



The Field Guide to Pregnancy: Navigating New Territory with Research, Recipes, and Remedies

Caylie See

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Pregnancy is a time of joy, wonder, and unsolicited—even coercive—advice. *The Field Guide to Pregnancy: Navigating New Territory with Research, Recipes, and Remedies*, by Caylie See, gives women an intimate, honest picture of all the intricacies of pregnancy, so each woman can manage herself, her life, and her own unique healthy pregnancy.

This month-by-month guide features themed chapters, from “Changing” in month one to “Releasing” in month nine—plus a bonus month ten: “The Golden Month, or the Aftermath.” Each chapter contains a litany of practical topics from miscarriage to water breaking and gives concise and positive insights into every pregnancy variation and option. Each chapter also opens with awe-inspiring lists of baby’s weekly developments and closes with a checklist for the month. The checklists are practical and surprisingly simple; rather than feeling overwhelmed, women will think, “I can do this!” This empowerment comes from See’s understanding of pregnancy as not just a physical phenomenon—a woman’s sense of self, not to mention mental and emotional health, is a vital part of the process.

See operates with the core belief that each woman is different—her body, her pregnancy, her values, her desires—so each should be encouraged to determine her path. So much pregnancy advice, both personal and professional, seems designed to scare and intimidate, but not this book. By embracing individuality and options, See eschews black-or-white advice in favor of empowering women with understanding.

See’s approach is holistic, and balanced between Eastern and Western thought. Her expertise in Chinese medicine is a fresh addition to the advice women receive from traditional obstetricians. She’s not in opposition to typical Western approaches; she simply augments the conversation with a broader array of options, including a fuller view of nutrition and self-care. A discussion of the therapeutic power of food—with recipes like “Morning Mocktail” and “Pumpkin Soup for You and Your Little Pumpkin”—is particularly practical and empowering.

See’s voice is warm but informative—she’s sharing what she knows but not telling women what to do. When she writes things like “if you choose that option,” it’s clear she really believes and values each woman’s decisions.

MELISSA WUSKE (Fall 2016)

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