



Heat: An Amateur Cook in a Professional Kitchen

By Bill Buford

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A highly acclaimed writer and editor, Bill Buford left his job at *The New Yorker* for a most unlikely destination: the kitchen at Babbo, the revolutionary Italian restaurant created and ruled by superstar chef Mario Batali. Finally realizing a long-held desire to learn first-hand the experience of restaurant cooking, Buford soon finds himself drowning in improperly cubed carrots and scalding pasta water on his quest to learn the tricks of the trade. His love of Italian food then propels him on journeys further afield: to Italy, to discover the secrets of pasta-making and, finally, how to properly slaughter a pig. Throughout, Buford stunningly details the complex aspects of Italian cooking and its long history, creating an engrossing and visceral narrative stuffed with insight and humor.

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Heat: An Amateur Cook in a Professional Kitchen By Bill Buford Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Bill Buford's funny and engaging book *Heat* offers readers a rare glimpse behind the scenes in Mario Batali's kitchen. Who better to review the book for Amazon.com, than Anthony Bourdain, the man who first introduced readers to the wide array of lusty and colorful characters in the restaurant business? We asked Anthony Bourdain to read *Heat* and give us his take. We loved it. So did he. Check out his review below. --
Daphne Durham

Guest Reviewer: Anthony Bourdain



Anthony Bourdain is host of the Discovery Channel's *No Reservations*, executive chef at Les Halles in Manhattan, and author of the bestselling and groundbreaking *Kitchen Confidential*, *Anthony Bourdain's Les Halles Cookbook*, *A Cook's Tour*, *Bone in the Throat*, and many others. His latest book, *The Nasty Bits* will be released on May 16, 2006.

Heat is a remarkable work on a number of fronts--and for a number of reasons. First, watching the author, an untrained, inexperienced and middle-aged desk jockey slowly transform into not just a useful line cook--but an extraordinarily knowledgeable one is pure pleasure. That he chooses to do so primarily in the notoriously difficult, cramped kitchens of New York's three star *Babbo* provides further sado-masochistic fun. Buford not only accurately and hilariously describes the painfully acquired techniques of the professional cook (and his own humiliations), but chronicles as well the mental changes--the "kitchen awareness" and peculiar world view necessary to the kitchen dweller. By end of book, he's even talking like a line cook.

Secondly, the book is a long overdue portrait of the real Mario Batali and of the real Marco Pierre White--two complicated and brilliant chefs whose coverage in the press--while appropriately fawning--has never described them in their fully debauched, delightful glory. Buford has--for the first time--managed to explain White's peculiar--almost freakish brilliance--while humanizing a man known for terrorizing cooks, customers (and Batali). As for Mario--he is finally revealed for the Falstaffian, larger than life, mercurial, frighteningly intelligent chef/entrepreneur he really is. No small accomplishment. Other cooks, chefs, butchers, artisans and restaurant lifers are described with similar insight.

Thirdly, *Heat* reveals a dead-on understanding--rare among non-chef writers--of the pleasures of "making" food; the real human cost, the real requirements and the real adrenalin-rush-inducing pleasures of cranking out hundreds of high quality meals. One is left with a truly unique appreciation of not only what is truly good about food--but as importantly, who cooks--and why. I can't think of another book which takes such an unsparing, uncompromising and ultimately thrilling look at the quest for culinary excellence. *Heat* brims with fascinating observations on cooking, incredible characters, useful discourse and argument-ending arcania. I read my copy and immediately started reading it again. It's going right in between Orwell's *Down and Out in Paris and London* and Zola's *The Belly of Paris* on my bookshelf. --Anthony Bourdain

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. Buford's book starts smartly—he first met dynamic celebrity chef Mario Batali at a dinner

party at his own home, where Batali sparkled until 3 a.m.—and continues at a fast clip as he conceives the notion of becoming Batali's "kitchen slave." Buford wanted to profile Batali for the *New Yorker* but also wanted to learn about cooking; he would be a "journalist-tourist" in the boot camp of a "kitchen genius." His subject became an obsession, and over the next three years, he investigated a rich menu of subjects: what makes a three-star restaurant work; what it takes to be a TV food star; the techniques and history of Italian cooking, not just from library research but also from repeated trips to Italy to visit Batali's relatives. Terrific culinary writing tracks Buford's successive passions for short ribs, polenta, tortellini and then the butcher's art, Italian-style, of pig and cow. Along the way, to his own surprise, Buford found that he had become a kitchen insider. This is a wonderfully detailed and highly amusing book from the writer who once took an insider's look at English soccer hooligans in *Among the Thugs*. 100,000 first printing. (June 13)

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From School Library Journal

Adult/High School—Could loving to cook translate into being a professional under the tutelage of the famous chef of a three-star New York restaurant? Buford jumped at the chance to find out. This energetic account of his intense culinary education brings readers into the scalding kitchens where fine food is prepared by obsessive chefs for whom timing is critical and cooking is art. The author entwines the history of pasta with his preparation of it, and he visits the theory that it was the Italians who brought fine cooking to France rather than the other way around. Buford follows the example of his mentors as he travels to Italian villages to serve as kitchen slave to a master of pasta-making and as an apprentice to a butcher to learn to perfect that culinary craft. A journalist for the *New Yorker*, the author writes with the same gusto with which he cooks. Readers learn how physically demanding professional cooking is, how hard it is on the ego, and how satisfying it can be. This is the ultimate career book for would-be chefs, and a book that noncooks will savor until the last word.—*Ellen Bell, Amador Valley High School, Pleasanton, CA*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Timothy Parker:

Are you kind of active person, only have 10 as well as 15 minute in your morning to upgrading your mind skill or thinking skill even analytical thinking? Then you are receiving problem with the book as compared to can satisfy your short time to read it because pretty much everything time you only find book that need more time to be go through. Heat: An Amateur Cook in a Professional Kitchen can be your answer given it can be read by you who have those short extra time problems.

Thomas Carroll:

The book untitled Heat: An Amateur Cook in a Professional Kitchen contain a lot of information on the item. The writer explains the girl idea with easy means. The language is very simple to implement all the people, so do not worry, you can easy to read the item. The book was written by famous author. The author provides you in the new age of literary works. You can easily read this book because you can please read on your smart phone, or model, so you can read the book in anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-book, you can available their official web-site as well as order it. Have a nice go through.

Brian Paige:

Within this era which is the greater particular person or who has ability in doing something more are more special than other. Do you want to become considered one of it? It is just simple method to have that. What you are related is just spending your time almost no but quite enough to possess a look at some books. One of several books in the top checklist in your reading list is actually Heat: An Amateur Cook in a Professional Kitchen. This book that is qualified as The Hungry Inclines can get you closer in growing to be precious person. By looking up and review this e-book you can get many advantages.

Beverly McClendon:

What is your hobby? Have you heard this question when you got college students? We believe that that concern was given by teacher to the students. Many kinds of hobby, Everybody has different hobby. And also you know that little person similar to reading or as looking at become their hobby. You need to understand that reading is very important and also book as to be the matter. Book is important thing to provide you knowledge, except your own teacher or lecturer. You discover good news or update regarding something by book. Many kinds of books that can you go onto be your object. One of them is Heat: An Amateur Cook in a Professional Kitchen.

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