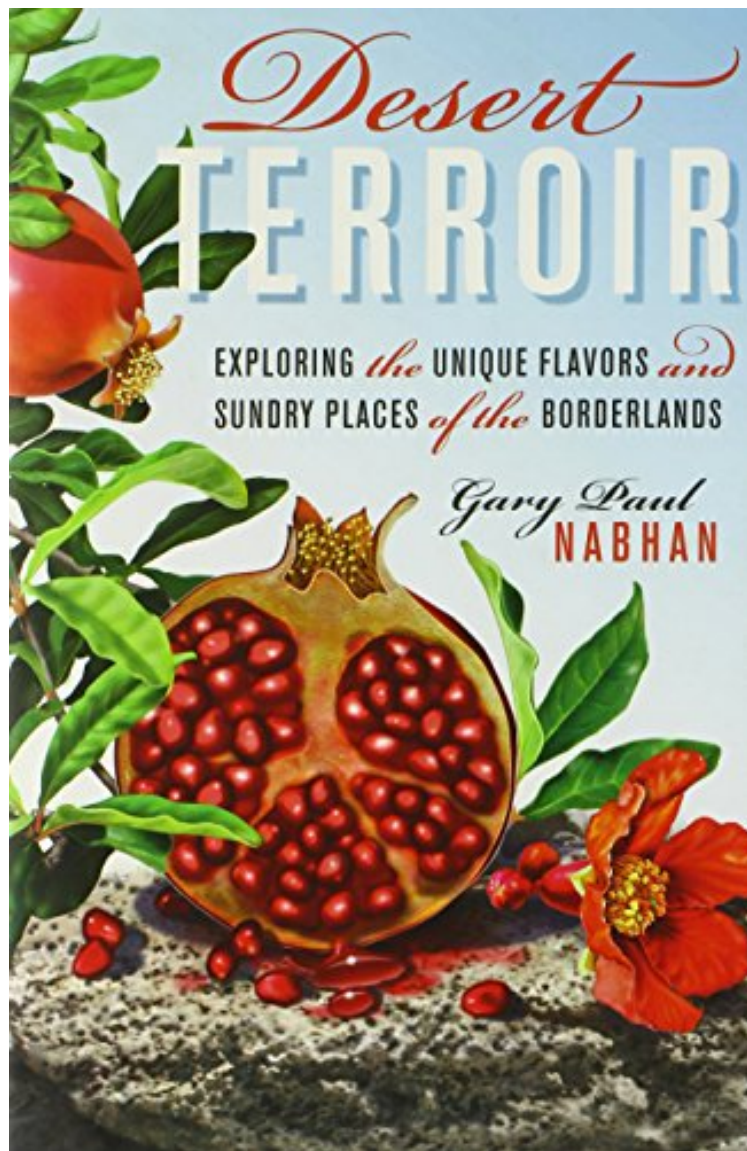


[Mobile library] Desert Terroir: Exploring the Unique Flavors and Sundry Places of the Borderlands (Ellen and Edward Randall Series)

Desert Terroir: Exploring the Unique Flavors and Sundry Places of the Borderlands (Ellen and Edward Randall Series)

