



Will Write for Food: The Complete Guide to Writing Cookbooks, Restaurant Reviews, Articles, Memoir, Fiction and More

Dianne Jacob

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Will Write for Food is for food lovers who want to express themselves, guiding them from their earliest creative impulses to successful article writing, restaurant reviewing, and cookbook writing. Dianne Jacob—journalist and food-writing instructor and coach—offers interviews with award-winning writers such as Jeffrey Steingarten, Calvin Trillin, Molly O'Neill, and Deborah Madison, plus well-known book and magazine editors and literary agents, give readers the tools to get started and the confidence to follow through. Comprehensive yet accessible chapters range from restaurant reviewing to cookbooks to memoirs. Focused exercises at the end of chapters stimulate creativity, help organize thought, and build practical skills. Will Write for Food is the first and ultimate ins and outs guidebook to the incredibly popular world of food writing.

Will Write for Food: The Complete Guide to Writing Cookbooks, Restaurant Reviews, Articles, Memoir, Fiction and More Details

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Author : Dianne Jacob

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Lizzy Seitz says

4.5 out of 5 stars

This book was assigned for a food writing class at my university. So I read most of it at the beginning of 2016 however I wanted to finish it because this book is really well done and jam packed with information about writing with food. Overall seriously enjoyed it

FreshGrads .Sg says

Especially in foodie-haven Singapore, food writing is everywhere – in magazines, newspapers and most prevalently on the world wide web. If you are an aspiring food blogger or simply a foodie looking for extra sources of income to supplement your guilty indulgences through writing, this is the book for you.

Will Write for Food is based on the author Dianne Jacob's own experiences as a blogger, cookbook author, freelance writer and former magazine editor. The comprehensive book covers, in individual chapters, several popular aspects of food writing, including how to become a freelance food writer, on starting with your own cookbook, and getting published with a food blog.

And for those researching the world of food writers, the book further illustrates with interviews with 75 of the world's most successful and award-winning food writers, literary agents, cookbook editors and recipe developers such as Molly O'Neill and Jeffrey Steingarten, on top of a foreword by David Lebovitz.

Praise for Will Write for Food

“Will Write for Food is a concise, illustrative and eminently useful guide to the nuts and bolts of professional food writing. Dianne Jacob gets right to the heart of what it takes not just to write—but to write well— about food. And she’s managed to wrangle a remarkable group of veterans to share their experiences and examples.” – Anthony Bourdain, author of the New York Times bestseller Kitchen Confidential

For more book reviews, visit FreshGrads Reads. We also do reviews on food, movies and more in Singapore. Check us out here!

Rebecca says

Good advice on good writing. Everyone I've ever read and respected makes an appearance, from MFK Fisher to Hemingway to Deborah Madison to the author of that Jewish cookbook Katie gave me for Hanukkah to the guy from Gourmet whose blog I just started reading. And, best of all, everyone I haven't read yet! My to-read list is now overflowing with gems of food writing.

Oh, yeah, and there's all kinds of industry advice here that seems indispensably helpful if you're actually trying to get published, and mildly intriguing in a behind-the-scenes way if you're not. (Hint: you better plan on doing it for the love, not the money.)

Try to find the forthcoming new edition which is supposed to deal more seriously with writing online. Or, you know, avoid it since she's sure to point you towards more arresting food blogs than you could read in a lifetime.

Meghan says

If you are interested in writing a book about food or filled with recipes, I would definitely suggest you read this book. Very interesting and full of information, plus the author interviewed several authors who are actually writing in this genre to find out what they had to say. Each chapter has writing activity suggestions to help you put into effect what she has taught you. Just one warning: Be prepared to take a lot of notes. :)

Kristine says

There is a level of snobbery here that was a real turn-off. Jacob leaves the reader who is potentially looking to learn how to write about food but not already a food journalist and successful food blogger feeling as though one has bungled up the attempt at writing before putting pen to paper. This book is not enlightening or helpful in any way and really serves as an ode to who Jacob knows in the food writing business.

Tiffany says

A great how-to guide and resource for aspiring writers. Jacob offers the same advice I'm finding in many of the writing books I'm reading - write every day, use the active voice, read, learn, etc - but she also adds lots of online and print resources ... not only for selling material, but for self-education as well.

Robin says

According to Goodreads, I've been reading this book since April 24, and it is now November 17. It's time to admit that it's likely I won't finish it right now, and to put it back on the shelf. How ironic that I got stuck in the chapter "Memoir and Nonfiction Food Writing," since this is the closest chapter to what my food blog, Seasonal Eating is about.

IMHO the best way to read this book is to go right to the chapters that are about the kind of food writing that you do or aspire to do and read them first. Each chapter is powerful and targeted and stands on its own. Ms. Jacob states that she prefers the reader proceed with the chapters in order, but says that it's not necessary. The fact that each chapter is dense with information and most contain writing exercises can dilute your initial enthusiasm if you must wade through many food topics before coming to your target. This is especially true if you're already doing some food writing and must sneak in your reading time between deadlines.

Dianne Jacob is probably the best-known food author, editor, and food writing coach in the US. She IS the source. Her book is a wonderful reference for food writers, and I'm sure it will be off my shelf again in no time. Topics include blogging, freelancing, restaurant reviewing, cookbooks, food in fiction and nonfiction, and even how to write a recipe. Plus there's a bonus chapter on how to get your book published.

If you're thinking about being a food writer, or beginning to write about food, definitely read this book. You might also want to follow the author's food writing blog.

