



Fork on the Road: 400 Cities/One Stomach

Mark Decarlo

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**A seasoned comedian's love letter to America's food curiosities—
the regional cuisines, the culinary oddities, the weird and the wonderful**

“Mark DeCarlo is a [modern-day] Groucho Marx.” —*PEOPLE*

Whether it be fish ice cream, kudzu tempura, or even sausage, Mark DeCarlo always wonders, “Who the hell thought to eat this stuff the *first* time?” We find out in this hilarious celebration of the genesis of America's most creative and idiosyncratic food traditions, and the people who keep these food traditions alive.

Join the master comedian on his journey across the United States to visit these people and their foods in their natural habitats—places like the French Quarter of New Orleans, lush Maui resorts, and the Annual Road Kill Cook-off Festival in West Virginia. From the obvious and beloved (Buffalo wings, Boston clam chowder, hush puppies, and strawberry shortcake) to the bizarre and, well, beloved by some (Rocky Mountain oysters, fried rattlesnake, scrapple, and deep fried Twinkies), DeCarlo takes readers on a rollicking tour of the people and places behind America's greatest food inventions.

Each chapter features the story behind a particular food (moosehead soup, anyone?) and the people who love it. Signature recipes, snapshot photos from the road, along with “Road Rules” on how to discover the real America all spice up the travelogue. It's a love letter to America's culinary curiosities, providing armchair travelers with a tour of the wackiest and kitschiest food festivals, delicacies, and people this country has to offer.

FROM THE AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

Consider the oyster. Unopened, dirty, and habitually covered with muddy, green crap. If you didn't know that it was hollow and contained a tasty glob of salty protein, would you ever guess that this rock was edible?

Well . . . somebody did. Deep in the recesses of time, some caveman or beach-dwelling ape not only discovered that oysters aren't rocks . . . but that they're tasty—as long as you've got Tabasco and a date for the night. But for every 'oyster,' success story, there are thousands of casualties that will forever remain unknown. History is written by the survivors.

A Fork on the Road celebrates those survivors and their progeny: It's about the kinds of people who will spend 30% of their yearly salary building a BBQ Trailer with a homemade logo painted in flames on the side just to win a \$50 contest 500 miles from home. It's about the third generation pie maker who is as dull as a hammer until the conversation comes around to “cracker” versus “pastry” shells. It's about the millions of people around the country who call themselves 'foodies'—as if the rest of us exist simply on air and water. . .

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