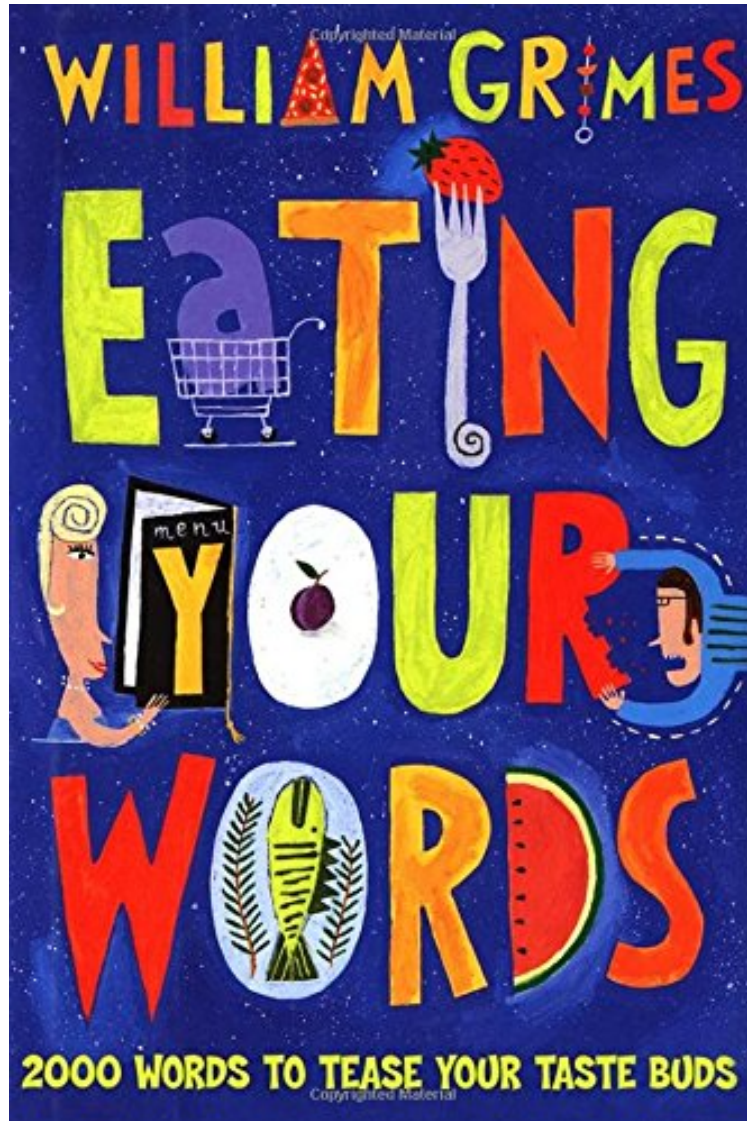


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## Eating Your Words: 2000 Words to Tease Your Taste Buds

*From William Grimes*

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**From William Grimes : Eating Your Words: 2000 Words to Tease Your Taste Buds** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Eating Your Words: 2000 Words to Tease Your Taste Buds:

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Articles = great, definitions = very poor By xxchef You have to ask yourself, "Why did William Grimes think there was the need for another culinary dictionary?". As you read the book, the answer comes quickly, before you're even very far into the "A's"... apparently he didn't. I was repeatedly

