



## The Apprentice: My Life in the Kitchen

By Jacques Pépin

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### **The Apprentice: My Life in the Kitchen** By Jacques Pépin

In this captivating memoir, the man whom Julia Child has called “the best chef in America” tells the story of his rise from a frightened apprentice in an exacting Old World kitchen to an Emmy Award–winning superstar who taught millions of Americans how to cook and shaped the nation’s tastes in the bargain.

We see young Jacques as a homesick six-year-old boy in war-ravaged France, working on a farm in exchange for food, dodging bombs, and bearing witness as German soldiers capture his father, a fighter in the Resistance. Soon Jacques is caught up in the hurly-burly action of his mother's café, where he proves a natural. He endures a literal trial by fire and works his way up the ladder in the feudal system of France’s most famous restaurant, finally becoming Charles de Gaulle’s personal chef, watching the world being refashioned from the other side of the kitchen door.

When he comes to America, Jacques immediately falls in with a small group of as-yet-unknown food lovers, including Craig Claiborne, James Beard, and Julia Child, whose adventures redefine American food. Through it all, Jacques proves himself to be a master of the American art of reinvention: earning a graduate degree from Columbia University, turning down a job as John F. Kennedy’s chef to work at Howard Johnson’s, and, after a near-fatal car accident, switching careers once again to become a charismatic leader in the revolution that changed the way Americans approached food. Included as well are forty all-time favorite recipes created during the course of a career spanning nearly half a century, from his mother’s utterly simple cheese soufflé to his wife’s pork ribs and red beans.

*The Apprentice* is the poignant and sometimes funny tale of a boy’s coming of age. Beyond that, it is the story of America’s culinary awakening and the transformation of food from an afterthought to a national preoccupation.

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

The sparkling personality, sense of humor, and charm familiar to Jacques Pépin's television audiences carries over to the page in the superstar chef's humbly titled memoir, *The Apprentice*.

A clever, mischievous, and very likable boy, Pépin's earliest food memories are hungry ones from his childhood in war-torn France. After World War II, his first restaurant job was peeling potatoes for his mother at her restaurant, and he became an apprentice in a hotel kitchen at age 13. In this delightful tale he works hard, plays fair, is kind to others and good to his family, and his efforts take him to Paris, and then New York. Except for the terrible car accident that required him to reinvent himself as a teacher and television personality, he seems to have always been in the right place at the right time. He cooked for Prime Minister Gaillard and then General Charles de Gaulle, met Pierre Franey, Craig Claiborne, and Julia Child, and turned down a job cooking for JFK to accept one with Howard Johnson. But just as entertaining and enjoyable to read about are his tender memories and thoughts about his relationships with his parents and brothers, and with his wife and daughter.

We all wish we could cook like Pepin (and every chapter ends with one of Pépin's favorite recipes), but this enchanting tale will make you wish you knew him. The clear, simple way he expresses himself and the honesty with which he tells his story will bring you to tears, and make you laugh out loud. --*Leora Y. Bloom*

#### From Publishers Weekly

In this fast-moving and often touching memoir, Pepin recounts his journey from the kitchen of his mother's humble restaurant in rural France after World War II to his current position as author of 21 cookbooks, star of 13 PBS cooking shows and dean of special programs at the French Culinary Institute in New York City. Along the way he describes everything from the tough French apprenticeship system that saw him dropping out of school at 13 to work in Lyon to the beginnings of the Howard Johnson's chain. Pepin accepted a job in the Howard Johnson's test kitchen over a stint at the White House cooking for John F. Kennedy, but shows no signs of regret. In fact, if there's a flaw here, it's that Pepin's eternally upbeat attitude is sometimes a little hard to buy—although he does seem to have been born under a lucky star. Pepin came to the U.S. just when a culinary culture was building and fell into friendships with Craig Claiborne, then food editor of the New York Times, and Julia Child. Even a bad car accident when he was 39 turned out to be a godsend, as it got him out of the restaurant kitchen and into the teaching profession. Pepin mines a lot of humor from the differences between French and American attitudes toward food, as when he recounts how he and a French friend once stopped by a farmsomewhere in the U.S. with a sign reading "Ducks for Sale" and wrung the neck of the duck they'd just bought in front of the horrified proprietress. Each chapter concludes with one or two recipes, many of them surprisingly earthy, such as Oatmeal Breakfast Soup with leeks and bacon. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

#### From [The New Yorker](#)

In this beguiling memoir, the celebrated French chef and cooking-show host recounts his start as a scrappy thirteen-year-old country boy who arrived at his first restaurant apprenticeship still wearing short pants. An incorrigible prankster (he once coated a colleague's eyeglasses in aspic), Pépin never fully submitted to the strict regimen of the French kitchen, and, after a stint as a cook for Charles de Gaulle, he headed for New York, where he ended up working for the chain-restaurant entrepreneur Howard Johnson. Making clam chowder by the gallon was a quirky turn for a classically trained chef, but it enabled Pépin to revolutionize mass-produced food. With appealing modesty, he sees himself as essentially a blue-collar worker, whose

"vantage point to history-in-the-making was the crack between two swinging kitchen doors."

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#### **George Oneal:**

Do you have favorite book? For those who have, what is your favorite's book? Publication is very important thing for us to learn everything in the world. Each guide has different aim or even goal; it means that publication has different type. Some people really feel enjoy to spend their the perfect time to read a book. They are really reading whatever they take because their hobby is reading a book. What about the person who don't like looking at a book? Sometime, particular person feel need book if they found difficult problem or perhaps exercise. Well, probably you will want this *The Apprentice: My Life in the Kitchen*.

#### **Anthony Sierra:**

Often the book *The Apprentice: My Life in the Kitchen* will bring one to the new experience of reading a new book. The author style to elucidate the idea is very unique. When you try to find new book to study, this book very suited to you. The book *The Apprentice: My Life in the Kitchen* is much recommended to you to see. You can also get the e-book in the official web site, so you can quicker to read the book.

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#### **Mary Bradford:**

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