

A (mostly) Historic Cookery Bibliography

Jeremy Fletcher

This is a bit obsessive, but that's hardly out of character for me.

Here is a mostly-up-to-date list of my historic cookery sources. I've divided my books into four broad categories:

- [Cookery books, or Primary Sources](#) (*i.e. the historic works themselves, generally translated*);
- [Cook books](#) (*historic recipes with redactions or interpreted adaptations*);
- [Baking books](#) (*books about bread, its history, and related subjects*);
- [Documentary sources](#) (*everything else, often useful information -- but not recipes*).

These are my impressions on the strengths and weaknesses of these books. A well-documented book that is of limited usefulness to me may still get a low rating.







I'm not well-equipped to judge how effective most translations are; I only know rusty French.

Caveat lector.

-Jeremy Fletcher (jfletcher at pobox.com)






Changes last made on: *April 25, 2017*.





How I rated these books:






	<p>Excellent information, impeccable documentation, superb detail. <i>It must be mine!</i></p>
	<p>Decent information and source material. <i>Worth buying when convenient.</i></p>
	<p>Limited usefulness; pick through with care. <i>Maybe if it's on sale.</i></p>
	<p>More chaff than wheat. <i>At best, check out a copy from the library to skim once.</i></p>
	<p>As an admitted bibliophile, I hate to classify <u>any</u> book as a waste of paper and ink. <i>These books, however, come close.</i></p>
	<p>Not yet rated. <i>Well, duh.</i></p>





Citations created using [EasyBib](#) where possible.





Primary Sources





 <p>It must be mine!</p>	<p>(1350s)</p>	<p>Adamson, Melitta Weiss. <i>Daz Büch Von Güter Spise (The Book of Good Food): A Study, Edition and English Translation of the Oldest German Cookbook</i>. Krems: Medium Aevum Quotidianum, 2004. Print. ISBN 3901094121.</p> <p>Subtitled “A Study, Edition, and English Translation of the Oldest German Cookbook”. This is very much in the Scully mode of historical cookbook publishing: compare the extant versions of the manuscript, contrast the differences, and document to within an inch of its life. This makes it harder to use recreationally - it's not a light or easy read - but you can have full confidence in its scholarship. I'll make that trade any time.</p> <p>Anyway, roughly one hundred recipes dating to about 1350. Both the original German and an English translation are present. “Don't oversalt” appears to be a common instruction.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>1250 to 1650</p>	<p>Albala, Ken. <i>Cooking in Europe 1250-1650</i>. Westport, Conn: Greenwood, 2006. Print. ISBN 0313330964.</p> <p>170 recipes from various medieval and Renaissance works, mostly ones not published elsewhere. The recipe is given, then a bit of description regarding the dish - Albala seems to have made most of these dishes, although his interpretations are rarely given. There is also an introductory section with background information on ingredients, meal structure, and the like.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>(1588)</p>	<p>Allde, Edward. <i>The Good Hous-wiues Treasurie</i>. Published 1588.</p> <p>A short recipe collection “Beeing a verye necessarie Booke instructing to the dressing of Meates.” It apparently has one of the earliest known mince pie recipes.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>(15th c.)</p>	<p>Anderson, John L. ed. <i>A Fifteenth Century Cookry Boke</i>. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1962.</p> <p>Recipes taken from the same manuscripts used in Austin's compilation. Only the original recipes are given; the glossary is pretty good.</p> <p>Why did I dock it a book in my rating? It's only a selection of recipes (Austin has the complete set), and the cheesy early-'60s children's book style watercolor illustrations make it difficult to take seriously.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>(1553)</p>	<p>Armstrong, Valoise, trans. <i>Sabina Welserin's cookbook</i>. Self-published, 2001.</p>






		It would be far more useful if <u>all</u> the German was translated. Some of the words are available in a modern dictionary, but isn't the point of doing a translation to do a complete job? Sigh...
 It must be mine!	(15 th c.)	Austin, Thomas, ed. <i>Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery-Books</i> . London: Oxford University Press, for the Early English Text Society, 2000. Reprint of the original edition of 1888. Tons of good recipes. They are not transliterated, but there is an excellent glossary to help you puzzle things out. More " Curry on Brown Goo " style recipes. But I like them.
 Worth buying	(1591)	A.W. <i>A Book of Cookrye Very Necessary for all Such as Delight Therein</i> . Published 1591. EEBO Editions, ProQuest, 2010. ISBN 978-1171316305. A facsimile edition of the original. Sometimes hard to read, both because of the font and the faintness of the (presumed) microfilm. Still worth having!
 Worth buying	(1591)	A.W., Mark and Jane Waks transcription. <i>A Book of Cookrye</i> . Published 1591, originally published 1584. Self-published, 2005. This is a transcription of the public domain work above, put out five years before Early English Books published their version. It's easier to read than the original, but having both is worthwhile to check the accuracy of the transcription. In any case, it's a typical late-16 th century work with lots of sugar and boiled meats. It also has a recipe for turkey: <p style="text-align: center;"><i>"To bake Turky Fowles: Cleve your turkye foule on the back, and bruse al the bones. Season it with Pepper groce beaten and salt, and put into it good store of Butter, he must have five houres baking."</i></p> (The transcribers have an online version available here .)
 Worth buying	(1552)	Boeser, Knut, ed. <i>The Elixirs of Nostradamus</i> . New York: Trafalgar Square, 1995. Print. ISBN 0747519617. Originally published in 1552, this book contains a number of recipes written by the famous fraud astrologer. The first section contains many nasty health recipes: one example is a lotion to whiten the face containing ground porcelain and borax. The second is devoted more to food -- jellies, preserves, marzipan, and so forth. The botanical illustrations did not originally go with the text; but at least they are contemporaneous, and pleasant to look at.




 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>(1610)</p>	<p>Caton, Mary Anne, and Joan Thirsk. <i>Fooles and Fricassees: Food in Shakespeare's England</i>. Washington, D.C: Folger Shakespeare Library, Distributed by University of Washington, 1999. Print. ISBN 0295979267.</p> <p>An exhibition catalogue from the Folger Library. I would have considered “Shakespeare’s England” to have ended when he died, in 1616; quite a few of the items shown are dated 1650 to 1700. The exhibition was very broadly focused -- everything from plates and cups, recipe books, paintings of diners, and so forth. There are lots of good pictures (including a 1600 Assize of Bread!) The appendix transcribes <i>Mrs. Sarah Longe her Receipt Booke</i>, published around 1610. It combines recipes (<i>To make rice-puddings</i>) and dubious medicinal tips (“<i>To stop the bleeding of a wound: Take a peece of an Old hatt, and burne it in the fire to a Cole then grind it to powder, and straw it into the wound.</i>”)</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	<p>(1596)</p>	<p>Dawson, Thomas, and Maggie Black. <i>The Good Housewife's Jewel (1596)</i>. New York: Southover, 2002. Print. ISBN 1870962125.</p> <p>Just barely published before the 17th century (1596), this is a typical Tudor work. Lots of recipes involving sugar. One of the few collections to specify a pie crust recipe. The bread recipe is more of a sweet biscuit, rather than what we generally think of as bread.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>(1604)</p>	<p>de Casteau, Lancelot. Leo Moulin, trans. <i>Ouverture de Cuisine</i>. Paris: De Schutter, 1983. Print. ISBN 9070667053.</p> <p>Great recipes, although its caloric content caused us to nickname it “Just Add Butter”. The author was the cook for three successive bishop-princes of Liege (Belgium); nothing in the text states whether they died from cholesterol poisoning.</p> <p>More sausage recipes than I've generally found elsewhere. Moulin’s translation into modern French is often blatantly incorrect; work from the original, which is (thankfully) present.</p> <p>There was a better translation from James Prescott in the works. If it or another one eventually comes out, there will really be no reason to own this one.</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	<p>(1529)</p>	<p>de Nola, Ruperto. Robin Carroll-Mann, trans. <i>Libre del Coch</i>. Self-published, 2001.</p> <p>I haven’t tried making many of the recipes yet. Lots of yummy stuff here, and since it’s Catalan it’s got a different spin than traditional Spanish stuff.</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	<p>(1529)</p>	<p>de Nola, Ruperto. Vincent Cuenca, trans. <i>Libro de Cozina</i>. Self-published, 2001.</p> <p>Like the other edition, this is an amateur translation and I am not</p>







		<p>qualified to judge its accuracy. Good recipes and lots of household-type advice, such as how to choose your servants:</p> <p><i>“The cook... is an office of the highest confidence; and he should be treated very well... because he serves with love, and should be well housed.”</i></p> <p>Yeah. What he said.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	(1598)	<p>de Rosselli, Giovanne. <i>Epulario, or The Italian Banquet</i>. LaVergne, TN: Proquest, 2011. Print. ISBN 978-1171324461.</p> <p>A facsimile reprint of the 1598 translation, flaws and all. It would be easier to use if there were a modern-print version afterward; some of the digitized words are hard to make out. But it's worth stumbling through, since there are far more recipes involving garlic in here than in most other cookbooks!</p> <p>I have to acknowledge the full title in all its overblown glory: <i>Epulario, or the Italian Banquet. Wherein is Shewed the Maner how to Dresse and Prepare All Kind of Flesh, Foules or Fishes. As also How to Make Sauces, Tartes, Pies. With an Addition of Many other Profitable and Necessary Things.</i></p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	(late 14 th to early 15 th c.)	<p>Faccioli, E. Ariane Helou, trans. <i>Anonimo Toscano, Libro della Cucina</i>. Self-published, 2005.</p> <p>A translation of a work I hadn't seen before -- the name or variants thereon is used for other manuscripts, but that's because it translates as “Cookbook”... anyway, a good mixture of recipes. It also has a description of how to make sourdough that I have not seen anywhere else:</p> <p><i>For one who does not have yeast.</i></p> <p><i>Take a loaf of bread and grate it and grind it with flour; this will not make good bread, but then a good sourdough comes out of it.</i></p> <p>(For the record: this works.)</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	(Roman)	<p>Flower, Barbara, and Rosenbaum, Elisabeth, trans. <i>Apicius: The Roman Cookery Book</i>. London: Peter Nevill Limited, 1958.</p> <p>Proof that just because a book was written a long time ago, it is not automatically outdated. Still one of the better translations, with Latin on one side and English on the other.</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	(14 th c.)	<p>Fрати, Ludovico ed. Smithson, Louise trans. <i>Libro di cucina / Libro per cuoco (Anonimo Veneziano)</i>. Self-published, 2005.</p>

