



Gastro Obscura: A Food Adventurer's Guide

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Gastro Obscura is a fascinating compendium of international food facts and lore.

The entries, most about a page long, span the globe and are illustrated with bright photographs and drawings. Some will no doubt induce wanderlust—perhaps inspiring a trip to Granada, Nicaragua, to partake in its official dish, Vigorón, an addictive street food made of boiled yucca and crispy fried pork skins served on a banana leaf. The book also mentions food-related festivals and events, like St. George, South Carolina's Cornmeal Mush Entrapment Competition.

Other entries may evoke disgust, as with the maggoty cheese of Sardinia and the disease-spreading penny-licks of a mid-1800s treat in England. Many quirky facts will no doubt provide conversational fodder for future dinner parties. Did you know, for example, that Haitians typically eat spaghetti and hot dogs for breakfast?

Sidebars provide additional information on how to experience many of the foods and events described. This is a tome to be savored in small servings, like a long multicourse meal. It's sure to please armchair travelers, at-home gourmets, and those ready for their next real-life adventure.

SUZANNE KAMATA (November / December 2021)

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