

Lonely Planet's Ultimate Eats

Lonely Planet Food

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How quintessentially inspired that Lonely Planet's 500-stop global gastronomy tour begins not with flashiness and flair, but by lauding what's simple: "battered white asparagus, a tuna and anchovy tart or maybe mushrooms braised in garlic," enjoyed after a "lazy day" in San Sebastián, Spain. This latest guidebook isn't about food-tripping for show; it is earnest in its efforts to encourage curiosity and learning on a transnational scale. Try everything, savour every ingredient—let taste be your guide.

The book's entries were ranked carefully by a team of culinary and travel experts. Borders may be crossed multiple times on a single page, but every entry ends up celebrating something elemental, situated, and singular. You may have had pho before, but have you had it on a boat in the Mekong Delta's river market? You incorporate coconut in dishes at home, but have you experienced it beachside in Fiji—"that little gift from Mother Nature ... cold, sweet and refreshing," sipped straight from the fruit? The book celebrates street food alongside Michelin three-star restaurants, and considers the experience as part of the package (*sufganiyot* are reserved for Hanukkah in Israel; wait to experience Germany's mulled wine until the nation's Christmas markets are in full swing). Its exuberance is pure; its sense of adventure is insatiable.

An index organizes entries by nation, enabling a quick scan of the must-tastes in your next destination. Colorful ingredients pop in bright photographs of steak tartare in France (the book begs that you not neglect the classics) and paprika-dusted cabbage rolls in Hungary, while wanderlust-awakening pictures of sites are included next to those of mouthwatering dishes. A select team of notable and celebrity chefs lent their own top five recommendations to the project, as seen in sidebars sprinkled along the path: note that mashed potatoes in Paris are how Eric Ripert does it, or follow in Wylie Dufresne's footsteps and down fish skin tacos in Copenhagen. It would be a shame to come away from this generously portioned project and not hunger for just one more helping, to be downed in a location that is as yet unknown.

MICHELLE ANNE SCHINGLER (July/August 2018)

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