		<p>A chatty amateur translation of an anonymous Venetian cookbook of the late 14th or early 15th century. Some of these recipes were interpreted in The Medieval Kitchen. My personal favorite is “Agliata”, or roasted garlic sauce. (Who’d have guessed?)</p> <p>(The translator has an online version available here.)</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	(various)	<p>Friedman, David, and Elizabeth Cook, ed. <i>A Collection of Medieval and Renaissance Cookbooks, v. I and II</i>. 1992.</p> <p>Greatly reduced photocopies of public domain primary sources: a Baghdad Cookery Book, Le Menagier, Sir Hugh Plat, and many more.</p> <p>Somewhat hard to read, but it beats not having them at all -- or trying to find them on your own.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	(6 th c.)	<p>Grant, Mark, ed. <i>Anthimus: On the Observance of Foods</i>. New York: Prospect Books (UK), 1996. Print. ISBN 0907325750.</p> <p>Sometimes considered “the first French cookery book”, this is more about healthy ways to eat (via humour theory) than actual recipes.</p> <p>It does provide some indications of what was eaten and how (e.g. bacon should be boiled and eaten cold; “frying brings absolutely no benefit.”) The Latin original is alongside the English translation.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	(1390s)	<p>Greco, Gina L. and Rose, Christine M. <i>The Good Wife's Guide: a Medieval Household Book</i>. Ithica: Cornell University Press, 2009. ISBN 978-0801474743.</p> <p>The first <u>complete</u> English translation of the <i>Menagier de Paris</i> (Power’s much earlier version was substantially cut down). However, the authors are not food scholars. They translated it for a feminist studies class and they have an Agenda beginning with a scarlet “A”. This means that the emphasis is not on the recipes, but on its “gravity as an agenda of female oppression.” Also, the authors posit that the author was not a real older man instructing his young bride, but merely a narrative device. Under that theory, the many specific and historically documentable people named - such as Master Jehan - are there merely to add verisimilitude? Seems a stretch to me.</p> <p>Finally, the authors have made some egregious errors that culinary historians might have caught, such as (<i>sigh</i>) calling grains of paradise cardamom.</p> <p>Despite these substantive flaws, it’s worth getting simply because <u>it is</u> a complete, generally well-done translation. Just read the recipes rather than the (too-frequent) postmodern feminist theory discussions.</p>
	(1300s)	<p>Grewe, Rudolf, and Constance B. Hieatt. <i>Libellus de Arte Coquinaria: An Early Northern Cookery Book</i>. Tucson: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance S, 2001.</p>






<p>It must be mine!</p>		<p>Print. ISBN 0866982647.</p> <p>Only thirty-odd recipes. But they are from one of the earliest surviving European sources (not written in Latin, that is). Interesting recipes, with the various originals alongside. Good glossary.</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	<p>(Roman)</p>	<p>Apicius, C. W. Grocock, and Sally Grainger. <i>Apicius: a Critical Edition with an Introduction and English Translation</i>. Totnes: Prospect, 2006. Print. ISBN 1903018137.</p> <p>“Some have asked why it is necessary to have another edition and translation of <i>Apicius</i>... Previous editions have been edited and translated either by scholars whose understanding of the technology and processes of the kitchen was limited to varying degrees, or (in one instance) by a chef whose understanding of Latin was sometimes questionable.”</p> <p>I can't put it any better than that.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>(1500)</p>	<p>Harris, Karen trans. <i>Manual de mujeres en el cual se contienen muchas y diversas recetas muy buenas (Manual of Women in which is contained many and diverse very good recipes)</i>. Published 1500. Self-published.</p> <p>About 80% are household health-type recipes, e.g. “Soap for the hands”, “Remedy for earache”. The 31 dishes included wander around markedly different foods - from varied preserves to two recipes for making blood pudding. And one of the few cured sausage recipes to specifically include garlic.</p> <p>(The translator has an online version available here.)</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>(1st c.)</p>	<p>Heffner, Edward H., and E. S. Forster, trans. <i>Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella : On Agriculture and Trees</i>. New York: Loeb Classical Library, 1955. Print. ISBN 0674994493.</p> <p>Latin alongside English. Good information on preserving and pickling; the rest is not directly useful, unless you happen to have an orchard and need farming tips from two thousand years ago. Okay, to be fair - some of them are still valid; grafting is basically done the same way today.</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	<p>(late 15th c.)</p>	<p>Heatt, Constance B. <i>Cocatrice and Lampray Hay: Late Fifteenth-century Recipes from Corpus Christi College Oxford</i>. Totnes, Devon: Prospect, 2012. Print. ISBN 978-1903018842.</p> <p>This is not the same as this Corpus Christi College Oxford manuscript, but one penned a hundred years earlier. It is unusual in that it gives quantities more than most works of the time. The authors have done a typically good job in documenting and translating the recipes.</p>







 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>(13th c. to 15th c..)</p>	<p>Hiatt, Constance B., Terry Nutter, and Johnna H. Holloway. <i>Concordance of English Recipes: Thirteenth Through Fifteenth Centuries</i>. Tucson: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance S, 2006. Print. ISBN 978-0866983570.</p> <p>As the title indicates, this is not a recipe collection but a <i>concordance</i>, or an index of recipe names and which collections they appear in. Tremendously useful if you can't remember where to find "Blanche Escrepes". Also, the recipe names are modernized alongside so you can see all six "ravioles" recipes together despite their varying original spelling.</p>
 <p>Not yet rated</p>	<p>(date)</p>	<p>Hiatt, Constance B. <i>Culinary Recipes of Medieval England</i>. Totnes, Devon: Prospect, 2013. Print. ISBN 978-1909248304.</p> <p>Not yet rated.</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	<p>(14th c.)</p>	<p>Hiatt, Constance B., and Sharon Butler, eds. <i>Curye on Inglisch: English Culinary Manuscripts of the Fourteenth Century</i>. London: Published for the Early English Text Society by the Oxford UP, 1985. Print. ISBN 0197224091.</p> <p>One of the "standard" reference works. Lots of recipes. Even if you prefer interpreted cook books and plan on never doing your own redactions, get this book for the fabulous glossary. I have sometimes referred to the recipes as "Curye on Brown Goo", but don't let that dissuade you. They can actually be quite good. British cooking didn't really decline to its current state until the 18th century.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>(15th c.)</p>	<p>Hodgett, Gerald A.J. <i>Stere Htt Well</i>. London: Cornmarket, 1972. Print. ISBN 071911487X.</p> <p>Late 15th century medicines and recipes alongside a facsimile of the original. Oddly enough, it starts with a listing of group names, e.g. a pride of lions, a city of badgers. My two favorites are "a temperance of cooks" (for tempering, or mixing ingredients -- not for abstinence) and "a disworship of Scots". No sectarian bias there.</p> <p>The text modernizes the original a bit too literally, using slashes to indicate a line end, which makes it harder to read. Still, how else will you know that to catch a salmon, you should light a candle by the water and the salmon will "come to the candle as if by nature"?</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>(10th c.)</p>	<p>Ibn, Sayyar, Nawal Nasrallah, Sahban Ahmad Muruwwa, and Kaj Ohrnberg. <i>Annals of the Caliph's Kitchen: Ibn Sayyar Al-Warraq's Tenth-century Baghdadi Cookbook : English Translation with Introduction and Glossary</i>. Leyden: Brill, 2007. Print. ISBN 978-9004158672.</p> <p>This massive work by Ibn Sayyar al-Warraq is apparently the tenth-century precursor to the Kitab Al-Tabikh. A huge number of dishes</p>




		and lots of variety. Seems to be well documented, with a large glossary. So why did I dock it a book? I'm not sure; maybe it's just that I don't play much with Arabic cuisine, so I'm not that interested. More my failing rather than this book's.
 Pick through	(1615 to 1649)	<p>Markham, Gervaise. <i>The English Housewife</i>. Ed. Michael R. Best. Kingston: McGill-Queen's UP, 1986. Print. ISBN 0773505822.</p> <p>Early 17th century (it was originally published in 1615), but the style is similar to late-16th century English cookbooks. The succinct subtitle of the work:</p> <p><i>“Containing the inward and outward virtues which ought to be in a complete woman; as her skill in physic, cookery, banqueting-stuff, distillation, perfumes, wool, hemp, flax, dairies, brewing, baking, and all other things belonging to a household.”</i></p> <p>There are many sweet recipes, as was standard for the time. Good thing they didn't brush their teeth with honey-soaked cotton, as did the Romans.</p> <p>There were five editions, and each one added later recipes. That makes it impossible to decipher which recipes date from 1615 and which ones are solidly post-La Varenne. This particular edition appears to be from 1649, so I really have to err on the side of “added later”.</p>
 It must be mine!	(1450s)	<p>Ballerini, Luigi, and Maestro Martino of Como. <i>The Art of Cooking: the First Modern Cookery Book</i>. Trans. Jeremy Parzen. New York: University of California, 2005. Print. ISBN 0520232712.</p> <p>A new translation with an introduction that's nearly as long as the work itself. Okay, that's an exaggeration. (But not much of one -- especially since the type size used in the intro is about half that of the main book.)</p> <p><i>Anyway</i>, this is one of the seminal works of Italian Renaissance cookery. This edition also contains redacted recipes, which from a very quick perusal looked reasonable. Some of the translations are overly literal and would have benefited from a culinary historian's input. E.g. <i>gamelino</i>, or “cameline” in every other cookery work and translation, is rendered as “gold of pleasure” because the cameline flower is also botanically known as gold of pleasure.</p>
 Meh.	(1685)	<p>May, Robert. <i>The Accomplisht Cook</i> (1685). Devon: Prospect Books, 2000. ISBN 090732598X.</p> <p>Lots of late 17th century English recipes. I particularly like the descriptions of how to draw patterns on pie tops according to their contents. However, the collection is nearly one hundred years too late for my primary interests.</p>





 <p>It must be mine!</p>	(1557)	<p>Messisbugo, Christoforo. Ariane Helou trans. <i>Banchetti, Composizioni di Vivande et Apparecchio Generale</i>. (aka Libro Novo) Venice, 1557. Print. Self-published, 2011.</p> <p>An unpublished but much more scholarly translation than Potter's version. If it's ever printed, I'll buy it immediately.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	(1557)	<p>Messisbugo, Christoforo. Charles A. Potter trans. <i>Banchetti, Composizioni di Vivande et Apparecchio Generale</i>. (aka Libro Novo) Venice, 1557. Print. Self-published, 2004.</p> <p>A somewhat slangy translation of this very long cookbook. I disagree with some of his choices (such as "baloney" for <i>mortadella</i> - the modern bologna/baloney is quite different from this sausage) and the word choices are not always consistent: a recipe is translated as "Imperial Yellow Pottage" in the index but "Imperial Golded Pottage" in the actual recipe. There are about 350 recipes here, so if it were the only translation available it would be invaluable... but it isn't.</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	(1475)	<p>Milham, Mary Ella, ed. <i>Platina: On Right Pleasure and Good Health</i>. Tempe, Ariz: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1998. Print. ISBN 0866982086.</p> <p>A good full (and lengthy) translation of Platina's work, with the Latin alongside. Where it differs from Martino's work (about 40% of the text was plagiarized) this is noted. An index would be nice, though!</p>
 <p>Not yet rated</p>	(1485)	<p>Myers, Daniel. <i>Recipes from John Crophill's Commonplace Book</i>. Blackspoon, 2016. Print. ISBN 0692591737.</p> <p>(The author has an online version available here.)</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	(late 15 th c.)	<p>Myers, Daniel. <i>Recipes from the Wagstaff Miscellany</i>. Blackspoon, 2015. Print. ISBN 978-1903018842.</p> <p>This transcribes the same manuscript as that used in Ordinance of Pottage, which is out of print; I'd have rated it three books if Hieatt's was still available. Each recipe is followed by a short analysis comparing it to similar English-corpus recipes.</p> <p>The author has an online version available here.)</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	(1557)	<p>Parker, Margaret, Anne Ahmed, and Cambridge Staff Corpus Christi College. <i>A Proper Newe Booke of Cokerye: Margaret Parker's Cookery Book</i>. New York: Corpus Christi College, Oxford, 2002. ISBN 095042613X.</p> <p>A short recipe manuscript originally published in 1557. Corpus Christi College in Cambridge has published a facsimile to commemorate the college's 650th anniversary (!) and has done a fabulous job. The original is given in reproduced form, and the editor promises that it is faithful to the original in text, size, and color. A modern translation is</p>

