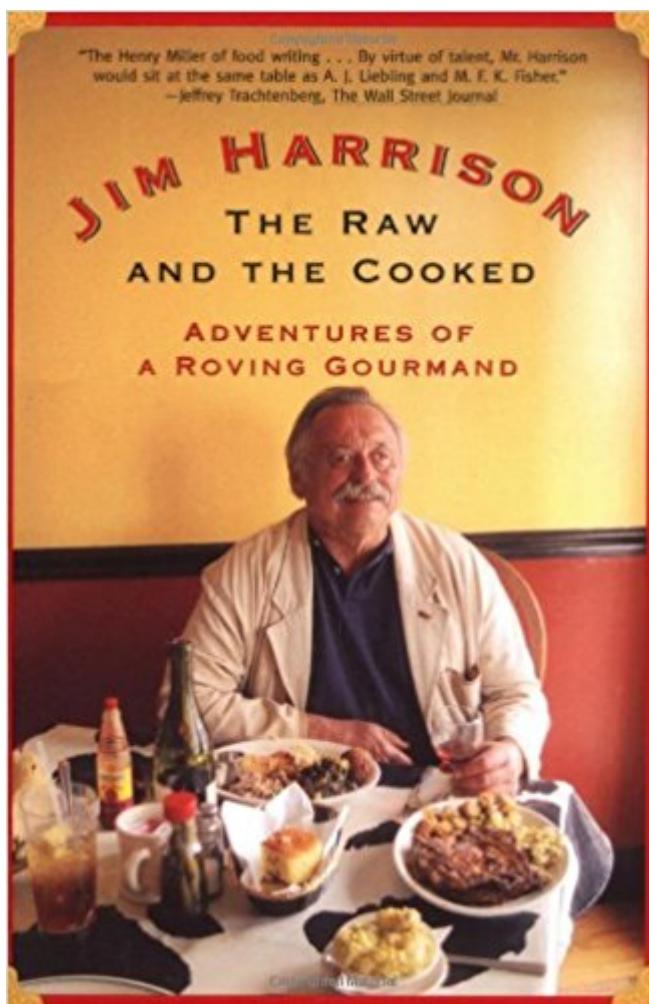


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# The Raw And The Cooked: Adventures Of A Roving Gourmand



## Synopsis

Jim Harrison is one of this country's most beloved writers, a muscular, brilliantly economic stylist with a salty wisdom. For more than twenty years, he has also been writing some of the best essays on food around, now collected in a volume that caused the Santa Fe New Mexican to exclaim: "To read this book is to come away convinced that Harrison is a flat-out genius"; one who devours life with intensity, living it roughly and full-scale, then distills his experiences into passionate, opinionated prose. Food, in this context, is more than food: It is a metaphor for life." From his legendary Smart and Esquire columns, to present-day pieces including a correspondence with French gourmet Gerard Oberle, fabulous pieces on food in France and America for Men's Journal, and a paean to the humble meatball, *The Raw and the Cooked* is a nine-course meal that will satisfy every appetite."Our 'poet laureate of appetite' [Harrison] may be, but the collected essays here reflect much more." John Gaterno, *The Dallas Morning News*"[A] culinary combo plate of Hunter S. Thompson, Ernest Hemingway, Julian Schnabel, and Sam Peckinpah...." Jane and Michael Stern, *The New York Times Book Review*"Jim Harrison is the Henry Miller of food writing. His passion is infectious." Jeffrey Trachtenberg, *The Wall Street Journal*

## Book Information

Paperback: 288 pages

Publisher: Grove Press; Reprint edition (September 17, 2002)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 080213937X

ISBN-13: 978-0802139375

Product Dimensions: 5.6 x 0.8 x 8.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 54 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #94,702 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #48 in Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Cooking Methods > Raw #183 in Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Cooking Education & Reference > Essays #468 in Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Regional & International > U.S. Regional

## Customer Reviews

Jim Harrison's *The Raw and the Cooked* extols our profound (and precarious) relationship to what we eat, and to the natural world. Compiled from the author's much-loved Esquire, Smart, and Men's Journal columns, the book offers charging personal panoramas in the guise of food essays. In

pieces with titles like "Conscious Dining," "Hunger, Real and Unreal," and "Repulsion and Grace," Harrison--a kind of dharma bum cum foodie--takes his readers into realms of taste and feeling, spirit and body. "We are often like autistic children," he writes, "unable to connect experiences, especially if we want something interesting to eat." A Michigan "outlander," he nonetheless travels wide and can tell of the "tummy thrills" engendered by trips to restaurants like Manhattan's Babbo, meals planned and meals remembered. But the journeys he likes best involve hunting or foraging, his personal salves: "I arrived home in a palsied state," he writes. "To set the brakes, I wandered for hours in the woods looking for morels. At one point I wandered three hours to find four morels. I did however gather enough to cook our annual spring rite, a simple sautÃƒÂ© of the mushrooms, wild leeks and sweetbreads." A warning: Harrison can lick his spiritual wounds publicly for long stretches, and not all readers will find his swaggering muscularity to their taste. Those who follow him are, however, rewarded by contact with his passion and sly, world-colliding depictions: "The dinner was a mystical experience," he writes, "and as such you must live through it to fully understand the mysticity ... less apparent when I got up next morning in a driving rainstorm with the usual flooded freeways." --Arthur Boehm --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

