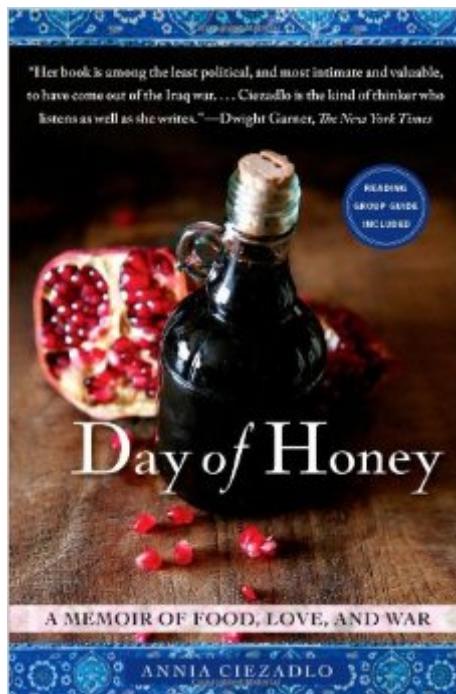


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Day Of Honey: A Memoir Of Food, Love, And War



Synopsis

Now in paperback, the powerful memoir that The New York Times described as "filled with adrenalized scenes" |Ciezadlo is the kind of thinker who listens as well as she writes. |Her sentences make a smart, wired-up sound on the page. Readers will be lucky to find her. •American Book Award WinnerWinner of Books for a Better Life Award (First Book)James Beard Foundation Award NomineeBNN Discover Awards, second place nonfiction IN THE FALL OF 2003, AS IRAQ DESCENDED INTO CIVIL WAR, Annia Ciezadlo spent her honeymoon in Baghdad. For the next six years, she lived in Baghdad and Beirut, where she dodged bullets during sectarian street battles, chronicled the Arab world's first peaceful revolution, and watched Hezbollah commandos invade her Beirut neighborhood. Throughout all of it, she broke bread with Sunnis and Shiites, warlords and refugees, matriarchs and mullahs. Day of Honey is her story of the hunger for food and friendship during wartime—a communion that feeds the soul as much as the body. In lush, fiercely intelligent prose, Ciezadlo uses food and the rituals of eating to uncover a vibrant Middle East most Americans never see. We get to know people like Roaa, a young Kurdish woman whose world shrinks under occupation to her own kitchen walls; Abu Rifaat, a Baghdad book lover who spends his days eavesdropping in the ancient city's legendary cafés; and the unforgettable Umm Hassane, Ciezadlo's sardonic Lebanese mother-in-law, who teaches her to cook rare family recipes (included in a mouthwatering appendix of Middle Eastern comfort food). From dinner in downtown Beirut to underground book clubs in Baghdad, Day of Honey is a profound exploration of everyday survival—a moving testament to the power of love and generosity to transcend the misery of war.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Honestly, I didn't expect to be so taken by this book. However, I was completely moved. Ciezaldo writes so vividly that I couldn't stop dreaming of the food she described. I swear I could taste it. My mouth literally watered. She writes from the heart and she touched mine. In 2003, Annia, who grew up in the Midwest, and her Lebanese husband, who grew up in New York, move to Beirut to Baghdad and back to Beirut to cover the war as reporters. She covers the events, people, culture and food there with a deep humanity that impressed me. For her it is personal. She makes it personal for the reader. I was constantly amazed at how apolitical this book is. In spite of all the political factions vying for control in the Middle East, Annia removes herself from the governments, sects and groups and focuses on the people. During war, the people suffer. The people love. The people hate. The people eat. Don't miss this beautiful, rich, nearly edible book. I devoured it. It will make you rethink everything you thought you knew about the Middle East.

And completely in love with the author's words and view. I suppose I should wait until I'm completely finished with this book but I'm simply having too much of a fantastic time with it. I must admit, similar to what the New York Times mentioned, that the cover made me think of something completely different. Luckily for me, Annia Ciezadlo's funny, engaging and thoughtful writing made me realize this book would not only help me discover a part of the world I've never visited but also keep me entertained and touched. I'll be back to update my review but in the meantime, please read this book. It's making me laugh, cry a bit, and also ravenously hungry.

Like other reviewers, Annia Ciezaldo had me hooked from the first few pages. This is not a book where you want to skip the introduction. The description she writes there of New York City in the first few days after 9/11, where I lived at the time, is so vivid, so true ... and so telling of what is to come. She finds humor in horror, gives everybody their say (even people who seem odious at first) ... and has such a gift for painting a scene with words. You see the scene, hear the people, and yes, taste the food. The other remarkable thing about this book is Ciezaldo as a narrator -- this is not an exasperated expert writing from on high, wondering why Americans remain so ignorant about the wars we're fighting. She's one of us. Another American who grew up understanding war in the Middle East as a series of short scary stories on the evening news. But she grew up and went to Baghdad and Beirut as a journalist (and on her honeymoon!) and she "ate the meal," as her journalism prof admonished his students to do, to get a full story. This is the fullest of stories. Ciezaldo winks at the book Eat, Pray, Love with a chapter titled Eat, Pray, War. If you kinda

sorta liked Eat, Pray, Love -- but found yourself annoyed by an author who could afford to drop everything and go to Tuscany -- do yourself a favor and buy Day of Honey. It's a much deeper, broader, more courageous book. And such delicious recipes.

To find the answer to this question, you will simply have to read "Day of Honey: A Memoir of Food, Love, and War" By Annia Ciezadlo. Ciezadlo finds the answer to this and many more questions throughout this heartfelt and intelligent memoir of the important role food plays in the Middle East in times of peace, and especially, war. The book is a fantastic read, gripping you with Ciezadlo's humor, wit and stark powers of observation. Readers will find themselves falling in love with the characters and places Ciezadlo paints with vivid detail and life, and will find themselves missing those characters and places when the book is finished. But readers should fret not about filling the void they might feel when the story is over; Ciezadlo generously finds a way for the story to continue on our taste buds and in our own stomachs by including recipes of the food so lovingly celebrated within the book's pages. Reading Ciezadlo's story will be one of the finest literature and culinary experiences you will have.

This is the kind of war story I've always wanted to read. It immediately sucks you into the author's world, into her quest to discover and record the real lives and glorious, glorious food of the civilians who so sometimes don't make it into other stories about strife and conflict. But it's Ciezadlo's voice and writing skill that makes this a book you need to read. Despite the bubble-gummy cover, the contents are all meat. Her writing is wicked smart but not preachy, impassioned but not self-righteous. She renders her subjects with grace, even making you love -- as she seems to -- her cantankerous mother-in-law. And she seems to have complete command of the national and culinary histories of Lebanon and Iraq, which she folds into the narrative with a subtle touch. "Day of Honey" strikes all the right balances -- in its writing style, its voice, its reporting, and its rendering of its subjects. It's tender and tough, intelligent and gritty. Perhaps best of all is Ciezadlo's ability to write about love, women and domestic life without ever making you feel like you're reading chick lit. Instead you will want to eat, cook, fall in love and strike out into the world.

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