		<p>alongside, although the quality is good enough that you can read the original -- which is good, as the translation is not always on point. (“Vergis” is translated as “verges”, or “edges”. I think that “verjuice” is a more accurate rendition.)</p> <p>This collection also has several recipes for pie crust; there are only a few that have survived. The author has redacted some of the recipes, but they are intended for cocktail parties rather than historical accuracy. That section can be skipped.</p> <p>Sadly but perhaps predictably, this book has apparently gone out of print.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	(1588)	<p>Peachey, Stuart, ed. <i>The Good Huswifes Handmaide for the Kitchin</i>. New York: Stuart, 1992. Print. ISBN 1858040035.</p> <p>There are some egregious errors in the glossary (e.g. “Grains” referenced as cardamom when it’s actually grains of paradise, and lots of missing terms that are easily found in the OED). The first printing was in 1588; some other works date it to 1596, but that’s the second edition.</p> <p>On the plus side, this work has two bread recipes!</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	(13 th c.)	<p>Perry, Charles trans. <i>A Baghdad Cookery Book: The Book of Dishes (Kitab Al-Tabikh)</i>. (PPC 79) New York: Prospect Books, 2005. ISBN 1-903018-42-0.<P></p> <p>The Charles Arberry translation of the thirteenth-century <i>Kitab al-Tabikh</i>, writes Perry in his introduction, was groundbreaking for its time. However, having looked critically at the original, Perry found vast numbers of significant errors. So he re-translated it more accurately.</p> <p>Extremely complete, impeccably documented, and well worth having.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	(1628)	<p>Plat, Hugh. <i>Delights for Ladies</i>. Brighton: Liz Seeber, 2002. Reprint of the original edition of 1628.</p> <p>A very good-quality, life-size facsimile of the original (which means 1x3 inches!) Unfortunately for my purposes, it was published 28 years too late. No glossary or transliteration, but it’s easy enough to read with a little practice.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	(date)	<p>Power, Eileen, trans. <i>The Goodman of Paris</i>. Avon: The Folio Society, 1992. Reprint of the original edition of 1928.</p> <p>When this edition was published, it wasn’t really done as a work of scholarship but as a historical interest book. This may be why some of the recipes are omitted and why the author accidentally ran some of them together. Still, interesting because it’s firmly middle-class in origin. This means that there are more vegetable recipes than you might easily find elsewhere, for example. Its faults, however, beg for a</p>






		<p>new version.</p> <p>(Thank you, publishing deities! You have answered! ...More or less.)</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	(1420s)	<p>Prescott, James. <i>le Viandier de Taillevent</i>. Eugene, Or: Alfarhaugr Pub. Society, 1989. ISBN 0962371904.</p> <p>A transcription and translation of a 1420s-era cooking manuscript. The recipes themselves are duplicated in Scully's translation, which came out slightly after this one.</p> <p>(The author has an online version available here.)</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	(1420s)	<p>Renfrow, Cindy. <i>Liber cure Cocorum</i>. Self-published, 2002.</p> <p>A modern English transcription and translation of a Northern English-dialect rhyming cooking manuscript from the 1420s or so. The actual recipes are mostly duplicates of those found in Curye on Inglisch. But it's in rhyme!</p> <p>(The author has an online version available here.)</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	(15 th c.)	<p>Renfrow, Cindy. <i>Take A Thousand Eggs Or More, vol. II</i>. [United States]: C. Renfrow, 1990. Print. ISBN 096285980X.</p> <p>Recipes from Thomas Austin's collection. The second volume contains only original recipes, to allow you to make your own redactions. Both the original recipe and a modern transcription are present.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	(13 th c.)	<p>Rodinson, Maxime, A.J. Arberry, and Charles Perry. <i>Medieval Arab Cookery</i>. Devon, England: Prospect books, 2001. Print. ISBN 0907325912.</p> <p>A collection of translations and essays. A.J. Arberry's 1939 translation of a 13th-century Arab cookery manual has been left largely as he wrote it. This is understandable due to copyright issues and so forth, but frustrating -- scholarship has advanced since then, so the many modern corrections are cross-referenced in the preface and footnotes. This means that to get the full benefit of the updates, you have to jump back and forth as you go.</p>
 <p>Meh.</p>	(1667)	<p>Rose, Peter G., ed. <i>The Sensible Cook: Dutch Foodways in the Old and the New World</i>. New York: Syracuse UP, 1998. Print. ISBN 081560503X.</p> <p>A well-written book transcribing the original recipes faithfully. The author also supplies background of the time and place the work was written. However, that date is 70 years past my upper limit. Interesting to trace the evolution from similar 15th century recipes, but not really valid for me.</p>

 <p>It must be mine!</p>	<p>(late 14th c.)</p>	<p>Santanach, Joan ed. <i>The Book of Sent Soví: Medieval recipes from Catalonia</i>. Trans. Robin Vogelzang. New York: Tamesis Books, 2008. Print. ISBN 978-1855661646.</p> <p>A thin book - only 57 recipes survive from this late fourteenth-century cookbook. The original Catalan is on the left and English on the right, along with recipes added later. Well documented and easy to use.</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	<p>(1420s)</p>	<p>Scully, Terence, ed. <i>Chiquart's 'On Cookery': A Fifteenth-Century Savoyard Culinary Treatise</i>. New York: P. Lang, 1986. Print. ISBN 0820403520.</p> <p>Faithfully preserves the flow of the exceedingly verbose original. Out of print, but there is a new version available.</p>
 <p>Not yet rated</p>	<p>(1420s)</p>	<p>Scully, Terence, ed. <i>Du fait de cuisine / On Cookery of Master Chiquart</i>. Tempe, AZ: ACMRS, 2010. Print. ISBN 978-0866984027.</p> <p>(Not yet reviewed) Apparently this is now out of print as well.</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	<p>(late 15th c.)</p>	<p>Scully, Terence. <i>Cuoco Napoletano: The Neapolitan Recipe Collection</i>. Ann Arbor, Mich: University of Michigan, 2000. Print. ISBN 0472109723.</p> <p>A recipe collection from the end of the fifteenth century, sort of proto-Italian cookery with Catalan influences. As usual for Terence Scully's work, the translation is documented to within an inch of its life. The book is organized in three sections: the original, untranslated recipes; notes on translation; and finally the translated recipes. This means flipping back and forth while reading, so I would have preferred a different organization that would be easier to use.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>(1651)</p>	<p>Scully, Terence, ed. <i>La Varenne's Cookery</i>. New York: Prospect Books (UK), 2006. Print. ISBN 1903018412.</p> <p>This book is (like all of Scully's works) <u>extraordinarily</u> well translated, documented, and footnoted. The main reason I rated this two books instead of four is because the three books translated here are mid-seventeenth century. Not only are they fifty years too late for my purposes, but the recipes are drastically different from those published in the sixteenth century - Scully's text helpfully notes where La Varenne's recipes are echoed in Escoffier, for example.</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	<p>(1570)</p>	<p>Scully, Terence, ed. <i>The Opera of Bartolomeo Scappi (1570)</i>. London: University of Toronto Press, 2008. ISBN 978-0802096241.</p> <p>It's too bad that most of the pictures from the original weren't included. That would have made the book much longer than its current 800 pages, though. The usual Scully good job translating and</p>

		<p>footnoting - although Louise Smithson points out that Scully (in his own words) assumes that a pound is the modern sixteen ounces, while most of the Italian peninsula of the time used twelve ounces as a pound. This will throw off recipe redactions drastically. There are some other problems with the work. It's still fabulous to have this finally translated into English, though.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	(1420s)	<p>Scully, Terence, ed. <i>The Viandier of Taillevent</i>. [Ottawa]: University of Ottawa, 1988. Print. ISBN 0776601741.</p> <p>Exceedingly complete. Scully provides simultaneous line-by-line comparisons of all the versions. You have to wade through 280 pages to get to usable recipes. When you do, it's worthwhile... but I actually prefer Prescott's version, written for the cooking enthusiast rather than the academic translator.</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	(15 th c.)	<p>Scully, Terence, ed. <CITE>The Vivendier: A Fifteenth-Century French Cookery Manuscript.</CITE>
Totnes, Devon, England: Prospect Books, 1997. Print. ISBN 0-907325-815.<P></p> <p>No, this is not a typo for The Viandier, although some of the recipes are nearly identical. Scully provides the original and an English translation, as well as a glossary of medieval French terms. The source is a 15th century work. The recipes include vermicelli (this is rare) and a fabulous roast chicken subtlety:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>“Get a chicken or any other bird you want, and pluck it alive cleanly in hot water. Then get the yolks of 2 or 3 eggs; they should be beaten with powdered saffron and wheat flour... by means of a feather paint your pullet carefully with this mixture so that its colour looks like roast meat... put the chicken’s head under its wing, and turn it in your hands, rotating it until it is fast asleep. Then set it down on your platter with the other roast meat. When it is about to be carved it will wake up and make off down the table upsetting jugs, goblets, and whatnot.”</i></p> <p>Ah, fine medieval humor. Not recommended for actual use as the ASPCA would be on your case!</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	(1604)	<p>Spurling, Hilary. <i>Elinor Fettiplace's Receipt Book</i>. New York, N.Y., U.S.A: Viking Penguin, 1986. Print. ISBN 0670815926.</p> <p>The author narrates her work as a chatty travelogue through the seasons, so recipe organization is lacking. The source material was originally written in 1604, but numerous additions were made over the next couple hundred years. Unfortunately the author did not distinguish between them; so use with care.</p>

 Pick through	(1669)	Stevenson, Jane, and Peter Davidson, eds. <i>The Closet of Sir Kenelm Digby Opened</i> . Blackawton, Totnes, Devon: Prospect Books, 1997. Print. ISBN 0907325769. This is an excellent compilation that, unfortunately for my purposes, dates 70 years too late. (Some of the recipes, such as Sauce Robert, are delicious. But still post-period.)
 Pick through	(14 th c.)	Todorow, Maria Fossi. <i>Invito Alla Mensa Del Mercante Del Trecento / an Invitation to the Table of a Merchant of the Trecento Usi, Arnesi E Ricette Della Cucina Medievale / Customs, Utensils and Recipes in the Medieval Kitchen</i> . Florence: Polistampa, 2009. Print. ISBN 978-8859606109. This 14 th century cookbook was last published by S. Morpurgo in 1890; a few of the recipes are reproduced in Redon's book but only one overlaps. Sadly, this book contains only four recipes total. The rest of the very thin pamphlet has illustrations of utensils, vegetables, etc. Not really worth the three minutes it took to read, which includes the time it took to get through the lengthy title.
 Pick through	(Roman)	Vehling, Joseph Dommers. <i>Apicius' Cookery and Dining in Imperial Rome</i> . New York: Dover Publications, 1977. Print. ISBN 0486235637. The first published translation into English. However, it was not done well. There are many other, better versions -- so punt this one.
 Worth buying	(10 th c.)	Zaouali, Lilia. <i>Medieval Cuisine of the Islamic World: a Concise History with 174 Recipes</i> . Trans. M. B. DeBevoise. Berkeley, Calif.: Univ. of California, 2009. Print. ISBN 978-0520261747. 174 recipes from the Kitab Al-Tabikh and a couple other Arabic works I haven't seen elsewhere, along with thirty (mostly forgettable) modern redactions.

