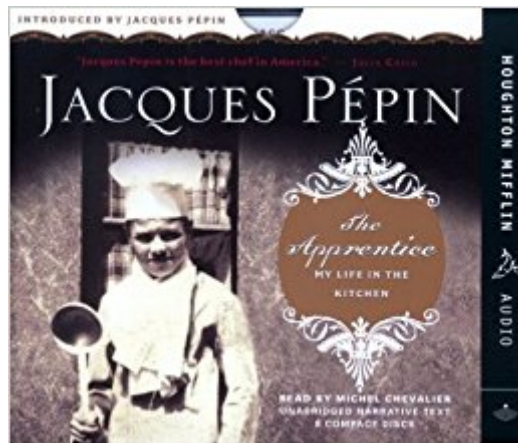


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# The Apprentice: My Life In The Kitchen



## Synopsis

In this captivating memoir, the man whom Julia Child has called "the best chef in America" tells the story of his rise from a frightened apprentice in an exacting Old World kitchen to an Emmy Award-winning superstar who taught millions of Americans how to cook and shaped the nation's tastes in the bargain. As a homesick boy in war-ravaged France, Jacques works on a farm in exchange for food, dodging bombs and bearing witness as German soldiers capture his father, a fighter in the Resistance. After the war he is caught up in the hurly-burly action of his mother's cafÃ©, where he proves a natural. He endures a literal trial by fire and works his way up the ladder in France's most famous restaurant, finally becoming Charles de Gaulle's personal chef. When Jacques comes to America, he falls in with a small group of as-yet-unknown food lovers, including Craig Claiborne, James Beard, and Julia Child. A master of the American art of reinvention, he goes on to earn a graduate degree from Columbia University, turn down a job as John F. Kennedy's chef to work at Howard Johnson's, and, after a near-fatal car accident, switch careers to become a charismatic leader in the revolution that changed the way Americans approached food. *The Apprentice* is the poignant and sometimes funny tale of a boy's coming of age. It is also the story of America's culinary awakening and the transformation of food from an afterthought to a national preoccupation.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The sparkling personality, sense of humor, and charm familiar to Jacques PÃ©pin's television audiences carries over to the page in the superstar chef's humbly titled memoir, *The Apprentice*. A

clever, mischievous, and very likable boy, Pépin's earliest food memories are hungry ones from his childhood in war-torn France. After World War II, his first restaurant job was peeling potatoes for his mother at her restaurant, and he became an apprentice in a hotel kitchen at age 13. In this delightful tale he works hard, plays fair, is kind to others and good to his family, and his efforts take him to Paris, and then New York. Except for the terrible car accident that required him to reinvent himself as a teacher and television personality, he seems to have always been in the right place at the right time. He cooked for Prime Minister Gaillard and then General Charles de Gaulle, met Pierre Franey, Craig Claiborne, and Julia Child, and turned down a job cooking for JFK to accept one with Howard Johnson. But just as entertaining and enjoyable to read about are his tender memories and thoughts about his relationships with his parents and brothers, and with his wife and daughter. We all wish we could cook like Pepin (and every chapter ends with one of Pépin's favorite recipes), but this enchanting tale will make you wish you knew him. The clear, simple way he expresses himself and the honesty with which he tells his story will bring you to tears, and make you laugh out loud. --Leora Y. Bloom --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In this fast-moving and often touching memoir, Pepin recounts his journey from the kitchen of his mother's humble restaurant in rural France after World War II to his current position as author of 21 cookbooks, star of 13 PBS cooking shows and dean of special programs at the French Culinary Institute in New York City. Along the way he describes everything from the tough French apprenticeship system that saw him dropping out of school at 13 to work in Lyon to the beginnings of the Howard Johnson's chain. Pepin accepted a job in the Howard Johnson's test kitchen over a stint at the White House cooking for John F. Kennedy, but shows no signs of regret. In fact, if there's a flaw here, it's that Pepin's eternally upbeat attitude is sometimes a little hard to buy-although he does seem to have been born under a lucky star. Pepin came to the U.S. just when a culinary culture was building and fell into friendships with Craig Claiborne, then food editor of the New York Times, and Julia Child. Even a bad car accident when he was 39 turned out to be a godsend, as it got him out of the restaurant kitchen and into the teaching profession. Pepin mines a lot of humor from the differences between French and American attitudes toward food, as when he recounts how he and a French friend once stopped by a farmsomewhere in the U.S. with a sign reading "Ducks for Sale" and wrung the neck of the duck they'd just bought in front of the horrified proprietress. Each chapter concludes with one or two recipes, many of them surprisingly earthy, such as Oatmeal Breakfast Soup with leeks and bacon. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information,