disappointed by the cursory, often puerile definitions which accompany most of the 2000 culinary terms Grimes presents. The simplistic line or two of text each are accompanied by are often incomplete and sometimes downright misleading. The introduction builds up the book as a necessary tool to help we little folk through the growing complexities of modern food buying and eating. In a world no longer dominated by a few French terms we are led to believe that this book will bridge the gap between old-school cooking books (say, from before 1990) and the current state of culinaria. Why then are so many of the terms defined in an out-dated, even archaic mind-set? Take the term "brown sugar". This book says it is "unrefined or partially refined sugar", a definition all well and good perhaps 200 years ago. Today brown sugar is almost always made from refined sugar with a special molasses syrup and colorings added back to it - a very different thing indeed, and Grimes should know the difference. There are innumerable other examples available in the same vein. Additionally, Grimes give us "food lists" scattered periodically throughout the book but provides only sporadic support for the words used in them. For example, there is a list of Varieties of Apples. 48 varieties are listed but when one wants more information on them it is often lacking. Sure "Red Delicious" apples have an insipid definition in the "R" section but what about the more interesting varieties like "Sundowner", or "Lodi" apples? No further mention of them can be found in the book. There is also a huge list of "Fish and Seafood" but if you are intrigued by what the "Geoduck" or "Sprat" listed might be, you're out of luck (without running to a REAL culinary dictionary). The bright (if limited) spots in the book are the articles on food etymology and history. There are 7 of them (reprints from other publications and various authors) that are each informative and interesting. Grimes would have done much better to have put together a collection of these little insightful gems and left the definitions to those more inspired by the subject. My guess is that the brevity of the definitions (leading to rampant deficiencies) was, perhaps, an attempt at simplicity but the effective "dumbing-down" of the book is insulting to anything but the most elementary reader. I know that Grimes, a former restaurant reviewer for the New York Times, must know a lot more about food than this book makes him sound. Grimes is listed as the "editor" of this work (along with a number of others) and it defies logic why he would allow his name used as the primary. Unfortunately, my copy of this book is destined for "re-gifting" or a permanent place on a dusty shelf somewhere while my venerable, dog-eared Larousse Gastronomique retains its place of honor near my desk. Bon appetite, ex libris, and caveat emptor. DH

Here is a feast of words that will whet the appetite of food and word lovers everywhere. William Grimes, former restaurant critic for The New York Times, covers everything from bird's nest soup to Trockenbeerenauslese in this wonderfully informative food lexicon. *Eating Your Words* is a veritable cornucopia--a thousand-and-one entries on candies and desserts, fruits and vegetables, meats, seafood, spices, herbs, wines, cheeses, liqueurs, cocktails, sauces, dressings, and pastas. The book includes terms from around the world (basmati, kimchi, haggis, callaloo) and from around the block (meatloaf, slim jims, Philly cheesesteak). Grimes describes utensils (from tandoor and wok to slotted spoon and zester), cooking styles (a *bonne femme*, over easy), cuts of meat (crown roast, prime rib), and much more. Each definition includes a pronunciation guide and many entries indicate the origin of the word. Thus we learn that *olla podrida* is Spanish for 'rotten pot' and *mulligatawny* comes from the Tamil words *milaku-tanni*, meaning 'pepper water.' Grimes includes helpful tips on usage, such as when to write whiskey and when to write whisky. In addition, there are more than a dozen special sidebars on food and food word topics--everything from diner slang to bad fad diets--plus a time line of food trends by decade and a list of the best regional snack foods. Even if you don't know a summer sausage from a spring chicken, you will find *Eating Your Words* a delectable treat. And for everyone who loves to cook, this superb volume is an essential resource--and the perfect gift.

"Will whet the appetites of word lovers."--Chicago Tribune "If you've ever floundered while decoding a sushi menu, puzzled over which sauce signifies what ingredients in classic French Cuisine or tried desperately to pronounce *huitlacoche* in a good Mexican restaurant, help is at hand.... Once fortified by this verbal *batterie de cuisine* you'll be able to roder *huitlacoche*, *palacsinta*, *saganaki*, and a *salmagundi* with confidence.... The culinary equivalent of a Berlitz phrase book, a handy reference of more than 2000 gastronomic terms and ingredients beginning with acorn squash and ending with *zwieback*."--Malachy Duffy, The New York Times Book "Just the lexicon to make you a smarter diner and cook. But '*Eating Your Words*' is more than a culinary dictionary. Here and there, Grimes breaks up the sections with essays, timelines and lists on such topics as mock foods and fad diets (the first was William the Conqueror's alcohol diet in 1087, followed by the first low-carb diet in the 1860s, the tapeworm diet in the 1920s and the blood-type diet in 1996, among many others)."--Sacramento Bee (Holiday Gift Book Roundup) About the Author William Grimes is a former restaurant reviewer for The New York Times and writes for the Time's Style and Arts sections. The author of *My Fine Feathered Friend* and *Straight Up or On the Rocks: The Story of the American Cocktail*, he lives in New York City.