Interpreted or Redacted Sources (Cook Books)

 <p>Meh.</p>	<p>Aresty, Esther. <i>The Delectable Past</i>. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1964.</p> <p>Some cookbooks age well. This work, however, is not one of them. The redacted recipes have scanty attribution, and some of her recipes clearly contradict the originals.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>Beebe, Ruth Anne. <i>Sallets, Humbles, & Shrewsbury Cakes</i>. Boston: David R. Godine, 1976. ISBN 0879232382.</p> <p>The recipes are reasonably good, but there's no way to tell what came from which source. If I wanted to do that level of research, I'd just buy the primary sources directly.</p> <p>(Oh wait, I <i>did</i> do that...)</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>Berriedale-Johnson, Michelle. <i>The British Museum Cookbook</i>. New York: Parkwest/British Museum Publications, 1988. Print. ISBN 0714116637.</p> <p>Inspired by the collections in the British Museum (you might have guessed that from the title), this book contains recipes “to recreate a flavour of what fashionable ancient Greek society in Athens, Anglo-Saxon peasants in their villages... or late medieval Frenchmen might have eaten.”</p> <p>Unfortunately, since there are no known original recipes from the Aztecs - for example - the author decided to forego <u>any</u> source material. In the “Classical Greece” section tomatoes and potatoes are specifically excluded [<i>good</i>] but an “Ancient Egypt” recipe calls for coffee [<i>very bad</i>]. Treat it as an unreliable source at best.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>Black, Maggie. <i>The Medieval Cookbook</i>. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1992. Print. ISBN 0500015481.</p> <p>Lots of good pictures. Interpreted recipes from various fourteenth and fifteenth century sources (complete with the originals). A decent way to get introduced to medieval- style cooking... although in many cases her recipe deviates substantially from the cited source.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Black, Maggie, Jane Renfrew, Peter Brears, Jennifer Stead, and Gill Corbishley. <i>A Taste of History</i>. New York: British Museum, 1997. Print. ISBN 0714117889.</p> <p>A collection of articles on eight different time periods, ranging from pre-historic to the twentieth century. All are by noted English food historians. Good background information and decent line drawings (rather than photographs). Original recipes are not always given but in general, the redactions appear pretty reasonable.</p>



Landfill

Brown, Michèle. *Royal Recipes*.
New York: Trafalgar Square, 1995. Print. ISBN 1857936914.

The author claims to have redacted actual historical recipes appropriate to the reign of each English monarch since 1066. This would mean she has found several early English cookery sources unknown to real scholars. But since no sources or original recipes are provided, her claim is conveniently impossible to verify.



Pick through

Buxton, Moira. *Medieval Cooking Today*.
Waddesdon, Buckinghamshire: The Kylin Press, 1983. ISBN 0907128149.

Medieval recipes, very loosely interpreted; presumably to not scare off the untutored modern palate. At least the original recipes are listed.



Landfill

Cosman, Madeleine. *Fabulous Feasts: Medieval Cookery and Ceremony*.
New York: George Braziller, 1976. Print. ISBN 080760898X.

The author once admitted to making up some of her “historic” recipes. (Personally, I have never seen a medieval recipe for parsley bread. And believe me, I’ve looked.) The interpretations use quite a few non-period ingredients, such as confectioner’s sugar (which contains cornstarch) and allspice.

The pictures are better, but like the recipes, they are not all medieval. The sole redeeming feature of this book is the bibliography -- which is odd, since Cosman seems not to have used it much herself. Buy it to see how far we’ve come if you absolutely must, but do **not**, under any circumstances, use this for documentation.



Pick through

Dalby, Andrew and Grainger, Sally. *The Classical Cookbook*.
Los Angeles, Calif: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2002. Print. ISBN 0892363940.

Recipes based on, or inspired by, descriptions in poetry, pictures, narratives, and the occasional recipe from the ancient Greek and Roman world. It’s much, *much* better documented than the usual attempt at this sort of thing. (Which one would expect given the authors’ academic pedigrees and subsequent books.)



Pick through

Dembinska, Maria. *Food and Drink in Medieval Poland: Rediscovering a Cuisine of the Past*.
New York: University of Pennsylvania, 1999. Print. ISBN 0812232240.

This book falls into two sections: documentary information on medieval Polish cookery, and reconstructed recipes. Likewise I was tempted to split the ratings; the documentary section is good, with well-researched material (and deserves a three-book rating). The recipes, however, I would rate at one book because they are simply guesses inspired by the documentary information. Granted: there are no surviving Polish cookbooks from the medieval period. So these may in fact be accurate reconstructions; but we will probably *never know*. To me, that makes this work unreliable -- even if, to her credit, the author candidly admits this.

Anyway, I averaged the two and rated the whole thing at two books.



Meh.

Driver, Christopher and Berriedale-Johnson, Michelle. *Pepys at Table: Seventeenth century recipes for the modern cook*. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California, 1984. Print. ISBN 0520053869.

A short description of the life of Samuel Pepys, a noted 17th diarist and gourmand. “He would have made an admirable inspector for a Restoration *Good Food Guide*”. The recipes themselves are taken from various cookery books roughly within Pepys’ lifetime (published 1653 to 1723). Thus interesting, but not within my main area of focus -- and the primary reason for my low rating.



Worth buying

Edwards, John. *The Roman Cookery of Apicius*. London: Random House, 1984. ISBN 0712610642.

Easier to read -- and substantially more accurate -- than [Vehling’s translation](#), and decently-written adapted recipes. Edwards livens up the recipes with selected other Latin writers’ quotes, e.g. Martial, Pliny, etc.



Worth buying

Friedman, David, and Elizabeth Cook. *A Miscellany, 9th Edition*. Self-published, 2000.

Excellent documentation, very good recipes (even if, in my opinion, there isn’t enough saffron used -- Cariadoc does not like the flavor). My main semi-complaint is the somewhat inconsistent recipe ordering. Of course, that’s historically accurate for this sort of work.

I don’t agree with all of the reconstructions - Cheddar cheese is too modern, for example - but this is still an excellent place to start developing a period palate and a feel for how to interpret period recipes.

(The authors have an online version available [here](#).)



Pick through

Gitlitz, David, and Linda Kay Davidson. *A Drizzle of Honey: The Lives and Recipes of Spain’s Secret Jews*. New York: St. Martin’s, 1999. Print. ISBN 0312198604.







An interesting idea - use records from the Inquisition to re-create what Spanish *conversos* (converted Jews) habitually ate. Unfortunately these sources are tertiary at best; a fifteenth-century satiric poem decrying a converso’s eating radishes and stuffed [chicken] crop is presented as what they might have eaten and turned into a recipe. Well, perhaps... but that’s authorial inference, not reliable documentation.









Worth buying






Grainger, Sally. *Cooking Apicius: Roman Recipes for Today*. New York: Prospect Books (UK), 2006. Print. ISBN 1903018447.

Nicely-explained recipes, and the theory behind the author’s reconstructions. I would have rated it more highly if the original recipes had been included - but this is really intended as a companion to their [Apicius translation](#), which does set out the originals in detail.

 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Grant, Mark. <i>Roman Cookery</i>. Grand Rapids: Serif, 1999. Print. ISBN 1897959397.</p> <p>The author presents “everyday Roman Food”, in contrast to the popular image of huge upper-class banquets with larks pickled in honey. (Or the jaguar’s earlobes, wolves’ nibble chips, and ocelot’s spleens sold by Graham Chapman in Monty Python’s <i>Life of Brian</i>.) Original recipes or descriptions are given, along with assorted other cultural information.</p>
 <p>Meh.</p>	<p>Herman, Judith and Marguerite Shalett. <i>The Cornucopia</i>. New York: Harper & Row, 1973. Print. ISBN 0060118415.</p> <p>You get a sense of this book's priorities by reading its subtitle: <i>A Kitchen Entertainment & Cook Book</i>. 15th century translations and 19th century recipes are scattered higgledy-piggledy. (A phrase that dates to 1598, according to the Oxford English Dictionary. Feel free to use that next time you need some random trivia at a cocktail party.)</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	<p>Hieatt, Constance. <i>An Ordinance of Pottage</i>. London: Prospect Books, 1988. Print. ISBN 0907325386.</p> <p>Original recipes from a 15th century English manuscript, followed by Prof. Hieatt’s recipe interpretations and a good glossary. Lots of useful glop recipes here. Mmmm... glop. I like glop.</p> <p>Sadly, this book is out of print. The Wagstaff Miscellany uses the same source.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Hieatt, Constance, and Sharon Butler. <i>Pleyn Delit</i>. Toronto: Univ of Toronto Pr, 1979. Print. ISBN 0802063667.</p> <p>A good introduction to medieval recipes. The originals are given, albeit in a hard-to-read font. Hieatt has since released a second version, adding more recipes and correcting some of the original flaws (such as “grains of paradise = cardamom”.) Hieatt apparently - and understandably - feels terrible that her initial error here has spread far and wide. Not the sort of fame she had envisioned getting through publishing...</p>
 <p>Landfill</p>	<p>Isitt, Verity. <i>Take a Buttock of Beefe</i>. Southampton: Ashford Publ., 1987. Print. ISBN 0907069576.</p> <p>Several problems with this book: the author is working from a recipe collection dated 1655 (fifty years too late for my purposes). More importantly, her redactions often have nothing to do with the original recipes -- e.g. “Jelly of Harts Horn” becomes “Strawberry Water Ice”; “To boyle Ducks after French Fashion” turns into “Cooked Chicken in Cream of Curry”. At least the originals are given, which is something. I suppose.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Klemetilä, Hannele. <i>The Medieval Kitchen: A Social History with Recipes</i>. London: Reaktion, 2012. Print. ISBN 978-1861899088.</p> <p>A nice introduction to medieval cooking, with lots of pictures from books of</p>

