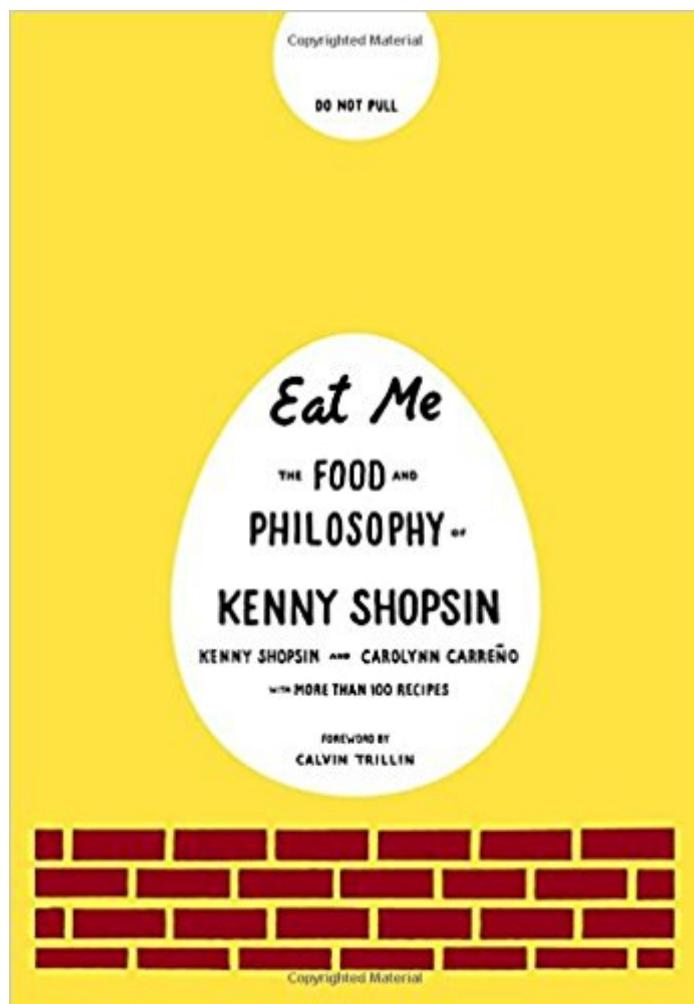


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# Eat Me: The Food And Philosophy Of Kenny Shopsin



## Synopsis

"Pancakes are a luxury, like smoking marijuana or having sex. That's why I came up with the names Ho Cakes and Slutty Cakes. These are extra decadent, but in a way, every pancake is a Ho Cake." Thus speaks Kenny Shopsin, legendary (and legendarily eccentric, ill-tempered, and lovable) chef and owner of the Greenwich Village restaurant (and institution), Shopsin's, which has been in existence since 1971. Kenny has finally put together his 900-plus-item menu and his unique philosophy — imagine Elizabeth David crossed with Richard Pryor — to create *Eat Me*, the most profound and profane cookbook you'll ever read. His rants — on everything from how the customer is not always right to the art of griddling; from how to run a small, ethical, and humane business to how we all should learn to cook in a Goodnight Moon world where everything you need is already in your own home and head — will leave you stunned or laughing or hungry. Or all of the above. With more than 120 recipes including such perfect comfort foods as High School Hot Turkey Sandwiches, Cuban Bean Polenta Melt, and Cornmeal-Fried Green Tomatoes with Comeback Sauce, plus the best soups, egg dishes, and hamburgers you've ever eaten, *Eat Me* is White Trash Cooking for the twenty-first century, as unforgettable and mind-boggling as its author.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Best of the Month, September 2008: The eccentric and engaging food-lit manifesto, *Eat Me: The Food and Philosophy of Kenny Shopsin*, collects the wisdom, rants, and recipes of New York's most

legendarily cranky, publicity-hating short-order cook. The foul-mouthed genius of Kenny Shopsin has been captured before, most notably in Calvin Trillin's wonderful *New Yorker* profile and the documentary *I Like Killing Flies*, but *Eat Me* gives a from-the-cook's-mouth take on life behind the counter, with the layout of a quirky, illustrated textbook. Chapter titles like "Selling Water, or the Secret of the Restaurant Business" and "The Story of Shopsin's Turkey, or Why I Hate the Health Department" should give you a taste of what's in store. Formerly located in Greenwich Village, Shopsin's now sets up camp at Stall No. 16 at the Essex Street Market, where you'll find dozens of soups, sandwiches, burgers, milk shakes, breakfast plates, and pancakes (from Plain to White Mint Chocolate Chip), along with original comfort-food classics like *Blisters on My Sisters* (tortillas, cheese, fried eggs, beans, and rice), gracing the crammed 900-item menu. Getting tossed out of Shopsin's (for whatever offense) has taken on badge-of-honor status among diners--the culinary equivalent of being on the business end of a Don Rickles zinger. Reading *Eat Me* feels like the next best thing. --Brad Thomas Parsons