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Wow, this book is way better than expected. I purchased it when it was on the monthly kindle discount list. Surprisingly well written, and well constructed backstory of his childhood. Reminds me of a French version of Kitchen Confidential (it even has a intro from Mr. Bourdain himself). The book gives good insight into Mr. Pepin's upbringing, as well as a story of ascendancy in the French culinary scene. This book really gives more context to the great chef we can see regularly on PBS.

A wonderful romp through a life well lived, by a truly wonderful man. I'm a food professional, so getting to read these very well written stories of apprenticeship and working in France during the last days of truly classic French cuisine is just a delight. There are a wealth of wonderful riches throughout, and it's all written in Pepin's gentle, humorous way. Great read.

When I saw this book, I was really excited to buy/read it because Jacques Pepin feels almost like an honorary member of my family (although I've honestly never even met him before). He's not the kind of person I consciously think about, but his name has always been familiar within my family. My mom grew up in France and ever since I can remember, she would consult her 'Jacques Pepin: A French Chef Cooks at Home' recipe book. With its pages falling out, it was clearly the most consulted recipe book of her (large) collection. It's impossible to forget the delicious results (especially the tarte aux pommes) and the many pages of helpful pictures. Memories aside, this book was a joy to read--great, funny stories that fit together in a very clear way to tell Jacques Pepin's complete story. This is one person I would definitely love to meet in real life!

Enjoyed this chatty, sometimes funny, sometimes poignant autobiography. It was interesting to learn about the inside workings of a French kitchen, then as translated to an American sensibility. Recipes are included, and helpfully indexed in the back. The flaw is the end...he just abruptly stops, not really ending, more like a thought not completed. I kept looking for a conclusion... The kindle edition, at least, could use better editing. Several obvious typing errors, and at least one recipe is not complete ( when and how am I supposed to incorporate the pork chops?)

This was such a charming book. Really a delight to read. Though I don't cook much, I love memoirs, especially about France, and I'd certainly heard of Mr. PãfÂ©pin. When I managed bookstores years ago, one of his cookbooks was a bestseller. I loved hearing about his childhood in France from

idyllic days in the countryside to his mother's ingenuity in business to his early love of the kitchen and cooking. There were memorable vignettes, such as the glorious day when the first Allied tank came rumbling through his town or his initiation at his first real job as an apprentice. You can feel his love of life in the writing and it's a joy to read. I also loved hearing about his life in the U.S. - New York City, in particular. Man, was he smart. There are wonderful, simple recipes at the end of most chapters, too. I did get the impression that the last 20% of the book was more hurriedly written, which is why I gave four stars instead of five. But the 80% before that is a solid 5 star-read.

The book was pleasant and enjoyable, but filled with TYPOS and errors all over the place. A poor translation to e-book.

Really a fun book, telling about the life of Jacques from the time he was a child in his mother's kitchen through his success as a world-renowned chef. And some of his personal recipes are included as well - all of which are very yummy!

I don't know if Jacques actually wrote this book, but if he did he's a very good writer. I went through the book in a few days. The way the book was written just drew me in. It flowed extremely well. I learned a lot of things about Jacques that I didn't know before. Since I don't want to put up spoilers, I'll leave it to you to uncover them. A lot of interesting/funny food anecdotes. I had two disappointments. Although he mentions meeting with Julia Child and some of the things together, he really does not go into the relationship that had developed when they were on PBS shows together. I don't know if the book was written before that time period, or not. The second disappointment, and the thing that stopped me from giving it five stars was the ending. I truly didn't think that I had come to the end. I had to check two more times. I thought that when making the book an ebook that they left off a couple of chapters. For me, the book just ends and leaves you hanging. For fans of Jacques and of how chefs are treated, it's a great book.

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