A rumination on the unholy trinity of sex, death and food, this long-awaited collection of gastronomic essays reads like the love child of M.F.K. Fisher and James Thorne on acid. Harrison poet, novelist and screenplay writer perhaps best known for *Legends of the Fall* and *Just Before Dark* writes with a passion for language equal to his passion for good food. His thick, muscular phrases tumble off the tongue: you can almost hear him sampling the language as deliberately as he does his French burgundies, and with as much genuine pleasure. The essays filled with sightings of big names (Jack Nicholson, Peter Matthiessen) take readers from meals in Harrison's homes in northern Michigan and New Mexico, to delicacies in New York, Los Angeles and Paris; Harrison's palate, while refined, is refreshingly earthy. He is a lover of duck thighs, pigs' feet, calves' brains, foie gras, confit, sweetbreads, game birds and mussels, served with exquisite wines and "shovels of garlic." Perhaps not surprisingly, Harrison also ruminates on gout, weight and indigestion. But to him, the trade-off is worth it: "Only through the diligent use of sex and, you guessed it, food," he writes, "can we further ourselves, hurling our puny 'I ams' into the face of twenty billion years of mute, cosmic history. With every fanny glance or savory bite you are telling a stone to take a hike, a mountain that you are alive, a star that you exist." Equally recommended for the literary crowd and armchair cooks (although perhaps not for vegetarians). Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This

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Jim Harrison has a grand appetite for food. Quantity, to him, seems to be as satisfying as the quality of what he's eating. He also often equates food with sex. In his novel the "English Major" he has his character eat a steak in a Montana diner that's downright arousing. "My porterhouse had a labial rose rareness and I thought about how things get confused with desire." In another of his stories, "The Great Leader," a character favors menudo, a Mexican dish made with tripe, because as he says, "the labial texture made him horny." Harrison also likes to quantify his food. His main character in "The English Major" has the best French fries of his life at that same diner in Montana. Seven is the number of whiskeys another character in another book prefers to have in one sitting. At a tavern near Casper, Wyoming, one character enjoys "one of the top five burgers of his life in the category unfrozen half-pound patty." As you might expect food is also classified and equated with sexual desire in a number of the essays in "The Raw and Cooked," this collection of Harrison food writing which is mainly reprinted from columns he wrote for "Esquire" and other magazines. Everything he does and experiences, Harrison approaches with gusto, even more so with food and food writing. For him, food is an emotional experience that is often transcendent. Mornings herald a new day to enjoy because he can eat once again. For Harrison just as with Proust, food can also bring on an epiphany. He often becomes philosophical, "On long road trips, I have a weakness for biscuits with sausage gravy, a nutritional holocaust unless you're bucking bales or hand-digging well pits. When I order this dish, covering it with a fine pinkish haze of Tabasco, I remind myself that the following day is a fresh start." That's from "Cooking Your Life," an essay about the connections food has with memories. It's my favorite of his forty-odd ruminations. And for me it evokes the Saturday morning Grits and Gravy special at Friederick's Family Restaurant in Fennimore, Wis., which makes it to my personal Top Ten List and where they always make sure to keep their crash cart fully charged. Food, sorry to say, has given Harrison a nagging case of (the) gout. Food, luckily, is also the inspiration for this collected volume that is satisfying in way not easily described. Plus there's a killer recipe for meatballs that will become for you, as it is for Harrison, not only a balm but also a food nostrum well worth partaking. [4.5 stars]

Much aspire

A collection of Jim Harrison's food writing over several decades. Great stuff for fans or foodies in general.

If you enjoy fine, articulate commentary, this is the book for you. JH comments upon food, nature, sex...all things of a sensitive nature.... and does it memorably, zestfully and with humor. The one irritation for me was the "name dropping", but one could say that habit contributes to the understanding of the author's personality. Jim Harrison's a bit of an "open book", and one comes to feel a sense of familiarity with him. I haven't read his poems, but look forward to the experience. For me, this book will stay in my library pending another reading or a search for a remarkable recipe. It can NOT be categorized as a "recipe book", however....more a source for technique.

This was one of several Jim Harrison books that have been ordered. Tells more about his lifestyle and you get to know more about the author's likes and dislikes regarding his eating and drinking preferences.

It was just a pleasure to read such a well written book on food from one of the great American writers. Harrison's prose is just brilliant. I particularly identified with Harrison's hunting adventures in the American Midwest. The one thing about the book that I didn't love was Harrison's blunt criticism of American food and wine. I suppose that this is somewhat forgivable considering that this book is now ten years old (and much of the content was written twenty years ago). Food and wine in America have made great strides in the past two decades. I would love to read his current impression.

Great book giving you a glimpse into the mind of Jim Harrison and a few of his passions. I will try many of the foods and wines and restaurants mentioned.

As an Aussie I hadn't heard much of Jim Harrison but I did know he was an American literary icon. Well after one page I can say he is my icon. His wording and imagery are second only to his passion, at times it feels as I'm experiencing a part of history. I'm not a massive reader, spending most of my time reading cook books, but I'm so grateful for this book, I just hope my friends forgive me for constantly quoting every beautiful, funny sentence that this like minded glutton is able to put in words

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