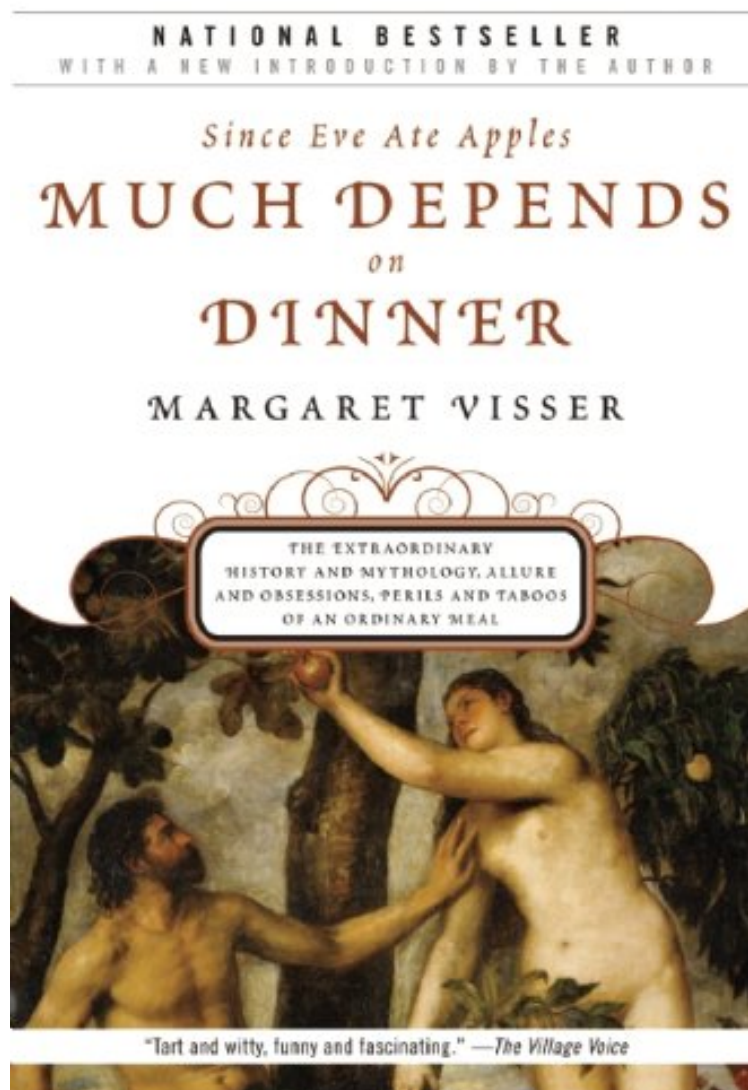


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# Much Depends on Dinner: The Extraordinary History and Mythology, Allure and Obsessions, Perils and Taboos of an Ordinary Meal

Margaret Visser

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**Margaret Visser : Much Depends on Dinner: The Extraordinary History and Mythology, Allure and Obsessions, Perils and Taboos of an Ordinary Meal** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would

be worth my time, and all praised *Much Depends on Dinner: The Extraordinary History and Mythology, Allure and Obsessions, Perils and Taboos of an Ordinary Meal*:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The OriginalBy J. TullisThis 1986 book has spawned many children, as some reviewers have noted. I read Visser's book because it was, as far as I know, the first of its kind. The book is structured around a chapter for each ingredient in a common dinner, a technique that was highly original in its day. The content is very detailed, sometimes too much so for my taste. For instance, the early chapter on corn contains much information that has been restated over the years to the point where it has become common knowledge. As a result, her treatment of corn's history feels like overkill. But it was a fairly "new" subject for general readers in its day. If you are interested in the history of humankind's interactions with foods that are common to America's dining table today, then *Much Depends On Dinner* is an excellent place to start.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Insightful and vividBy CustomerInsightful and vivid. Though something as colorful as meal and dinner could have been written more colorfully and probably with more wit. But a great read to learn so much about everyday meal and ingredients which we eat and don't know anything about..!0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. and full of terrific information. Visser does a terrific job of interweaving ...By Krista B ClarkeThis book is very interesting, written in a pleasantly accessible tone, and full of terrific information. Visser does a terrific job of interweaving historical and contemporary information about various foods, and has obviously done her research. It's informative, readable, and great material for a dinner conversation.

A staple of the food-writing genre that prefigured the current locavore and foodist movements by almost two decades, Margaret Visser's *Much Depends on Dinner* is a delightful and intelligent history of the food we eat, and a cornucopia of incredible details about the ways we do it.Presented as a meal, each chapter of *Much Depends on Dinner* represents a different course or garnish, which Margaret Visser handpicks from the most ordinary American dinner: corn on the cob with butter and salt, roast chicken with rice, salad dressed in lemon juice and olive oil, and ice cream. Visser tells the story behind each of these foods and in the course of her inquiries reveals some unexpected treats: the history of Corn Flakes; the secret behind the more dissatisfactory California olives (they're picked green, chemically blackened, and sterilized); and the fact that, in Africa, citrus fruits are eaten whole, rind and all.For food lovers of all kinds, this intelligent and unexpectedly funny book is a treasure of information that sheds light on one of our favorite pastimes: eating.

From Library JournalIn this immensely learned and attractive book, Visser gives a chapter to each of the nine ingredients of a simple dinner: corn with salt and butter, chicken with rice, lettuce with olive oil and lemon juice, ice cream. Each of these foods has a "weird, passionate, often savage history of its own," which she relates in spirited prose, rich in surprising facts, unexpected connections, and a well-documented outrage at what modern technology and agribusiness have done to purity and quality. This presents a remarkable amount of information seamlessly and entertainingly. Ruth Diebold, MLS, Upper Nyack, N.Y.Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc.