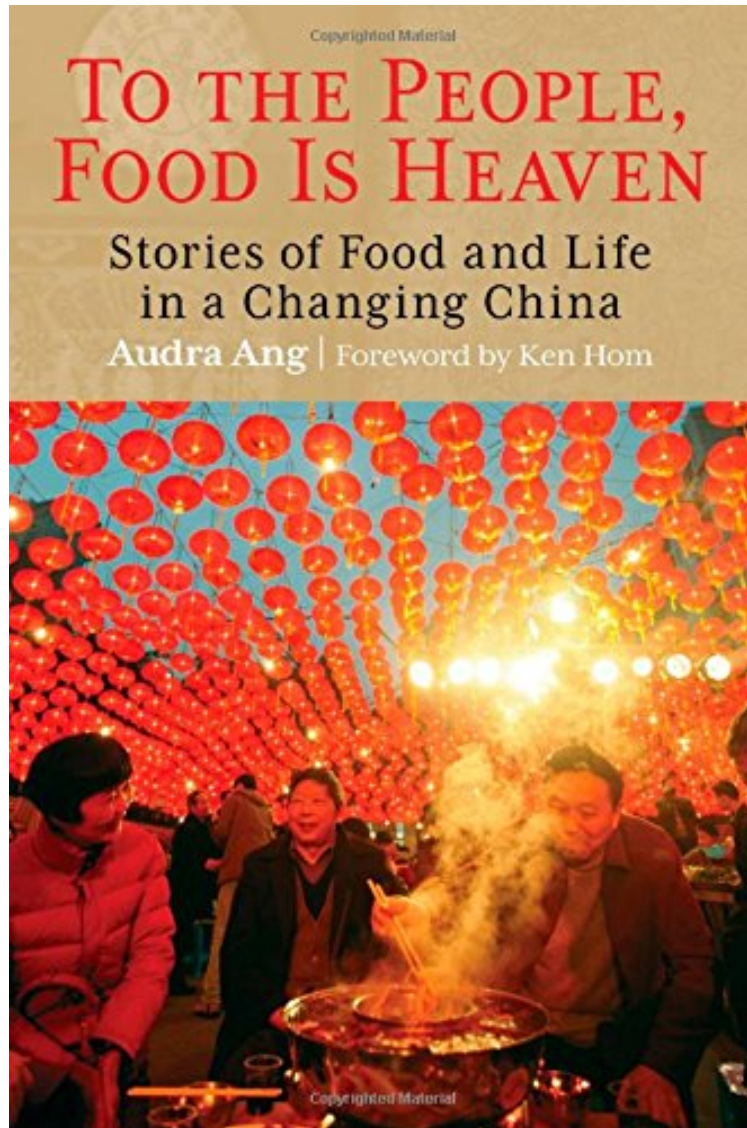


To the People, Food Is Heaven: Stories Of Food And Life In A Changing China

Audra Ang

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Audra Ang : To the People, Food Is Heaven: Stories Of Food And Life In A Changing China before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised To the People, Food Is Heaven: Stories Of Food And Life In A Changing China:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great account of a journalist's experiences in ChinaBy CustomerI use this book in a first-year seminar class about contemporary China. I really like it because it gives a close-up

