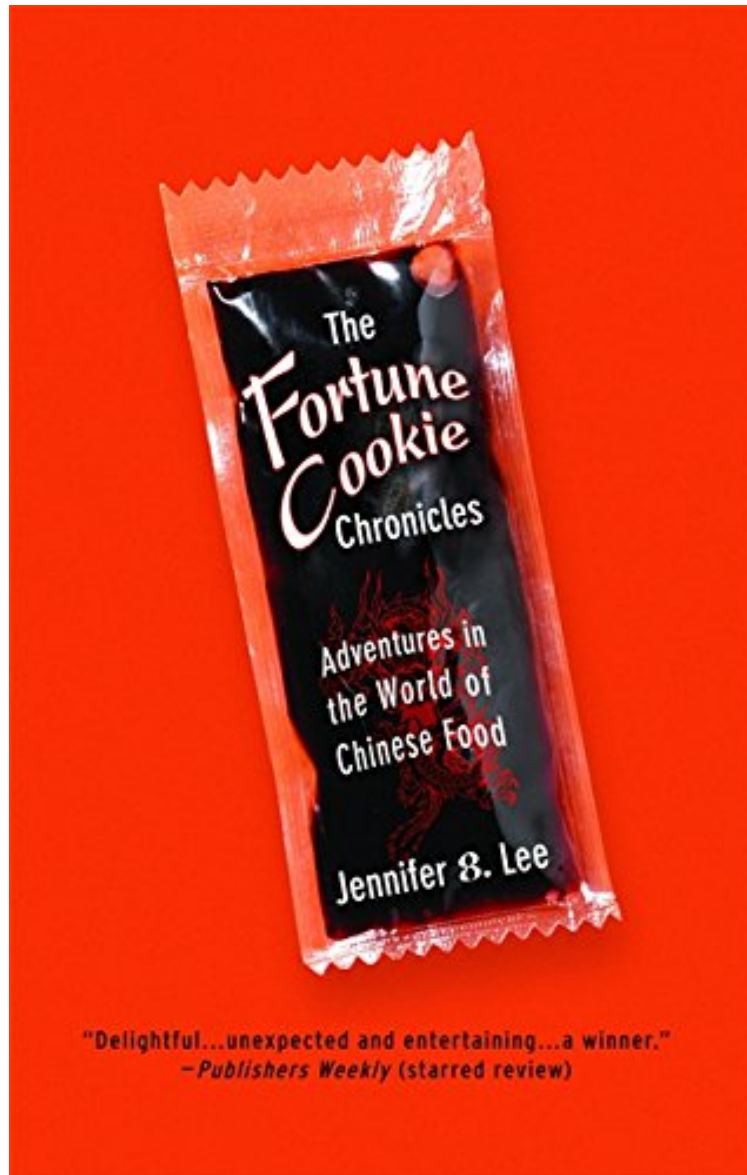


(Read now) The Fortune Cookie Chronicles: Adventures in the World of Chinese Food

The Fortune Cookie Chronicles: Adventures in the World of Chinese Food

Jennifer 8. Lee

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#289062 in Books Jennifer 8 Lee 2009-03-23Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.00 x .75 x 5.251, .0 #File Name: 0446698970320 pagesThe Fortune Cookie Chronicles Adventures in the World of Chinese Food | File size: 21.Mb

Jennifer 8. Lee : The Fortune Cookie Chronicles: Adventures in the World of Chinese Food before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Fortune Cookie Chronicles: Adventures in the World of Chinese Food:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Food for ThoughtBy A. SilverstoneJennifer 8. Lee uses a search for the origin of fortune cookies to take us on a historical tour of America's favorite ethnic food, Chinese cooking. And what a trip it is. As might be expected for something as humble as the fortune cookie, there is not a clear documented history. Nevertheless, through a lot of sleuthing, as well as talking to other fortune cookie detectives, Lee shows how the origin is in a Japan where a cracker made at temples morphed into the cookie we know today. There, of course, is a bit of tragedy in the story. Many of the Japanese bakeries that had been supplying the early cookies to Chinese restaurants in the 30s were all closed when the Japanese-Americans were locked up in internment camps during WW2. Chinese bakers took over, and the fortune cookie's fate was sealed.Lee also delves into the history of Chinese restaurants in the US, and their ubiquitous appearance. She explores the challenges and sociological aspects of running and staffing the restaurants, and discusses the illegal immigration, using the famous Golden Venture ship grounding in New York, which supplies so many of the waiters, dishwashers and cooks who make-up the workforce of the industry.Lee also reveals the history of some of the most popular Americanized dishes, General Tso's chicken and Chow Mein, which are unrecognizable back in China. Her search for the greatest Chinese restaurant in the world reveals all the different forms that Chinese food takes. In many countries that immigrants have moved to, they then adapted Chinese cuisine for local tastes.Lee tells a fascinating story that jumps from dish to dish, leaving us more knowledgeable and more appreciative of the stir fry in front of us.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Deep insights into the history and current state of the Chinese in AmericaBy Michele SteinbergMs. Lee's book is a well-researched history, ostensibly of fortune cookies and Chinese food, but more importantly, of how Chinese food around the world and particularly in America is a reflection of the Chinese diaspora experience. If you've ever wondered about anything having to do with Chinese-American culture and even if you haven't, you should read this book. If you take your delivery man or the woman at the takeout counter or the chef churning out General Gao's chicken for granted, I promise that you won't after reading this book.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Book Review: The Fortune Cookie ChroniclesBy mDavThis morning, I had the pleasure of finishing Jennifer Lee's enchanting book The Fortune Cookie Chronicles.What a book! It takes the reader literally around the world to answer the perennial question of where fortune cookies truly come from. (I won't spoil it.) But it's not just about fortune cookies, oh no - it's an examination of the history of Chinese restaurants (of which there are more in the United States than there are McDonald's, Wendy's, and Burger King combined); Powerball winners (one year, there were ~110 Powerball winners who got their lucky five-of-six numbers from fortune cookies); and more.Well-written and engaging, the book pulled me in from the beginning. I was hooked - couldn't wait to go back for more.I will say that it was a little longer than I expected, coming in at 291 pages - but I flagged only briefly about 2/3 of the way in. There was enough new and different material to keep me engaged, and Lee did a good job at circling back to the initial premises of the book, notably the fortune-cookie origin dilemma and the Powerball numbers.4/5 stars.

