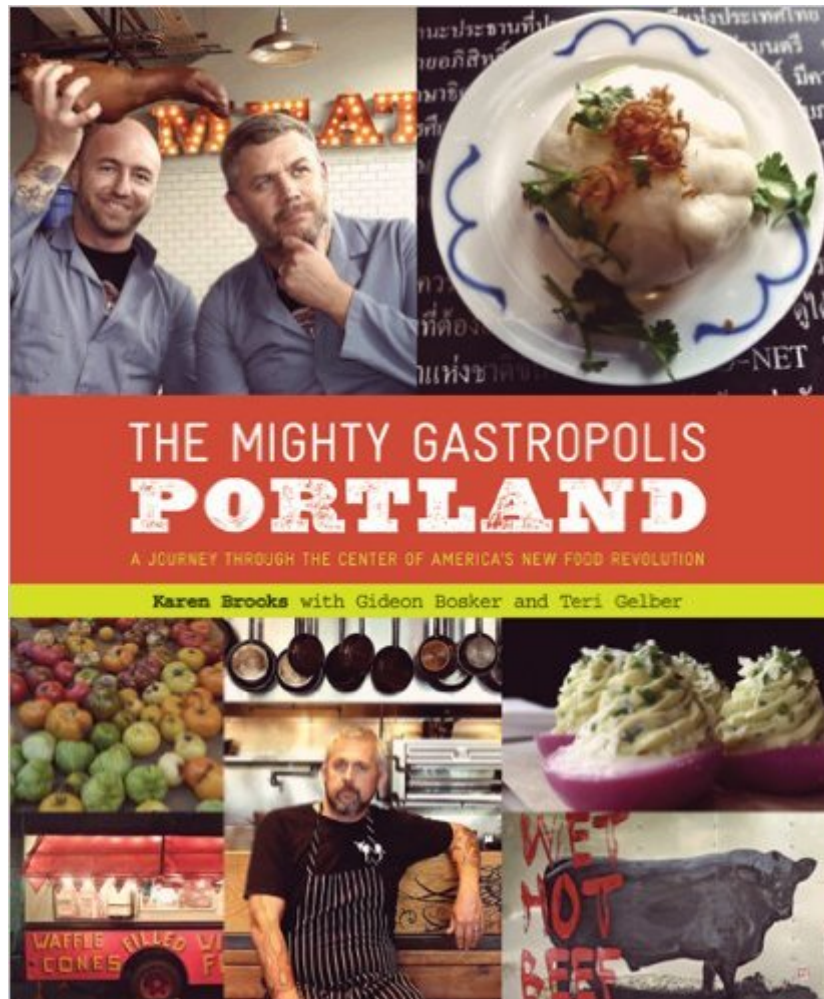


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# The Mighty Gastropolis: Portland: A Journey Through The Center Of America's New Food Revolution



## Synopsis

The Mighty Gastropolis: A Journey Through the Center of America's Food Revolution charts the rise of one of the country's most talked about food and dining destinations, Portland, Oregon, a place former Gourmet Editor and food icon Ruth Reichl calls "the crucible of New American cooking." The author goes deep behind the scenes to explore the kitchens, personal lives, and mindsets of Portland's celebrated cooks to chronicle, with humor and panache, a people's army of maverick chefs, artisans, obsessives, farmers, food carters, and plucky pioneers who have created a risk-taking, no rules food town unlike any other: one that is exporting its culinary ethos, innovations, and sensibilities to America's gastronomic power zones in New York, LA, Chicago, and countless other cities that are coming under its spell: a spell and culinary imagination that, according to Bon Appetit Restaurant and Drinks Editor, Andrew Knowlton, emanates from "a city thriving with creativity, passion, and an anything-goes attitude for all things edible." Among Portland chefs whose work, culinary output, and cooking pearls are profiled in this book are those whose rise-to-stardom stories, picture-perfect dishes, and iconoclastic innovations now slather the pages of Bon Appetit, Saveur, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Food and Wine, GQ and The Huffington Post; as well as the Food Channel. The authors introduce you to Pok Pok's Andy Ricker, a pioneering, chicken wingmeister who gambled all on a Thai chicken shack in his front yard and now rules the roost in New York; and Le Pigeon's Gabriel Rucker, the freewheeling flavor genius (and James Beard Rising Star 2011) who power drills lamb heads in his basement like a hit man in Goodfellas. You'll also encounter the artisanal know-how at Olympic Provisions, whose chefs have spawned their own Slow Salumi movement; and chocolatier David Briggs, whose nationally celebrated Raleigh Bar-he makes them in the storeroom of a cult sandwich shop-has re-imagineered the iconic Snickers bar, catapulting this salted caramel-meets-pecan and chocolate nougat confection into a new galaxy of pleasure, prompting Bon Appetit's Andrew Knowlton to fawn, "the best chocolate candy I've had." In The Mighty Gastropolis, you will learn, ingredient by ingredient, experiment by experiment, dish by dish, how Portland's culinary cognoscenti have re-imagined and reconfigured restaurant culture for modern times and established a new paradigm for how to succeed in the fiercely competitive, no-chops-barred worlds of both hi- and lo-fi dining. The result, as Thomas Lauderdale, founder of Pink Martini, explains, "is a hilarious, heart-warming, punk-rock portrait of a daringly creative Mecca showing the rest of America a better way to eat-and live." This is a landmark contribution to the literature of food. And, perhaps best of all, the book's recipes are roadmaps to rarified states of gastro-nirvana.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book features excellent food writing about the emergence of Portland as a culinary mecca. It features many of the chefs and food styles that have made Portland a great food city. While I do not live in Portland, I have visited many, many times, and frequent restaurants of all price levels when I visit. This book does a great job of capturing the eclectic and interesting food vibe that is Portland and includes some excellent recipes by some of Portland's most well known chefs.

