

Explore the world of food in 'Kitchen Confidential: Adventures in the Culinary Underbelly'

By John Vollinger

Go! Magazine

Three long years have come and gone since Anthony Bourdain's untimely passing — an event too sudden that left many saddened and bewildered. Though sometimes sardonic, Bourdain brought a very particular joie de vivre to our television screens on his various travel-based food shows between 2002 and 2018. His programs often seemed cavalier in approach, but were underscored with a deep passion to experience more — both in cultural and culinary forms.

Perhaps as a means to better understand the mind that brought us around the world on shows like "No Reservations" and "Parts Unknown," a new film has been released in theaters titled "Roadrunner: A Film About Anthony Bourdain." With this new release, I chose to reacquaint myself with the book that initially launched Bourdain's career: "Kitchen Confidential: Adventures in the

KITCHEN CONFIDENTIAL

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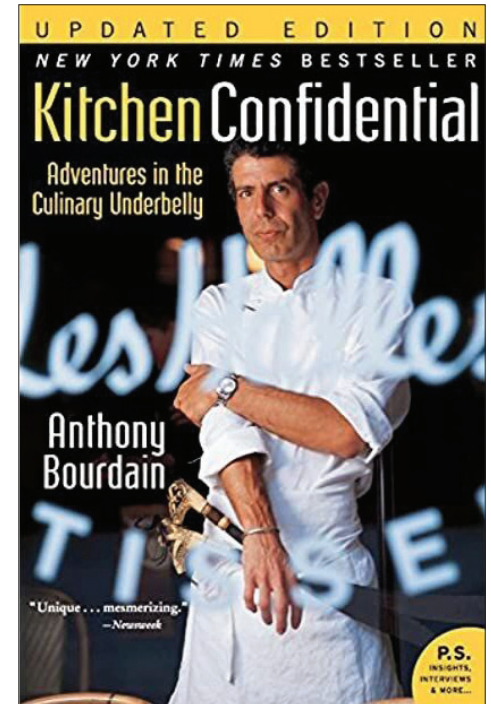
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Bourdain details the very first handful of childhood meals that sparked his passion for food, often marked by experiences that challenged his preconceived notions of what food should, or could, be. He traces his career through the industry, battling the addictions and predilections that were so common in the lives of line cooks of the 1970s and 1980s.

The autobiographical account of

working through the New York restaurant scene would be worth the price of admission alone, with colorful anecdotes from within numerous kitchens. Some make you laugh, and some will make you nervous to ever eat out again. But "Confidential" offers so much more than that. Peppered throughout the pages are glimpses into what it actually takes to run a successful kitchen, tips on what not to order when dining out, useful hints for your own cooking habits, and meditations on why some would choose to walk down such a grueling path.

All of this is wrapped in voice — one that is distinctly Bourdain's, and is more refined than countless modern authors. His writing remains inescapably captivating as it seamlessly threads a brash poeticism through frank descriptions of what is. Those who have heard his voiceovers from his shows will clearly hear the cadence of his speech through the words on the page, but all are privy to the style and grace that he brings to



the descriptions of his life as a chef and, of course, the food.

"Roadrunner: A Film About Anthony Bourdain" will be available on HBO Max, following its stint in theaters, but "Kitchen Confidential" will surely tide over all who are interested until then.


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