FEATURED ON TED.com and The Colbert Report.

From Publishers WeeklyStarred . Readers will take an unexpected and entertaining journey;through culinary, social and cultural history;in this delightful first book on the origins of the customary after-Chinese-dinner treat by New York Times reporter Lee. When a large number of Powerball winners in a 2005 drawing revealed that mass-printed paper fortunes were to blame, the author (whose middle initial is Chinese for prosperity) went in search of the backstory. She tracked the winners down to Chinese restaurants all over America, and the paper slips the fortunes are written on back to a Brooklyn company. This travel-like narrative serves as the spine of her cultural history;not a book on Chinese cuisine, but the Chinese food of take-out-and-delivery;and permits her to frequently but safely wander off into various tangents related to the cookie. There are satisfying mini-histories on the relationship between Jews and Chinese food and a biography of the real General Tso, but Lee also pries open factoids and tidbits of American culture that eventually touch on large social and cultural subjects such as identity, immigration and nutrition. Copious research backs her many lively anecdotes, and being American-born Chinese yet willing to scrutinize herself as much as her objectives, she wins the reader over. Like the numbers on those lottery fortunes, the book's a winner. (Mar.) Copyright © 2006; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From School Library JournalAdult/High School;Lee takes readers on a delightful journey through the origins and mysteries of the popular, yet often overlooked, world of the American Chinese food industry. Crossing dozens of states and multiple countries, the author sought answers to the mysteries surrounding the shocking origins of the fortune cookie, the inventor of popular dishes such as chop suey and General Tso's chicken, and more. What she uncovers are the fascinating connections and historical details that give faces and names to the restaurants and products that have become part of a universal American experience. While searching for the "greatest Chinese restaurant," readers are taken on a culinary tour as Lee discovers the characteristics that define an exceptional and unique Chinese dining experience. Readers will learn about the cultural contributions and sacrifices made by the Chinese immigrants who comprise the labor force and infrastructure that supports Chinese restaurants all over the world. This title will appeal to teens who are interested in history, Chinese culture, and, of course, cuisine.

Recommend it to sophisticated readers who revel in the details and history that help explain our current global culture, including fans of Thomas L. Friedman's *The World Is Flat* (Farrar, 2006) and Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner's *Freakonomics* (Morrow, 2006).mdash;Lynn Rashid, Marriots Ridge High School, Marriotsville, MD Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From Bookmarks Magazine

Wersquo;re in something of a golden age for food journalism, with exposeacute;s like Eric Schlossersquo;s *Fast Food Nation*, odysseys like Michael Pollansquo;s *Omnivoresquo;s Dilemma*, histories like Mark Kurlansky's *Salt*, and quirky memoirs like Julie Powellsquo;s *Julie and Julia*. *The Fortune Cookie Chronicles* is a bit of each, and reviewers held it to similar standards. Most critics felt that it made the cut as a unique exploration of food, culture, immigration, and identity. A few critics, however, while thoroughly enjoying the booksquo;s quirky, fascinating anecdotes and histories, felt like there was something missing. Lee, well-known for both her city-beat reporting for *The New York Times* and her salonlike parties, could have made herself a stronger character in the book to give it more unity. Despite this complaint, every reviewer had to admit that something about the subject matter and its author was irresistible. Copyright copy; 2004 Phillips Nelson Media, Inc.