	<p>hours, health manuals, and so forth. A good translation from the original Finnish that does not read as the common stilted construction. (The layout, however, could have been improved - there are lots of one- or two-page inserts that are worth reading, but interrupt the text.)</p> <p>More background than actual recipes. She starts by attempting to clear up some of the common misconceptions - spices to cover rotting meat, <i>blah blah blah</i> - which is always welcome. Original recipes are not given but the sources are cited, whether primary sources or other cookbooks. My only real complaint is that the author (correctly) states that “there remain disappointingly few bread recipes from the Middle Ages”; bafflingly, her redacted recipes do not actually use any of them.</p> <p>I rated this three books, but if you have many of the other good interpreted cookbooks this might be a two.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Marks, Henry. <i>Byzantine Cuisine</i>. Self-published, 2002.</p> <p>A good overview of cooking in the Byzantine Empire (4th through 15th centuries) as expressed in poems, medical theory, and monastic documents. Well documented; some of the redactions are supposition, but the author freely admits this. Two-thirds of the book is appendices with some of the original material. Impressive especially when you consider that this is strictly an amateur work. (This has its own problems -- he translated translations, rather than using the original source, so other reviews have pointed out fallacies. But still, I think he deserves praise for doing the work.)</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Matterer, James. <i>A Boke of Gode Cookery, vol. I</i>. Self-published, 2005.</p> <p>Original recipes, generally with sources, translated and then interpreted. There are some unacknowledged post-1600 recipes, such as Shrewsbury Cakes; and some of the recipes use non-period ingredients, such as Cheddar cheese and hartshorn or baking powder. But all in all, a decent recipe book to have, especially for someone new to medieval cooking.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>McGregor, Pat. <i>Traveling Dysshes, 2nd Edition</i>. Self-published, 2002. ISBN 0-9723843-0-8.</p> <p>An excellent introduction to period cooking. Good list of non-period foods and sources for period ones. There is a decent variety of recipes to help make a period potluck easier. Original recipes are given so you can compare it with the interpretation. I don't agree with all of the redactions, but that really could be said of any cookbook.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>Peachey, Stuart. <i>The Book of Sausages 1580-1660</i>. New York: Stuart, 1998. Print. ISBN 1858041171.</p> <p>Pretty much the same comments as The Book of Breads below. This series would be much more useful if it included a bibliography!</p>

 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Rain, Eden ed. <i>The Feudal Gourmet, vol 6: A Brief Overview of Early Spanish Cuisine</i>. Self-published, 2001.</p> <p>A nicely-documented overview by the Madrone Culinary Guild in Seattle, and the reconstructions look tasty. There are a number of post-1600 recipes listed, but I would only exclude one of them -- I'll accept 1607 as the recipes are generally similar to those published in 1599. A recipe dated 1631 or 1655, however, tends to be dramatically different. Even if it's tasty, it shouldn't be there.</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	<p>Redon, Odile, Françoise Sabban, and Silvano Serventi. Edward Schneider, trans. <i>The Medieval Kitchen: Recipes from France and Italy</i>. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1998. Print. ISBN 0226706842.</p> <p>Redon, Odile, Françoise Sabban, and Silvano Serventi. <i>La Gastronomie au Moyen Age: 150 recettes de France et d'Italie</i>. Rennes: Editions Stock, 1995. ISBN 2234024021.</p> <p>Various primary-source recipes with the originals given. The reconstructions look reasonable, and there are some good shopping tips (e.g. avoid corn oil, buy rustic fruit). The French edition is almost exactly the same, but not translated for the American audience. Quite understandable... since it was published in France.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Renfrow, Cindy. <i>Take A Thousand Eggs Or More, vol. I</i>. [United States]: C. Renfrow, 1990. Print. ISBN 096285980X.</p> <p>Recipes from Thomas Austin's collection. The first volume is made up of interpreted recipes by the author. Both the original and a modern transcription are present. A good place to start developing a period palate.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>Riley, Gillian. <i>Renaissance Recipes</i>. San Francisco: Pomegranate Artbooks, 1993. Print. ISBN 1566405777.</p> <p>Middling-quality interpreted recipes with spotty attribution. The originals are not given, so it is difficult to judge the closeness of the redactions without knowing the sources. Good pictures, although they seem to be driving the text rather than the other way around.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Santich, Barbara. <i>The Original Mediterranean Cuisine</i>. Chicago, Ill: Chicago Review, 1995. Print. ISBN 155652272X.</p> <p>Decent background information on selected 15th century southern French, Italian, Spanish, and Arab recipes. The original and its translation is given along with each dish.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Sass, Lorna. <i>To the King's Taste</i>. [New York]: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1975. Print. ISBN 0870991337.</p> <p>Recipes from Forme of Cury. Her redactions are not always faithful, although the author admits this up front and originals are given. A reasonably good short glossary is included.</p>

 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Sass, Lorna. <i>To the Queen's Taste</i>. Norwich: Fletcher & Son Ltd., 1977. ISBN 0719533864.</p> <p>Recipes from various works published 1585-1615. Otherwise, pretty much the same comments as above. (There is a revised edition out, which I do not have.)</p>
 <p>Meh.</p>	<p>Savelli, Mary. <i>Tastes of Anglo-Saxon England</i>. Norfolk, England: Anglo-Saxon, 2002. Print. ISBN 1898281289.</p> <p>There are no primary sources from the pre-Norman Conquest Anglo-Saxon period that have surfaced so far. The author was “trying to produce dishes an Anglo-Saxon thane would recognize and enjoy. My other goals were to create dishes an average cook could produce and a modern diner would enjoy.” To this end she has created recipes based on the excellent documentary information found in Ann Hagen's books; Anglo-Saxon literature such as Aelfric's <i>Colloquy</i>; and Roman cookery, specifically Apicius and Anthimus.</p> <p>There are many modern intrusions into her recipes. Some examples include rolled oats (19th century), bread pans (ditto), kidney beans (New World), and summer squash (likewise). She also says that cinnamon can substitute for mastic as they share a similar taste -- which I have certainly not found to be true. The recipes look like they might taste good, but I wouldn't trust their historical accuracy.</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	<p>Scully, D. Eleanor and Terence. <i>Early French Cookery</i>. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1995. Print. ISBN 0472106481.</p> <p>Like all of Terence Scully's books, this is exhaustively documented. The redactions appear good, although I don't care for the typeface he chose for this one (it emphasizes Olde Englyshe appearance over legibility). Still, if that's my only complaint I'm doing pretty well.</p>
 <p>Meh.</p>	<p>Segan, Francine. <i>Shakespeare's Kitchen: Renaissance Recipes for the Contemporary Cook</i>. New York: Random House, 2003. Print. ISBN 0375509178.</p> <p>Shakespeare died in 1616. So why does the author take half her recipes from The Accomplisht Cook, first published in 1660? Many of the interpreted recipes do not reference the original source. This may be intentional; a quick perusal of the ones that <u>are</u> present often show unjustified changes.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Waines, David. <i>In a Caliph's Kitchen</i>. New York: Riad El-Rayyes Booksellers, 1995. Print. ISBN 1869844602.</p> <p>Recipes “selected from medieval Arabic culinary collections dating from the early ninth to the late thirteenth century.” The redacted recipes face a picture of the interpreted dish, with the original underneath. Good background information on the Arabic world, spices, preparation, and tools.</p> <p>So why did I give it a three-book rating rather than four? The cheesy pictures hurt its credibility, giving it a 1950s Good Housekeeping kind of feeling.</p>



Meh.

Willan, Anne. *Great Cooks and their recipes: from Taillevent to Escoffier*. London: Pavilion, 2000. Print. ISBN 1862054371.

This book's sole redeeming feature is its good pictures. It would have improved had the author done actual research. She translates [grains of paradise as cardamom](#) and says that medieval cooks

“spiced [ingredients] in such profusion that the original taste was lost... food was often so stale as to be almost rotten.”

Also, she says that “poudre fin” from [Taillevent](#)'s collection resembles curry powder. Well, I suppose you could make that claim... in that poudre fin was a ubiquitous mixture of spices that changed from area to area. The composition is completely different, of course. Nowhere is that made clear.



Meh.

Wood, Jacqui. *Tasting the Past: Recipes from the Stone Age to the Present*. Stroud, Gloucestershire: The History Press, 2009. Print. ISBN 978-0752447940.





The author is a food historian for a British TV program. This may explain why her emphasis is on making modern-like, non-scary dishes rather than, say, historically accurate ones. As she herself puts it:






“There was a school of thought arguing that, unless you found the actual residue of a particular meal in a pot, then you could not say categorically that our ancestors ate it. I, however, approached the subject in a different way. If we watch a TV documentary about an Amazonian tribe, we all assume that if there were tasty plants near them in the forest they would have known about them and eaten them. So I did not see why our ancestors should have been any different.”

In other words, “making stuff up and calling it historical”.

She does sometimes use actual recipes - but never with the original given so that you could judge whether her interpretation is accurate. **Hint:** it isn't.

Baking Books

 <p>Meh.</p>	<p>Ashley, William. <i>The Bread of our Forefathers: An Inquiry in Economic History</i>. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1928.</p> <p>The author's forefathers don't predate the 18th century, apparently. Discussions of the different breeds of grains grown in England during the last few hundred years, but that's about it.</p>
 <p>Meh.</p>	<p>Bailey, Adrian. <i>The Blessings of Bread</i>. New York: Gramercy, 1988. Print. ISBN 0517226359.</p> <p>A coffee-table book with no serious interest in history. Look at the period illustrations on the first forty pages, and ignore the rest.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>David, Elizabeth. <i>English Bread and Yeast Cookery</i>. Newton: Viking Penguin, 1977. ISBN 0964360004.</p> <p>One of the seminal books on baking throughout history, with many historic recipes and good detail. Exceedingly good for the novice baker. Most of the recipes are 18th century and later, however.</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	<p>Desportes, Françoise. <i>Le Pain au Moyen Âge (Bread in the Middle Ages)</i>. Paris: O. Orban, 1987. Print. ISBN 2855653509.</p> <p>The best book I've found for baker's marks (it has actual pictures of surviving dies in the Cluny). Mainly limited to France, but perhaps that's because it's in French. This makes it difficult for those who don't speak the language, obviously.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>Dupaigne, Bernard. Antonio and Sylvie Roder, trans. <i>The History of Bread</i>. New York: Harry N Abrams, 1999. Print. ISBN 0810934388.</p> <p>An oversize coffee table book. Historical eras are summed up in one page. Some decent pictures, but may be useful only to a complete novice.</p>
 <p>Meh.</p>	<p>Galavaris, George. <i>Bread and the Liturgy: the Symbolism of Early Christian and Byzantine Bread Stamps</i>. Madison, Milwaukee, and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1970.</p> <p>I thought that given the title, it would focus on secular bakers' marks. That shows my ignorance of Catholic ritual. It's actually a study of the liturgy of the early Byzantine Church. Bread, where mentioned, is strictly the unleavened Host used in services. Bread stamps in this context are used to imprint decorative elements upon the Host: crosses, fish, etc.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>Goodwin, Gillian. <i>Manchet & Trencher</i>. London: Gelofer P.s, 1983. Print. ISBN 0950652938.</p> <p>Mostly 17th-century baking recipes. There is also some fun baking trivia</p>

