

Man with a Pan: Culinary Adventures of Fathers Who Cook for Their Families

John Donohue, Editor

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Marriage counselors might consider offering a copy of this text to their clients. Fathers donning aprons to cook for their families so that busy working mothers don't have to has been on a dramatic upswing. And statistics show that men who cook at home have much happier marriages.

"I love being in the kitchen," the editor writes. "And as a father, I am not alone. The amount of time dads now spend behind a stove is at an all-time high." As an editor at the *New Yorker* and a cartoonist and writer, Donohue has already logged many hours cooking for his wife and two daughters. Here he shares his passion about food. But he has also assembled persuasive accounts from other fathers embracing saucapans and the resulting warmth added to their own kitchens, arguably the friendliest and most comfortable room in a house.

Food writer Mark Bittman became closer to his two daughters as they cooked together. Author Stephen King took up the kitchen reins for his family when his wife's culinary interests diminished. He shares a secret for a simple but tasty omelet: "If you want to flip it, you're either an acrobat or an idiot." Novelist Jim Harrison hunted and fished for his family in rural northern Michigan, putting his prize catches on the family table. For them, simple trumped fashionable, and wild game topped pen-raised food any day. Harrison's advice: "Owning an expensive car or home and buying cheap groceries and wine is utterly stupid...food is one of our few primary aesthetic expenses, and what you choose to eat directly reflects the quality of your life."

The book is more than first-person accounts about cooking. Donohue taps into the vast *New Yorker* library of cartoons, finding examples of family life and cooking—including a few cartoons of his own. And most contributors offer a list of food-related books on their shelves that have most influenced them and why.

The "In the Trenches" section is where the olive oil meets the saute pan. Each writer provides memorable recipes that guys can try, and that's where everyone's quality of life starts to heat up.

KARL KUNKEL (May / June 2011)

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