Starred Review. Kenny Shopsin hates publicity the way a magnet must hate metal filings. With a documentary, a *New Yorker* profile and several *New York Times* articles clinging to him, this supposedly reluctant restaurateur now adds to his own troubles by releasing a totally hilarious and surprisingly touching treatise on cooking, customer loyalty and family bonds. As his brood grew to include five kids, his Manhattan eatery shrunk in size, yet maintained its idiosyncratic 900-item menu (reproduced here in a 12-page spread). Recipes for more than 100 of the offerings are presented, including Mac n Cheese Pancakes and *Blisters on My Sisters* (sunny-side-up eggs placed atop tortillas and a rice and bean concoction). But the real treat is Shopsin's salty philosophizing. Sure, pancakes are tasty, but he reminds us that, They are flour and milk drowned in butter and some form of sugar. They're crap. And the customer is always wrong until they show me they are worth cultivating as customers. Two such well-cultivated customers were the writer Calvin Trillin and his wife, Alice. They pop up throughout the book, providing not only happy reminiscences, but a roux of poignancy as both Shopsin and Trillin become widowers, bonded together over the love of a decent meal, quickly rendered. (Sept.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Important chapter and family in NYC history. This restaurant, this family, the neighborhood that used to be, and most importantly, their philosophy of food -- and recipes! Kenny Shopsin narrates his recipes replete with curse words, --- you'll feel like you're in his kitchen. Shopsin's was the eatery on

Bedford and Morton Streets in Greenwich Village down the corner from where I lived -- where you could get hundreds of types of soups with more than a serving of NYC attitude. Truly the best food around, -- plus we had the life of the Shopsin family all through our eating experience and neighborhood life. These are New Yorker's that gave New York its allure to city dwellers and visitors alike. I'd invite my mother down, just to have pancakes and eggs with them. This family was noble in their own unique way. This book is a must for anyone who was ever fed by the Shopsins, and for those who wonder what all the fuss about New York City authenticity was about. Buy this book and give it to people who like the real thing, who love recipes, who want a good read, who are renegades forever, Annie Annie Lanzillotto author of "L is for Lion: an Italian Bronx butch freedom memoir" SUNY Press and "Schistsong" BORDIGHERA Press [www.annielanzillotto.com](http://www.annielanzillotto.com) L Is for Lion: An Italian Bronx Butch Freedom Memoir (SUNY series in Italian/American Culture) Schistsong (Via Folios) Blue Pill Carry My Coffee (Live) Eleven Recitations

...who...who...defies description. I was considering buying this book after seeing the documentary, I Like Killing Flies. I went back and forth. On the one hand, I thought, I best these recipes are REALLY good. On the other hand, Kenny kinda came off as a major-league jerk in the movie. (Let me tell you, a little Kenny can go a long way.) On the third hand, I thought maybe he's really that awful (although I can see the point of tossing parties of more than four), or maybe it's the editing that did it. I settled on editing, and bought the book. These recipes are fabulous. This is the kind of heavy-duty comfort food I grew up with; my mom is a marvelous cook, so my comfort food expectations are pretty high. And I just LOVE the idea of a Thai Cobb salad. Now I want to make a trip to New York and check this out in person. The book is THAT good.

This guy is such a different type of chef than I used to see on tv or in magazines. He has a real appreciation for the culinary world and doesn't like the fake wannabe's (which, if I'm being really honest with myself, is me sometimes). He's a class act and I hope to hear more from him on really any subject. A great, great read!

I first met Kenny while watching the DVD documentary on his story. I will say see the movie first, and then you will totally enjoy this book and it will help put it in perspective. The man, his family, his cooking is all so unique. He is the walking truth. What you see, is what you get. You can't help but think about how he reminds you of somebody you know or knew. Little bits of Kenny are in all of us really. Have the movie for Supper and the book for dessert!

Shopsin's is a very unique dining establishment in NYC which I make certain to eat at every time I visit NY. He has a very quirky personality, and it's sometimes said that the Seinfeld Soup Nazi episode is modeled after him. This book had a massive impact on my home cooking philosophy. In addition to pointing out how he embraces the characteristics of poorly cooked eggs for certain dishes in his egg chapter, his soup chapter was particularly life changing. I've always followed the "big batch" soup method, where I make my soups in very large batches and tune as needed. This has the effect of making all of the flavors mingle together. Kenny's philosophy is that this is not always ideal, and haven eaten many of his soups, I never realized the contrast but now agree. He keeps an assortment of broths on hand for his soups, but makes each bowl to order. Each time an order for a bowl comes in, he will prepare the additions as needed, usually by sauteing. This gives more distinct separation of the flavors. To put this into practice this week, I used a mushroom/asparagus/onion dish that I created to serve as a side with some steak this week. This gave me three different soups in practice: Soup A: Chunky Mushroom and Asparagus Soup (I just heat the broth and filling, and combine, season to taste. The veggies stay Al dente without turning into mush.) Soup B: Creamy Mushroom and Asparagus Soup (Same as Soup A, I just stir in some Creme Fresh) Soup C: Mushroom and Asparagus Bisque (Same as Soup B, just Vitamixed) I like adding crushed cashews to all three soups at serving. I don't think I'll go back to huge batches of soups that I get bored with. While I always have a fresh batch of broth from the previous couple of weeks scraps, I can now change which soups I make out of the broth each day.

One of my favorite cookbooks Ah, the Zen of Ken. fun read, well illustrated recipes are cafe fast, modest in ambition, executed well He will not make you a better cook Make yourself a better person

It was a gift for my wife and she loved it. I think she enjoyed the premise of the book more than any recipes. She's decided to regift it to her best friend so she can enjoy it too. I guess a secondhand rating would be 5 stars.

everything I hoped it would be and more....loved the movie, love the cook book!

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