	<p>here. Did you know that in some Islamic traditions, Adam was the first baker? The tree of knowledge was wheat, which was reduced to its current small size for its role in the fall of Adam and Eve.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>Holt, Richard. <i>The Mills of Medieval England</i>. Oxford, UK: B. Blackwell, 1988. Print. ISBN 0631156925.</p> <p>I rated this two books, not because its scholarship is lacking, but more due to the relatively abtruse subject matter. Don't bother to read it unless you are passionate about mill technology. Or if you are interested in the subject matter solely because of its links to bread.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>Jacob, H.E. <i>Six Thousand Years of Bread</i>. New York: Lyons & Burford, 1997. Print. Reprint of the original edition of 1944. ISBN 1558215751.</p> <p>History written in a lyrical documentary style, much in favor at the time. If that doesn't annoy you, there is lots of information about bread's historical role. The book is especially good talking about ancient Egypt and Rome.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>Moritz, L.A. <i>Grain-Mills and Flour in Classical Antiquity</i>. New York: Oxford Univ., 2002. Print. Reprint of the original edition of 1958. ISBN 0198142218.</p> <p>A <u>very</u> scholarly work. I took a while to read it, because my eyes kept glazing over (and I was <i>interested</i> in this sort of thing!) The book is essentially two separate monographs slapped together: one on Greek and Roman mills, the other (surprise!) on flour. Way too technical for my level of interest, although if I were researching a master's thesis I'm sure I'd find it invaluable.</p> <p>Some fun trivia from the book, though: the Roman equivalent of "knowing one's place" is "To know the color of one's bread". That's because high-class people have refined sensibilities, so their digestion can't handle coarse bread. Peasants, of course, would get sick if they ate white bread; so you actually do them a favor by only providing them cheap and coarse stuff. This line of thought continued well into the 19th century.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>Peachey, Stuart. <i>The Book of Breads 1580-1660</i>. New York: Stuart, 1996. Print. ISBN 1858040825.</p> <p>Some useful recipes, but unfortunately the source documentation is referenced only in cryptic codes. If you already have the works, you can backtrack to figure them out (e.g. GHHK6I = <i>The Good Huswifes Handmaide for the Kitchin</i>, p. 61.) But if that's the case, why do you need this pamphlet? Sigh.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>Peachey, Stuart. <i>Bakers 1580-1660</i>. Bristol: Stuart, 1998. Print. ISBN 1858041155.</p> <p>Intended "to look at the possessions and lifestyle of bakers primarily by using details of their possessions and homes from probate inventories." A laundry list of dead bakers' stuff.</p>



It must be mine!

Phillips, Gordon. *1666 and All That: A History of the Bakers' Company*. [London]: Bakers' Co., Granta, 1993. Print. ISBN 090678297X.

The title led me to believe that the subject would be 17th century at best. Happily for me, the book was commissioned by the London Bakers' Company as a sort of sequel to [Sylvia Thrupp](#)'s work and it contains much pre-16th century information. (The title comes from the Great Fire of London, which was accidentally started by a baker to Charles II. One trivia bit from the book is that the Bakers' Company put up a plaque in 1986 acknowledging their role in the fire's start, but with enough lawyer weaseling to preclude any modern claims for damages.)

Information in the book is somewhat disjointed; the author jumps around from topic to topic and from era to era. It also skims the surface rather than being as in-depth as I would like. Still, there are lots of intriguing excerpts for me to research further. And there is a two-page color spread of the 1569 charter granted by Elizabeth I!



Pick through

Plaetinck, Walter, van der Linden, Renaat, and Mertens, Phil. *Le Rayonnement du Pain. (The Influence of Bread.)* Tielt: Imprimerie Lannoo, 1980. ISBN 9020909339.

A French coffee-table book. Some historic information, but mostly concerned with modern decorative bread. There are some great pictures of medieval heraldic wafer irons, though.



Meh.

Sheppard, Ronald, and Edward Newton. *The Story of Bread*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957.

Exceedingly dated and mostly modern. Is that a contradiction in terms? Well, what I mean is that the history is 19th century on. The "research" reflects its 1950s publication date: many absolute statements given with no supporting documentation.



Landfill

The "Staff of Life", A Short History of Milling. Adelaide: Sands and McDougall, 1883.

"Compiled by E.F.L.H." If I was the author of this vanity press, I wouldn't reveal my name either. It's a love-fest to a 19th century Australian miller named John Dunn. Two chapters of history are, um, scantily researched: the complete history of milling, from 800 BC through the (then) modern day, takes up a whopping five pages. I could do better than that in high school.



It must be mine!

Thrupp, Sylvia. *The Worshipful Company of Bakers: A Short History*. Croydon: Galleon Press, 1933.

All right, I'm biased here. Only truly useful to a bread geek. But if that's the case, congratulations! You're the target audience! It's got a black-and-white picture of the 1569 Guild charter; a little bit of information on bakers' marks; and lots of obscure history of the London guild that so far, I haven't found anywhere else.



Pick through

Watts, Martin. *The Archaeology of Mills & Milling*.
Charleston: Tempus Publishing, 2002. ISBN 0752419668.

Similar in style to, and possibly conceived as a companion to [Richard Holt](#)'s work. Many good drawings and pictures. Concentrates primarily on English milling in the pre-medieval era. If you want to see a reconstruction of an Anglo-Saxon horizontal waterwheel mill, this is the book for you.














Meh.

Ziehr, W. and Bühner, E.M. *Le Pain à Travers les Ages: Paysan, meunier, boulanger*.
(Bread Through the Ages: Peasant, miller, baker.)
Paris: Editions Hermé, 1985. ISBN 2866650115.

A French coffee table book about bread. Too bad; with a name like that I was hoping for better. Mostly modern and no documentation. Some good pictures, though, including a 5500-year-old loaf of bread discovered in Switzerland. (No, they didn't try to eat it after digging it up.)

Documentary Sources

 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>Adamson, Melitta Weiss. <i>Food in the Middle Ages: a Book of Essays</i>. New York: Garland Pub., 1995. Print. ISBN 978-0815313458.</p> <p>Ten short essays on various aspects of medieval food. The essays have essentially nothing in common - they range from a discussion on “tempering”, to a tantalizing overview of a 1451 cooking manuscript from a German monastery, to the use of pears as a pregnancy imagery in Chaucer. The authors include reputable names and some of the essays are engaging, but I wouldn’t need to read it more than once.</p> <p>I’d like to have a full translation of that German monastery manuscript, though.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Albala, Ken. <i>The Banquet: Dining in the Great Courts of Late Renaissance Europe</i>. New York: University of Illinois, 2007. Print. ISBN 978-025-031335.</p> <p>Well-documented information on banqueting in a narrow focus of years: 1520 to 1660. The areas covered include not just the types of foods used, but “national” cookery, carving, and sources of the time condemning banquets. There are a few recipes included, too.</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	<p>Albala, Ken. <i>Eating Right in the Renaissance</i>. New York: University of California, 2002. Print. ISBN 0520229479.</p> <p>To date, the best book I have read on humour theory. In a somewhat dry but excellent work, Albala documents and contrasts the various humoural theorists’ works from the 1470s to 1650. The author’s stated goal is to better understand the workings of the Renaissance mind by its ideas on food, and he does an admirably complete job.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Alcock, Joan P. <i>Food in Roman Britain</i>. Grand Rapids: Tempus, Limited, 2001. Print. ISBN 0752419242.</p> <p>Documentary evidence, rather than recipes; lots of pictures and drawings. Chapters on meat, fowl, vegetables, nuts, and so forth (as well as a lengthy section on baking). Also drinks, kitchen utensils, furniture, army diets, and more. Well documented by archaeological digs.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Arano, Luisa Cogliati. Oscar Ratti and Adele Westbrook, trans. <i>The Medieval Health Handbook (Tacuinum Sanitatis)</i>. New York: G. Braziller, 1976. Print. ISBN 0807608084.</p> <p>This is taken from four related 14th century works of humour theory, one of which Spencer translated in her book. The pictures are smaller and mostly black and white, but are more complete. I also like this translation better.</p> <p>My personal favorite: Chatting.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“Nature: it induces sleep. Usefulness: for those who delight in such an endeavor. Dangers: it causes boredom.</p>

	<i>Neutralization of the dangers: by sleeping.”</i>
	<p>Bach, Volker. <i>The Kitchen, Food, and Cooking in Reformation Germany</i>. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016. Print. ISBN 1442251271.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>Backhouse, Janet. <i>Medieval Rural Life in the Luttrell Psalter</i>. Toronto: University of Toronto, 2000. Print. ISBN 0802083994.</p> <p>A very short book with selected good-quality reproductions from a 14th century illuminated manuscript. Pictures of cooks, a banquet, farming, etc. I like the kitchen tools. One of my friends once made me a giant flesh hook based on these illustrations.</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	<p>Banham, Debby. <i>Food and Drink in Anglo-Saxon England</i>. Grand Rapids: Tempus, Limited, 2004. Print. ISBN 0752429094.</p> <p>“What did the Anglo-Saxons eat?” The author attempts to answer this, using archeological evidence. While nowhere as complete as Ann Hagen’s books, it is much easier to read. Some sections are more in-depth (such as the chapter on bread). Excellent footnotes and bibliography, too. It’s a pity the book is only 96 pages...</p>
 <p>It must be mine!</p>	<p>Brears, Peter. <i>Cooking & Dining in Medieval England</i>. Blackawton, Totnes, Devon: Prospect Books, 2008. Print. ISBN 978-1903018552.</p> <p>A gargantuan quantity of useful information about feasting and dining in the 14th and 15th centuries, backed by documentation. Also kitchen layout, tools, staffing levels... just wow.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Brooks, Phillips V. <i>Kitchen Utensils: Names, Originals, and Definitions from the Early Middle Ages to the Mid-Nineteenth Century</i>. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004. Print. ISBN 1403966192.</p> <p>A compendium of kitchen utensils, but you probably guessed that from the title. The lists are organized by type (serving dishes, drinking vessels, cutlery) and each term has a definition, documented variant spellings with sources, and the earliest known citation. Some pictures, too. So you can find out such vital information, for example, that a “pottle” dates to 1300; is a liquid measure equal to two quarts; and was additionally spelled <i>potel</i>, <i>potell</i>, <i>potelle</i>, <i>pottel</i>, and <i>pottell</i>.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Carlin, Martha, and Joel Rosenthal ed. <i>Food and Eating in Medieval Europe</i>. London: Hambledon, 1998. Print. ISBN 1852851481.</p> <p>Eleven shortish essays on various food-related topics such as food in <i>The Canterbury Tales</i>, the Anglo-Saxon feast hall, medieval wedding banquets, etc. Everyday-life type info, and worth reading.</p>



Pick through

Centre Universitaire d'Études et de Recherches Médiévales d'Aix. *Banquets et Manières de Table au Moyen Âge (Banquets and Table Manners in the Middle Ages)*. Aix-en-Provence: L'Université de Provence, 1996. ISBN 2901104389.

