

In Bad Taste? The Adventures and Science Behind Food Delicacies

By: Dr. Massimo Francesco Marcone
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Written by University of Guelph food science professor Dr. Massimo Marcone, this is a first person account of his adventures in the field to track down elusive food delicacies. Marcone also gives a reader-friendly breakdown of the scientific analysis of his rare finds.

Pros

This easy read explores the cultural insights of traditional food stuffs from diverse regions of the world. Marcone uses a thoughtful and mindful approach to exploring food customs and traditions. It enables readers to look through the veil of judgment of our food beliefs and opens our mind to accepting different foods. The book presents historical and cultural insights by providing information on the foods' origins. The read is a learning experience too as Marcone explains the results of his scientific analysis of the foods. We enjoyed the colour photos that brought life and understanding to his adventures.

Cons

It would be difficult to expect that one could be a world recognized food scientist as well as an accomplished writer in the narrative voice. Alas, we have found no fault with his science, but we did find the book lacks any flair for writing. Perhaps a good editor or a ghost writer could have brought some emotion to the reader. While we read Marcone's adventures, he failed to transport us through the story in a way that a seasoned writer could. We would love to have felt emotionally engaged with a book of this style.

The Bottom Line

While this book presents no nutrition controversies that would keep us from recommending it, we are just not sure that a broad audience would enjoy it. The book is not a "page turner", but it may appeal to food historians, Marcone's students, or those interested in expanding their opinions and beliefs around food.