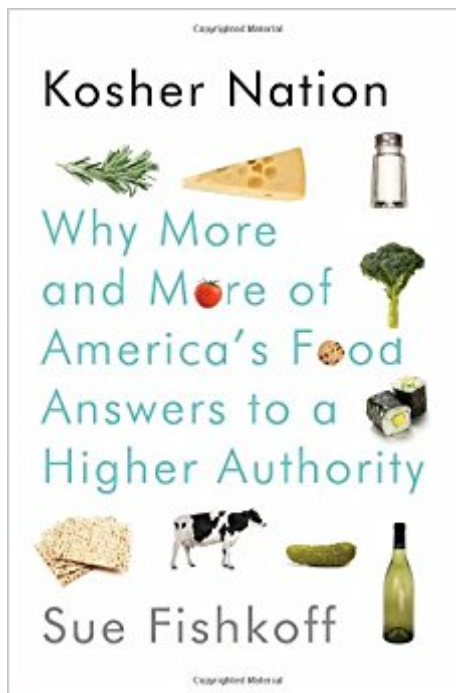




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Kosher Nation: Why More And More Of America's Food Answers To A Higher Authority



Synopsis

Kosher? That means the rabbi blessed it, right? Not exactly. In this captivating account of a Bible-based practice that has grown into a multibillions-dollar industry, journalist Sue Fishkoff travels throughout America and to Shanghai, China, to find out who eats kosher food, who produces it, who is responsible for its certification, and how this fascinating world continues to evolve. She explains why 86 percent of the 11.2 million Americans who regularly buy kosher food are not observant Jews—they are Muslims, Seventh-day Adventists, vegetarians, people with food allergies, and consumers who pay top dollar for food they believe “answers to a higher authority.” Fishkoff interviews food manufacturers, rabbinic supervisors, and ritual slaughterers; meets with eco-kosher adherents who go beyond traditional requirements to produce organic chicken and pasture-raised beef; sips boutique kosher wine in Napa Valley; talks to shoppers at an upscale kosher supermarket in Brooklyn; and marches with unemployed workers at the nation’s largest kosher meatpacking plant. She talks to Reform Jews who are rediscovering the spiritual benefits of kashrut, and to Conservative and Orthodox Jews who are demanding that kosher food production adhere to ethical and environmental values. And she chronicles the corruption, price-fixing, and strong arm tactics of early-twentieth-century kosher meat production, against which contemporary kashrut standards pale by comparison. A revelatory look at the current state of kosher in America, this book will appeal to anyone interested in food, religion, Jewish identity, or big business.

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Customer Reviews

In this informative and revealing primer on kosher food, practice, business, and history, Fishkoff delves into the ins and outs of why the kosher industry continues to grow at an astounding rate despite the small number of observant Jews who actually require kosher-certified food. Having spent years researching and following mashgichim (Orthodox Jews who supervise the production of kosher food and ingredients around the world), Fishkoff has an impressive arsenal of firsthand stories and inside information to keep the narrative moving. The volume provides in-depth chapters on what kosher means, what mashgichim do, the growth of the kosher supermarket, kosher winemaking, and going kosher globally, among other related topics. With an obvious zeal for what she writes, Fishkoff will engage readers with both the religious and professional facets of this complex and misunderstood standard as she explains why so many people prefer kosher cuisine despite its higher costs. (Oct. 12) (c) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Why is kosher food so popular in the U.S.? Eighty-five percent of the 11.2 million Americans who buy it are not Jewish. Muslims, Seventh Day Adventists, vegetarians, and people with food allergies are among those who are willing to pay more for food that is certified kosher. Fishkoff traveled all over the U.S. and to Shanghai to learn about the consumption and production of kosher food, interviewing food manufacturers, rabbis who oversee the production and service of food, ritual slaughterers, wine makers, and restaurant owners. She also examines the eco-kosher movement and the recent scandal at a kosher meatpacking plant in Iowa, which made Conservative and Orthodox Jews demand higher ethical and environmental values for kosher food production. This informative and entertaining look at the state of Jewish dietary practice in the U.S. will be enjoyed by those interested in food, religion, and/or business. --Barbara Bibel

Ms. Fishkoff provides a detailed overview on the kosher food and kosher-certification industry that includes numerous interesting side stories. As most people of the Judaic faith are already somewhat familiar with the history of kashrus, or religious dietary law, this book should be picked up and understood by the non-Jewish readers out there who have no clue as to how deep Judaic halacha (or Jewish Law) has penetrated their everyday lives and eating habits. Do you know what a hekhsher is? If you don't, then perhaps you should buy this book and discover how it affects you, your wallet, and your interests. The book is easy to read and chaptered well.

I thoroughly agree with the rave reviews given to Sue Fishkoff's new book by the media, including the Forward, Ha'aretz and The New Republic. The many anecdotal reports present "You are There," scenarios, which richly add to the wealth of information provided by this award-winning Jewish journalist. Fishkoff writes in her usual fluid style, with a touch of gentle humor, when appropriate. And when facts are disturbing, as they are re: the greed and fraud found in the certification industry and the Postville slaughterhouse incident, Fishkoff lays out the facts in the straight-forward, unbiased manner, for which she is highly regarded as an investigative reporter. Between the covers of Kosher Nation readers will find anything they ever wanted to know about kosher, as well as facts about which they didn't even think existed. Everyone at all interested in kosher will find this book supremely informative, useful and fascinating.

I borrowed this book from a friend and am only a little over halfway through reading it. I am enjoying it so much that I've ordered my own copy (and not on Kindle, I want to be able to pass it around). The book reads easily, written with humor as well as insight into the influences of a changing world. I particularly like the discussions of "why Kosher", the issue of sharing kosher wine with those friends who don't keep kashrut and especially - can one be both green and kosher. These are issues that would not normally come to my mind. You don't need a kosher background to enjoy and learn from this writer and if you have a kosher background, there is still a lot to be learned from Ms. Fishkoff's latest book.

I was just re-reading part of this book as research for an article I'm working on and was reminded how well-researched and fascinating it is. So glad to have it on my book shelf!

Bought it for a class and was not disappointed. Came in great condition!

Great book - all you need/want to know about Kosher food is in this book.

Bought this for my wife and she absolutely loved the book, she has given it to many friends who also enjoyed the book. Recommend to anyone who would like to learn more about the history of what they eat.

Awesome read

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