38 articles and 562 pages, all in modern French. The articles I've skimmed seem okay, but the collection didn't impress me enough to justify the effort of mentally translating the whole thing.



Meh.

Cheke, Val. *The Story of Cheese-Making in Britain*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1959.

Mainly concerned with the eighteenth century on. The short shrift given to early history (the chapter on "Cheese from Saxon to Tudor Times" allots twenty pages to 1100 years!) don't justify buying the book.



Worth buying

Crossley-Holland, Nicole. *Living and Dining in Medieval Paris: The Household of a Fourteenth Century Knight*. Wales: University of Wales, 1996. Print. ISBN 070831368X.

The author discusses 14th century urban French life, from the standpoint of the middle class. She also identifies who she thinks is the author of the anonymous [*Le Menagier de Paris*](#), and why.



Worth buying

Dalby, Andrew. *Dangerous Tastes: the Story of Spices*. New York: University of California, 2000. Print.

A relatively easy-to-read overview of the history of spices: the trade routes, uses, and suchlike. I found it useful, despite the standard weaknesses of such a survey (most spices have a page or two devoted to their use). The organization is a bit arbitrary and not the easiest to follow. Excellent bibliography, though.



Pick through

David, Elizabeth. *Harvest of the Cold Months: the Social History of Ice and Ices*. New York, N.Y: Viking, 1995. Print. ISBN 0670859754.

I rated this "pick through with care" not because it's a sloppy work, but because ices and sorbets date to the 1650s at the earliest. Still, an interesting read for historical value.



Worth buying

Davidson, Alan. *The Oxford Companion to Food*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999. Print. ISBN 0192115790.

Okay, this massive work (850+ 9x11-inch pages in 6 point type) is probably not complete, in that I am not sure *anyone* could get every single food item. It does not claim to list all possible fruit breeds, for example. But it ranges from aardvark to zucchini. Not bad for twenty years' worth of work!

(I pointed out to Mr. Davidson that his entry on "Shrewsbury Cakes" is incorrect, in that the earliest recorded recipe I've seen dates to 1621, rather than 1734 as published. It might have gotten a mention in the next update, if he hadn't died.)



Pick through

Dawson, Mark. *Plenti and grase: Food and Drink in a Sixteenth-Century Household*. New York: Prospect Books, 2009. ISBN 978-1903018569.

I forgot to make any notes on this when reading it, and only got around to updating the bibliography several months later. I can't remember what it was about beyond what's mentioned in the title. Based on that non-impact, I'm giving it a 2-book rating.



Worth buying

de Worde, Wynkyn. *The Boke of Kerunyge*. Lanham: Archaeological Institute of America, 2003. Print. ISBN 1870962192.

Or, as it would be written today, *The Book of Carving*. A facsimile of the 1508 original dealing with proper table manners. Fun information to properly serve a meal, spelling out how to fold the three required tablecloths, wrapping bread for service, and how many trenchers each guest should have based on rank. As promised by the title, carving methods are also revealed:

*“To sauce a capon.
Take up a capon and take off the right leg and the right wing and
arrange it on the platter as if it were going to fly, and serve your lord.”*



It must be mine!

Egan, Geoff. *Medieval Household; Daily Living c.1150-c.1450*. London: Stationery Office Books, 1998. ISBN 0112904904.

The sixth book in the Museum of London series, detailing medieval finds from archeological excavations around London: things that fall under the household label. This means lots of spoons, candlesticks, keys and locks, trivets, etc. The author apologizes that for budgetary reasons, they used mostly pictures rather than hand-drawings; personally, I find the pictures easier to see and use for documentation.



Meh.

Feild, Rachael. *Irons in the Fire: a History of Cooking Equipment*. Ramsbury, Marlborough, Wiltshire: Crowood, 1984. Print. ISBN 0946284555.

“The Black Death brought prosperity and bricks to medieval England.” That about sums up the depth of this book's research.

And I do mean depth. Some nice pictures of medieval firedogs and trivets, though. (If you don't know what those are, well -- read this book or, better yet, a more scholarly one like [Geoff Egan's](#).)



Meh.

Flandrin, Jean-Louis, Massimo Montanari, and Albert Sonnenfeld. *Food: A Culinary History*. New York: Penguin (Non-Classics), 2000. Print. ISBN 0140296581.

An assortment of short articles, organized from ancient Greek and Roman times on. The quality is uneven: the first five pieces (all on ancient times) each use the same vastly over-cited quote from Brillat-Savarin (“Tell me what you eat and I will tell you what you are”). This epigram was authored 2000 years later than their subject matter!

Also, some of the later material on medieval times is written with a blatant

	<p>Marxist spin (i.e. proto-capitalist nobles unjustly enriching themselves by exploiting the downtrodden workers' labor) -- I find this distracting, and just get annoyed at the preaching.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>Fletcher, Nichola. <i>Charlemagne's Tablecloth: A Piquant History of Feasting</i>. New York: Phoenix (an Imprint of The Orion Group Ltd), 2005. Print. ISBN 0753819740.</p> <p>Random anecdotes in no particular order. The bibliography is good, though - the author made an attempt to document the tales she chose for the book. They range from pre-history to near-modern, so it's difficult to use as a form of documentation.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Freedman, Paul H. <i>Out of the East: Spices and the Medieval Imagination</i>. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008. Print. ISBN 978-0300151350.</p> <p>An interesting read on <u>why</u> medieval Europe coveted spices - not just for their flavors, but also fashion, conspicuous consumption, medicine via humour theory, and ultimately their "virtue" and symbolic nature.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>Furnivall, Frederick J. ed. <i>Caxton's Book of Curtesye</i>. Washington D.C.: Early English Text Society, 1998. Reprint of the original 1868 edition. Print. ISBN 0859919501.</p> <p>A 15th century book of manners. There are two versions of the text, one circa 1477 and the other dated 25 years later; they are presented on opposite pages for comparison. The poem enjoins a child to</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>"shall not Also at the borde youre naylis pare, Ne pike not youre teth wyth youre knyff"</i>.</p> <p>Seems fairly sensible, really.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Furnivall, Frederick J. ed. <i>Early English Meals and Manners</i>. Detroit: Singing Tree Press, 1969. Reprint of the 1867 edition.</p> <p>Many books of manners and health collected together. They run the gamut from "<i>a lytyl Reporte of how Young People should behave</i>" to how to stay healthy, to the best way to carve meats at the high table. Utterly fascinating, and I doubt that one percent of this was ever actually followed.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>Grant, Mark. <i>Galen on Food and Diet</i>. New York: Routledge, 2000. Print. ISBN 0415232333.</p> <p>I found this hard to read; but then, I don't generally enjoy vivid descriptions of black and yellow bile. Especially before breakfast. Galen did much to codify humour theory -- that what you eat affects your physical health by its humours, or properties; this was the basis for European medicine, and perhaps cookery, for most of the Middle Ages. One example, chosen (<i>ahem</i>) purely at random:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Garlic "heat[s] the body, as well as both thinning the thick juices and cutting through the viscous juices in it... on the whole they should not be</i></p>

served until [it has] been cooked. But garlic is eaten not just as an accompaniment to bread, but also as a medicine for the health, because it contains aperient [laxative] and discutient [dissolving] powers."



It must be mine!

Hagen, Ann. *A Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Food & Drink: Processing and Consumption*. Pinner, Middlesex, England: Anglo-Saxon Books, 1994. Print. ISBN 0951620983.

Hagen, Ann. *A Second Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Food & Drink: Production & Distribution*.

Hockwold cum Wilton, Norfolk, England: Anglo-Saxon Books, 1995. Print. ISBN 1898281122.

Two (unfortunately, poorly-bound) comprehensive works on early Anglo-Saxon food. The books cover roughly from the 5th century to the 11th. Documentary evidence, rather than recipes; but knowing the breeds of cows kept, for example, is useful stuff if you are trying to judge how much meat we get per animal as compared to what they could. One of my favorite bits: the Saxons would dip birch twigs in liquid yeast, hang dry, and store it that way -- their equivalent of today's modern dried yeast packets.

The two books have been re-issued as one in a much better binding, which I do not have.



It must be mine!

Hammond, P.W. *Food and Feast in Medieval England*.

Grand Rapids: Sutton Publishing, 1998. Print. ISBN 0905778251.

A good read, which counts for a lot on a fairly dry subject. Hammond does a surprisingly in-depth overview of what people ate (breaking it down by country, town, and gentry), as well as table manners and feast menus. Many good pictures and drawings.



Pick through

Hampton Court Palace. *The Tudor Kitchens*.

Printline Limited, 1991.

Pretty pictures of the kitchens at Hampton Court (duh) that have been redone in their original 16th century style. Unfortunately, a fair number of typos and no documentation; seems aimed as an impulse purchase for the tourist trade.



Meh.

Harrison, Molly. *The Kitchen in History*.

New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972. ISBN 0684133024.

Some decent drawings of kitchen equipment. Unfortunately, the author also believes that medieval food was heavily spiced to disguise the taste of rotting meat. Sigh... we'll probably never get rid of this myth. *Bark!*



Worth buying

Henisch, Bridget Ann. *The Medieval Cook*.

London: Boydell Press, 2009. ISBN 978-1843834380.

A decent introduction to the duties and perceptions of medieval cooks. I didn't learn anything new, but it's a good starter that pulls in a fair amount of disparate information into one place.



Pick through

Huggett, Jane. *The Mirror of Health: Food, Diet, and Medical Theory 1450-1660*. New York: Stuart, 1995. Print. ISBN 1858040760.

A good brief overview, but incomplete. The attribution is also inconsistent. Still, a worthwhile starting point. My favorite quote is from *How to Live a Hundred Years*, written by Luigi Cornaro in 1562:

“Bread is above all things man’s proper food.”

Some things never change.



Worth buying

Jaine, Tom ed. *Oxford Symposium on Food & Cookery 1988: The Cooking Pot*. London: Prospect Books, 1989. ISBN 0907325424.

That year’s symposium proceedings: twenty-five short articles on such varied subjects as the Maya chocolate pot, cannibalism, mortars and pestles, and medieval French pots. The articles are good, short, overviews; generally not more than a couple of pages.



Pick through

Jobard, E. ed. *Essai sur l’Histoire de la Moutarde de Dijon (Essay on the History of Dijon Mustard)*. Luzarches: Réunis de Senlis, 1978. Reprint of the original 19th century edition.