Mike says

When I saw 'Will Write for Food' on a bookshelf in the Ferry Building in San Francisco, I was surprised and excited that a book existed for such a narrow topic. I don't usually do this, but in this case, I bought it immediately without even browsing the chapters and rolled the dice that the author (Dianne Jacob) had done her homework. As I was walking home, I realized how easily a book like this could be slapped together and sold to people like me, who just started a food blog (WithoutTakeout.com).

I shouldn't have been worried. 'Will Write for Food' is smartly organized and offers a wide range of advice for all types of food writers. The author also included opinions from several established food writers, which was particularly helpful. For example, the chapter on restaurant reviewing had advice from all the major food reviewers that I've read over the years (Frank Bruni, Michael Bauer, etc.). This book has already been incredibly useful and should be a resource for me as I look to expand my food writing.

(Disclaimer: I've only read about 75% of this book, only the chapters that apply to me)

Buy 'Will Write for Food' from [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com/dp/1570671411)

Rose says

Great for anyone beginning to think about writing professionally. Good tips on crafting and refining. I enjoyed all of the stories from well known food writers.

Willow A. says

I applaud this book on being incredibly thorough. You'll find reasonably detailed information on virtually every aspect of food related writing you can think of here, from blogging and cookbook writing to freelancing and fiction – including various ways people make money with each, and plenty of grounded reminders of the amount of time, work, and sometimes luck involved for those who do it successfully.

Whatever kind of food writing you want to do, you are likely to find some useful advice in this book.

However, there will most likely be a lot of parts that don't interest you, too, and if you make yourself read them anyway, in the hopes you might glean something useful, you'll probably be disappointed. At least that's how I felt reading the chapters that didn't pertain to my specific interests. Fortunately, the book is well organized, so skipping the parts that don't benefit you is easy enough to do. (For some reason I was determined to read every word... how could I say I'd "read the book" if I only actually read half? So I stuck with it even when it bored me. That said, I'd rather have too much information than not enough, and when it comes to covering a wide range of topics, this book does a great job.)

My only real complaint is one thing this book completely failed to deliver on: as a book that's all about writing, I kiiiind of expected it would be written really well. I went into it hoping for... I don't know, personality? Whimsy? To be entertained while I was educated. For the most part (aside from some of the areas where the author quotes other food writers) the information is delivered so dryly, it was hard to choke down (pardon the pun). I started reading in January and had to set the book down for several months before picking it up again. I'm glad I finished it (the last chapter in the updated edition is especially useful to bloggers like myself) but it seems like the author took a somewhat textbooky approach to writing this book. Perhaps in a sincere effort to be as informative and clear as possible, which is commendable, but it certainly effected my enjoyment. Hence, 3 stars. I'd still recommend this to anyone wanting to learn about various ways food writing can be implemented, how the publishing industry works, or how to make money writing, but skim for the parts that are most valid to you.

Cory Van Horn says

I was so excited with I first bought the book. Since it had won an award for great writing, I figured with would provide me with new insights into the food writing world. Sadly, the book was so boring I had to retire it to the "will read later pile" after finishing the second chapter. The author seems switch between her own narrative and quotes from other books almost every other paragraph. This causes the book to take on a textbook feel.

Nicole says

This is a great reference chocked full of practical information, frank advice, and examples of how to work intelligently. I am impressed that the author got so many famous food writers to share their personal stories, too!

Murissa says

I am a food and travel blogger and I have been wanting to write a novel with a food focus. I also have been writing food and travel articles for free and was thinking about getting my work published. I bought this book to help me in all aspects of my writing. I graduated university with a major in creative writing and found myself out of my element when it came to writing articles about restaurants, food history etc. so I looked to this book for help and direction. I definitely found every chapter helpful and the writing exercises are great for when you feel stumped.

She gives various perspectives within the industry besides her own and is encouraging yet realistic about the

difficulties you'll encounter with getting published. It is an invaluable reference book that gives you a long list of other books to read for help or pleasure. I would recommend it to anyone starting out with a blog or anyone wanting to write about food in any genre really.

Hope says

For anyone thinking of writing food pieces in any medium, this book is a must have. The field is extremely competitive, but determination and work will result in publication, even if that publication will be developing a strong personal blog. Some food bloggers are making a living and have started major trends in writing. The most famous of these is food52.com, led by Amanda Hesser, editor of *The New York Times Cookbook* and regular *NYT* contributor. The Pioneer Woman, while not a pro, has an extremely successful blog, too.

Other places for publishing food writing include newspapers, travel magazines and dedicated food periodicals, cookbooks, memoirs such as those of the inimitable MFK Fisher's, and others. *Will Write For Food* addresses each of these, as well as teaches the reader how to do it well.

While there's no substitute for actually writing pieces, nor even a hardcore class on food writing, this book is an invaluable addition to the writer's skill set. I strongly suggest that food writers add it to their libraries and consult it regularly.

Lauren says

A bible for all things food-writing, I highly recommend this for anyone that has any interest in the area at all. Written in a tone that seems like you are having a conversation with a friend, this is a must-read that you won't want to put down. Chapters include information on writing a food blog, developing a cookbook, the art of memoir, fiction that includes food, freelancing, writing restaurant reviews and getting published.

Jacob not only provides a wealth of information for the aspiring writer, she also includes writing exercises and book suggestions at the end of each chapter. Additionally, she interviewed many well-known foodies for the book and the advice and stories of people like Anthony Bourdain, Ree Drummond, Ruth Reichl, Julia Child, MFK Fisher, David Lebovitz, Molly Wizenberg and more appear scattered throughout the book. There isn't a single question I could think of that isn't addressed somewhere in the book.

One word of warning: reading this book will make you want to quit your job so that you can divide your time between creating in the kitchen and writing up a storm on the computer!