The Mighty Gastropolis: Portland: A Journey through the Center of America's New Food Revolution. This is a bubbly, fun, well written romp through Portland's food scene and why it is in the unlikely forefront of new ideas about how to cook, how to serve and how to eat food of every kind.

This book is unique in the fact that you can tell Karen Brook's actually knows and cares about every business in it. The pictures are personal and beautiful, the stories are informational and interesting. I've even tried some of the recipes and they're amazing! Da Sterling Bombs by Two Tarts Bakery (pg. 171) were a personal favorite. One other really great feature is the cover. The back side is map of Portland with all the places in the book highlighted. Truly a wonderful purchase and I recommend anyone involved with anything Portland to buy it!

Karen's experience in Portland's culinary community shines bright in this amazing story of how Portland got the reputation it enjoys today. I've long wondered the reasons why Portland rose to fame, beyond the obvious great produce, great wines & beers, etc. I knew there was more to it.

Karen sums it all up nicely in this book that you just can't put down. I read it from cover to cover non-stop. Portlanders will be proud of this book. Non-Portlanders will marvel at it and wonder how they implement these lessons of success in their cities. And everyone will enjoy it: there's something for everyone in *The Mighty Gastropolis*.

This book is an insider view of Portland's throbbing punk rock food scene. Karen Brooks is the Tom Wolfe of food writing. Her vivid stories of Portland's top underground chefs and their uncompromising creativity are an inspiring read whether or not you live in Portland. The signature recipes that she somehow extracted from these chefs are alone worth the price.

It's almost impossible to grasp the non-stop carnival of food in Portland, but Karen Brooks does a marvelous job of capturing the spirit that comes from the personalities behind one of the most exciting--if not THE most exciting--food cities in the USA. This is absolute required reading for anyone into Portland's food scene, and a must-read for anyone living in Portland. If anyone is not aware of what's going on here while they go about their daily lives, this will be an eye-opener. For anyone outside of Portland who has an interest in food, or spends any time watching Bourdain or any of the chef-based Food Network shows, this should cause a flurry of activity on Expedia. (The local travel bureaus should be very thankful for this book.) I have interviewed a few of the subjects profiled in *The Mighty Gastropolis*. Karen digs deep into the chefs' and the artisans' backgrounds, giving us a new appreciation for the restaurants and shops we visit. These are obsessed talented folks who do what they do incredibly well. And their obsessions are our gain (experiential AND on the scale!) Thanks to Karen for giving us cause to appreciate the bounty -- and the talent -- we have here in Oregon. I'm not a voracious book reader by any means. But this one I consumed in two sittings the day it was released. I will be going back to read it again, and will someday foray into the recipes. As someone who has a small business built around showcasing the people who make up the Portland food scene, many of whom are in this delicious book, I can't recommend *The Mighty Gastropolis* more emphatically than to say put down your fork and pick up your reader. Don't worry, it'll all still be there when you're done.

My wife and I honeymooned in Portland and Seattle a few years back pretty much because of our love of food. This book takes me right back there from the nose to tail restaurants, the bakeries, to the food carts. Usually food books about a city come up short on depth but this one does a great job of bringing these chefs passion for what they do to the forefront. Love it.

In short, this book is a must read! Not only does Karen Brooks write pregnant phrases like "pork is the new salmon" in the Northwest--not a slim insight for a writer who cut her eye teeth as a writer on one of the earliest vegetarian cook books--she does so with an incisive analysis of a scene that not only represents a sea change in Portland, it symbolizes a revolution in eating in America. It is about "democracy in America" where the "prophets" of cuisine are dressed down (like all the prophets were) uttering new truths about not only what to eat and how to cook, but how to eat. This is a revolutionary response to "fast food living" that incorporates the American struggle for finding home, nourishment and joy at prices attainable for the common man (and woman). In fact, Ms. Brooks is the prophet spirit herself, who perceived the revolution as it was happening on the ground, and in highlighting it, brought it momentum. Kudos to the achievement! This book is way, way beyond a travelogue in import, but anyone wanting to know how to live in Portland, wanting to visit, wanting to bring some of Portland's revolution to where they live, should be nourished by this book.

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