A vanity press work, put together with a high degree of care. The cover is tooled leather (with a drawing of the mustard plant), and the pages are carefully sewn together. My wife, who has studied bookbinding, tells me this is a very good quality book.

The book itself is small and quite short. Oh, and in French. The most important thing for my interests is that Dijon mustard, in its current tasty form, dates only to the early 18th century. However, the city itself was known for high-quality mustard production since the 13th century. So what makes Dijon-style mustard different? It’s traditionally made with verjuice, not vinegar.



Pick through

Kurlansky, Mark. *Cod*. New York: Penguin (Non-Classics), 1998. Print. ISBN 0140275010.

I enjoyed this book and learned more than I expected. However, the back cover does a better job proving the subtitle (“A Biography of the Fish That Changed the World”) than does the main text.



Pick through

Kurlansky, Mark. *Salt: A World History*. New York: Penguin Books, 2003. Print. ISBN 0142001619.

A popular history rather than one directed at scholars. This is not necessarily a disqualifier; but it does mean no footnotes for attribution (despite a lengthy bibliography). The narrative is somewhat disjointed, as it leaps from one anecdote to the next. Some are documentably false, such as the one about Charlemagne eating Roquefort. Still, as a start you could do much worse.



Meh.

Lysaght, Patricia ed. *Milk and milk products from Medieval to Modern Times*. Edinburgh: Published by Canongate Academic in association with the Department of Irish Folklore, University College Dublin and the European Ethnological Research Centre, Edinburgh, 1994. Print. ISBN 1898410127.

Proceedings of the Ninth International Conference on Ethnological Food Research, held in 1992. The book consists of many short articles on varied topics revolving around milk. As is often the case with symposium proceedings, the articles are generally well-documented; however, their scope varies wildly and -- despite the title -- very little has to do with medieval times.



Meh.

Mead, William Edward. *The English Medieval Feast*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1967.

The book starts reasonably well, with decent factual research. But then it slips into an anti-medieval screed: (after quoting a recipe)

“If, by some miracle, a satisfactory dish resulted from vague directions of this sort, the cook was certainly to be congratulated.”

Or: *“One might almost suspect that the cooks were aiming to render food unfit for human consumption.”*

And Mead reiterates the oh-so-superior belief that spices were primarily used to cover the taste of rotting meat.



Meh.

Mennell, Stephen. *All Manners of Food*. New York: University of Illinois, 1995. Print. ISBN 0252064909.

The book is subtitled *“Eating and Taste in England and France from the Middle Ages to the Present”*, but don’t be fooled. Most of the book is concerned with the 18th century on. More to the point, this is a work of historical sociology rather than culinary history. The author is primarily concerned with how attitudes toward food differed from England to France. Very well documented, but not directed to my interests so I ended up basically skimming the last third.



Worth buying

Paston-Williams, Sara. *The Art of Dining: A History of Cooking & Eating*. New York: Harry N Abrams, 1994. Print. ISBN 0810919400.

Gorgeous pictures of houses kept in the British National Trust, arranged from late medieval through Edwardian times. Also a decent overview of various foods for each period. The author includes recipes “appropriate to the time of each house”. Well... the original is given, at least, so that you can determine the accuracy of that statement. Or lack thereof. Basically, just ogle the pictures.



Pick through

Rohde, Eleanour Sinclair. *The Old English Herbals*. Minneapolis: Dover Publications, 1971. Reprint of the original edition of 1922. ISBN 048626193X.

Descriptions and snippets from herb books, dating from the 10th through the 17th centuries. Mostly background information on plants, although a bit of humour theory is mentioned.



Pick through

Ross, Barbara trans. and ed. *Accounts of the Stewards of the Talbot Household at Blakemere 1392-1425*.
Keele: Centre for Local History, University of Keele, 2003. Print. ISBN 0953602044.

Transcribed audits of household expenses for the 14th century Talbot household. Bean-counting of the most literal sort. Thus extremely boring, although the information is undoubtedly useful to someone -- how else will you know that this household of (approximately) 40 people consumed over forty thousand loaves of bread or 17 pounds of pepper in a year?



It must be mine!

Scully, Terence. *The Art of Cookery in the Middle Ages*.
Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Boydell, 1995. Print. ISBN 0851156118.

Unlike many of Terence Scully's other works, this is not a translated recipe collection. It is his view of *why* medieval people cooked the way they did -- humour theory and medicine, ingredient availability or lack of same, culture, and so forth. The author has axes to grind with which not all food researchers agree, but he certainly sets forth prodigious documentation to support his ideas. And I certainly can't say that's a bad thing.



Pick through

Seton, Walter ed. *A Fifteenth Century Courtesy Book*.
London: Oxford University Press for the Early English Text Society, 1962. Reprint of the original edition of 1914.

Actually three separate texts: a 15th century book of manners, an undated but probably contemporaneous Franciscan set of rules titled "The Thirde Order of Seynt Franceys", and a 15th century rules manuscript for their sister order, the Order of Saint Clare, called "The Rewle of Sustris Menouresses enclosid".

The first text is a short, six-page work for servants, "A Generall Rule to Teche euery Man to Serve a Lorde or Mayster". How to set tables, serve food, what the order of servants is in the household, etc. I liked it but it was too short.

The other two detail rules for each order - which if you're not interested, is pretty dry.



Pick through

Shephard, Sue. *Pickled, Potted, and Canned: How the Art and Science of Food Preserving Changed the World*.
New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001. Print. ISBN 0743216334.

Decent information on the different methods of preserving foods throughout history. The main problem I have, however, is the lack of citations -- Shephard cites many interesting anecdotes. Unfortunately, many of these cry out "urban myth" to me. An example:

"Louis XIII of France loved [dried mushrooms'] woodland scent so much that he lay on his deathbed in 1643 threading mushrooms onto strings for drying."

A good story, certainly. Actual historical fact? It seems unlikely, and without documentation I can't judge the veracity of the source material.



Meh.

Smith, R.E.F. and Christian, David. *Bread & Salt: A social and economic history of food and drink in Russia.*

Cambridge [Cambridgeshire]: Cambridge UP, 1984. Print. ISBN 052125812X.

Despite its name, there is not much in here on bread -- the book focuses on the history of Russian food in general. This is not inherently bad. However, most of the book deals with the 18th century on. Granted: earlier source material is scarce, but.



Worth buying

Spencer, Judith, trans. *The Four Seasons of the House of Cerruti.*

New York: Facts on File, 1984. Print. ISBN 0816001383.

Humour theory from Abulcasim's 11th century manuscript. This edition was illuminated in 14th century Italy, and is also useful for looking at clothing from that period. The healthful uses and dangers of ingredients are given, as well as those of fabric types, rooms, and activities such as vomiting and sporting contests. Personality traits (shyness, anger) are also listed. Good large, color pictures.



Meh.

Tannahill, Reay. *Food in History.*

New York: Stein and Day, 1973. Print. ISBN 0812814371.

As the title suggests, the book covers a broad range of times and topics. It suffers from the usual defects of its type -- a lack of detail, which is unavoidable if the author truly wants to cover everything; and a weakness for neat-sounding but poorly-documented anecdotes. Okay for an overview but not for anything more in-depth.



Pick through

Toussaint-Samat, Maguelonne. Andrea Bell, trans. *History of Food.*

New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1998. Print. ISBN 076070-9696.

This is such a broad topic that it is perhaps easy to forgive the author for not researching as thoroughly as she should have (some stories cited are documentably apocryphal). What I cannot forgive, however, is her bias that everything good was invented by the French. Yes, quite a few things were -- but many more weren't; a more objective researcher would admit that, and it calls all her research into question.



Pick through

Wheaton, Barbara Ketcham. *Savoring the Past: The French Kitchen and Table from 1300 to 1789.*






New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996. ISBN 0684818574.

This work mentions that some past food historians have translated grains of paradise as cardamom... **but says that it is wrong!** Pretty good information on cooking methods and types of foods. Few pictures. Only the first hundred pages deals with pre-1600, so I would have liked more detail.



Wilhelm, Stephen, and James E. Sagen. *A History of the Strawberry: from Ancient Gardens to Modern Markets.*

Berkeley: University of California, 1972.

<p>Pick through</p>	<p>Most people probably don't know that the modern strawberry is a hybrid of the European woods strawberry, the California beach strawberry, and the Chilean strawberry. Even fewer probably care. I found it interesting, though, in an overly-technical kind of way.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>Wilson, C. Anne, ed. <i>'Banquetting Stuffe': The fare and social background of the Tudor and Stuart banquet.</i> Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1991. Print. ISBN 0748601031.</p> <p>Papers from a Leeds Symposium. Good background information, especially on sugar. Much of it is mid- to late-17th century (which to be fair is, in fact, Stuart).</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Wilson, C. Anne. <i>Food and Drink in Britain: From the Stone Age to the 19th Century.</i> Chicago: Academy Chicago Publishers, 1991. ISBN 0897333640.</p> <p>A reprint of the 1973 British edition. Scholarship has advanced since this was first published, but it is still a good overview for basic documentary information -- although footnotes are somewhat scanty. The book is organized by broad food groups (wild game, dairy, cereals) and moves forward from Neolithic to the 1800s or so within each chapter. Original recipes are scattered throughout, but this is not a cookbook.</p>
 <p>Pick through</p>	<p>Wilson, C. Anne, ed. <i>Waste Not, Want Not: Food Preservation.</i> Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1991. Print. ISBN 0748601198.</p> <p>Six brief articles from a Leeds Symposium on Food History, dealing with smoking, potting, and other ways of preserving food. Only about 25% of the book is concerned with pre-18th century times, so it is of limited use for my interests. I will say that it is well-researched though.</p>
 <p>Worth buying</p>	<p>Woolgar, C.M. ed. <i>Food in Medieval England: Diet And Nutrition.</i> Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006. Print. ISBN 0199273499.</p> <p>A series of papers that look at various aspects of medieval English diet primarily through archeology. The authors do not limit themselves to describing bones found in rubbish pits (although that's there, too) but also address changes in nutrition, the typical urban diet vs. what was eaten in monasteries, and regional differences both within England and between the island and Europe. It seems to be well documented and while it's a bit dry, there's lots of good information there.</p> <p>I'm particularly amused to know that "at Glastonbury Abbey, we know how much came from the monastic garden, and the calculation can be made that garlic supplies were sufficient for a monk to have three cloves of garlic per day." Compared to monks, I don't consume that much.</p>
 <p>Landfill</p>	<p>Wright, Clifford A. <i>A Mediterranean Feast.</i> New York: Morrow, 1999. Print. ISBN 0688153054.</p> <p>This book is a massive tease: it has a promising title, enormous heft and on the</p>

cover is a late 15th century Botticelli painting of, yes, a Mediterranean feast. The history, ecology, and geographical information appears okay for its brevity, but the recipes are all completely modern! I felt cheated -- so it gets a zero book rating.