Gary Paul Nabhan

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Gary Paul Nabhan : Desert Terroir: Exploring the Unique Flavors and Sundry Places of the Borderlands (Ellen and Edward Randall Series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Desert Terroir: Exploring the Unique Flavors and Sundry Places of the Borderlands (Ellen and Edward Randall Series):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Mesquite tortillas, camel chorizo, Hadji Ali and some wonderful stories about food and the desert. By Lyndon Brecht I just reread this short book. I like Nabhan's writing. This book (as with some of his others) is heavy with personal accounts of interacting with many people, in this book people who deal with some aspect of food in the desert area of the Southwest US and adjoining Mexico. For example, he has a chapter on fishing with Mexican fishermen (no women) in the Gulf of California, a fine chapter; and getting a Hispanic woman to make him some mesquite tortillas, which she later starts a business doing. The stories are lively, excellent and usually positive. Nabhan sometimes makes loaded comments, such as his story of boating down the Rio Grande sampling local cuisines on both sides of the river, which he now notes has been completely closed off by Homeland Security. As readers of his books will know, Nabhan is an American of Lebanese (and ultimately Omani) origin, making connections with the American and Middle Eastern deserts. He describes grass-grown cattle and traces their origin to Mexico, the Canary Islands, Spain and Morocco. In a little place in Baja, he sees traces of Moorish and Sephardic Jewish culture. And of course, terroir because all the stories center on food. He intermixes history as well. The first chapter discusses Mostafa al-Azemmouri, a Moroccan Muslim, converted to Christianity as a slave, better known as Esteban with the four survivors of Cabeza de Vaca's expedition, told through how Mostafa/ Esteban would have found similarities with the African desert he knew. Then there's the chapter, somewhat wry, about camel chorizo, which tells of eating camel, and also much about Hadji Ali, the chief cameleer (if that's a word) for the US Army, which brought camels and Hadji Ali to Texas in the late 1850s. Both stories, please note, along with his own, show people of Arab and Muslim background to be part of American history.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Joyful and Educational By atavism I think this might be Gary Nabhan's best work since *Coming Home to Eat*. For those who aren't familiar with him, Nabhan is an ethnobotanist who writes beautifully about the intersection of food, culture, and geography. In *Desert Terroir*, he focuses on the flavors of the US/Mexico borderlands. He details the tastes and traditions of foods like mesquite, fish, and camels. There is a good bit of history in this book, including an extremely interesting section on some shipwrecked Moroccans and Spaniards who traveled across the Southwest in the 1500s. Nabhan is a talented storyteller, and he is able to describe sensory details so well that you almost feel like you have already experienced what he is writing about. I'd also like to mention that the illustrations (done by Paul Mirocha) are a perfect fit for the book and really add more depth to the whole story.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. gathering the desert, junior! By arizonadeserttomgary nabhan has written another book as good as his 1985 offering of *Gathering the Desert*. It is part travelogue, part heritage food exploration, and a good dose of mixing with the local cultures. There is a lot of good history on how some old world foods ended up in the Americas and vice versa. Along the way in the travels you will meet some interesting people, hidden oases and other locations, and get acquainted with some beasts of burden! This is the kind of book that you can certainly read at home, but I would suggest to really savor it, take it along backpacking, or sit down under a ponderosa pine in the summer, or a saguaro in the winter and read it!

Why does food taste better when you know where it comes from? Because history, ecological, cultural, even personal flavors every bite we eat. Whether it's the volatile chemical compounds that a plant absorbs from the soil or the stories and memories of places that are evoked by taste, layers of flavor await those willing to delve into the roots of real food. In this landmark book, Gary Paul Nabhan takes us on a personal trip into the southwestern borderlands to discover the terroir—the taste of the place that makes this desert so delicious. To savor the terroir of the borderlands, Nabhan presents a cornucopia of local foods: Mexican oregano, mesquite-flour tortillas, grass-fed beef, the popular Mexican dessert *capirotada*, and *corvina* (croaker or drum fish) among them, as well as food experiences that range from the foraging of Cabeza de Vaca and his shipwrecked companions to a modern-day camping expedition on the Rio Grande. Nabhan explores everything from the biochemical agents that create taste in these foods to their history and dispersion around the world. Through his field adventures and humorous stories, we learn why Mexican oregano is most potent when gathered at the most arid margins of its range and why foods found in the remote regions of the borderlands have surprising connections to foods found by his ancestors in the deserts of the Mediterranean and the Middle East. By the end of his movable feast, Nabhan convinces us that the roots of this fascinating terroir must be anchored in our imaginations as well as in our shifting soils.

"One of Napa Valley's most prestigious winemakers recently said that there is no such thing as terroir. He scoffed at the idea that wine somehow captures the essence of place. A scientist by training, he insisted instead that wine is the result of chemical processes that can be analyzed and controlled, nothing more. Gary Paul Nabhan's new book, *Desert Terroir: Exploring the Unique Flavors and Sundry Places of the Borderlands*, is an eloquent refutation of that assertion. Like other proponents of terroir, Nabhan argues that sunlight, wind, rain and minerals in the soil all affect the way a given food tastes. But for him there is more. Terroir is also an expression of the hands of the women who rhythmically pat out tortillas in the borderlands between the United States and Mexico, and of the labors of ranch hands who graze sturdy *Corriente* cattle. It is found, too, in the ancestry of both human and plants. If we attune ourselves to our own history, and to that of the natural world, we stand to gain a keen appreciation for our planet's myriad distinctive tastes

Nabhan is a natural storyteller." (Times Literary Supplement)About the AuthorGary Paul Nabhan is an internationally celebrated desert explorer, plant hunter, and storyteller of the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, as well as a pioneer in the local foods movement. Nabhan is author or editor of twenty-four books, including *Chasing Chiles: Hot Spots Along the Pepper Trail*, *The Desert Smells Like Rain*, and *Coming Home to Eat*. This book reunites him with Paul Mirocha, the illustrator and co-conspirator of their award-winning *Gathering the Desert*. Nabhan has received a MacArthur genius fellowship and the Vavilov Medal, and he currently holds an endowed chair in sustainable food systems at the University of Arizona. At his home near the Mexican border, he tends an orchard of heirloom fruits and heritage crops.