perspective on what it's like to be a journalist in a place that makes it challenging to work as a journalist. Audra Ang is very honest about her experiences, both the rapture of delicious meals and the rage that sometimes strikes foreigners living in a 'mei you' world (it's called 'China rage'). From offers to cut off her hand to see an illegal noodle workshop to heart-rending accounts of covering the 2008 Sichuan earthquakes, the book is full of interesting experiences.² of 2 people found the following review helpful. Lip-Smacking Tour of Contemporary China By Sonia Katchian Incredible find! This is not only a palate-guided tour of cities and villages throughout China today, but also a keenly-observed introduction to the exigencies of contemporary Chinese life. What makes this book a particular gem is that the author, Audra Ang, is a foreigner who passes for a Chinese, since her Singaporean heritage is derived from Chinese ancestors. Thus, we have a guide with a compassionate eye and heart, but who simultaneously displays the sharp mind and objective attitude of the AP reporter that she is. We are led through the denizens of a Beijing exurb, straight into one of its tiny room/apartments for an intimate dinner of countless dishes. We dash through Beijing trying to evade interlopers from Party headquarters and end up sitting down to a table (loaded with food, of course) surrounded by some of China's most famous dissidents. The few simple bw images are enough to convey visually some of places and people we meet. I recommend this book to anyone wanting to learn about China in the early years of the 21st century. A great gift for any Sinophile! Also great reading for any student of economics, politics, sociology, urban studies . . . and of course, for any foodie. And did I mention Ang's sense of humor? 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Illuminating By Alex Chen As an American expatriate living in China and having lived in China during the same time as the author, this is the book that I've wanted to write as my personal account of what I've witnessed in this crazy country. From Olympic highs to the earthquake lows and everything in between is so well documented and stories so well told, I felt like I was along for the ride. Only my book would pale in comparison to her first hand accounts of the the food scandals, tea farms, public and social unrest as well as her personal experiences with Chinese warmth, generosity and hospitality over fabulous but unfussy meals. Ms. Ang is a strong story teller that writes unapologetically with her well honed voice. It's giving, frustrated, excited, enthusiastic and heartbroken in places but all the while effortlessly authentic. This is a book that I will reread in the years to come to remember a China pre/post Olympics as it steamrolls its way to the future. I hope Ms. Ang comes back to China to tell next chapter of this crazy country... a story told hopefully over a bowl of steaming hot, delicious rice.

In China, the world's next superpower, life is comfortable for the fortunate few. For others, it's a hand-to-mouth struggle for a full stomach, a place to live, wages for work done, and freedom to speak openly. In a place where few things are more important than food, "Have you eaten yet?" is another way of saying hello. After traversing the country and meeting its people, Ang shares her delicious experiences with us. She tells of a clandestine cup of salty yak butter tea with a Tibetan monk during a military crackdown and explains how a fluffy spring onion omelet encapsulates China's drive for rural development. I'll have lunch with some of the country's most enduring activists, savor meals with earthquake survivors, and get to know a house cleaner who makes the best fried chicken in all of Beijing. Ang bites into the gaping divide between rich and poor, urban and rural reform, intolerance for dissent, and the growing dissatisfaction with those in power. By serving these topics to us one at a time, *To the People, Food Is Heaven* provides a fresh perspective beyond the country's anonymous identity as an economic powerhouse. Ang plates a terrific, wide-ranging feast that is the new China. Have you eaten yet?

"Food is only the flavouring in Ang's book, where the real meat lies in her insight into life in contemporary China." —Straits Times (Singapore) "A rare glimpse into the day-to-day experiences of those who inhabit a paradoxically intransigent and transforming modern China. Audra Ang serves up a sweet, sour, savory, and bitter tale that culinarily paints the complexity and poignancy of life for today's Chinese." —Grace Young, James Beard Award-winning author of *Stir-Frying to the Sky's Edge* "To the People, Food Is Heaven is like a fresh and generous Chinese meal, varied, colorful, and delicious. Audra Ang takes you with her on a thoughtful journey through China, reflecting on everything from the politics of protest and mysterious lake monsters to the lives of farmers, scholars, activists, cops, and reporters. Ang's own story, woven among those of the people she met, is a moving tale of how we find ourselves and each other, often in the most unexpected places." —Rachel DeWoskin, author of *Foreign Babes in Beijing* "Audra Ang has a wonderful eye for detail and a passion for good food and good company. After reading her beautiful memoir, you'll feel as though you've met every character personally and shared a meal with each of them." —Philip P. Pan, author of *Out of Mao's Shadow* "Audra Ang has written a fast-paced memoir of her eventful years in China, a period of turmoil and change that shaped today's country. Ang — a Singaporean of Chinese descent — uses her very Chinese love of food as a way to penetrate Chinese society and bring us closer to ordinary people. Throughout it all, she writes clearly, with great sympathy and an open mind." —Ian Johnson, author of *Wild Grass* "Writing in clear bold prose, Ang offers us a feast of intimate and heartfelt vignettes viewed through the lens of food — part reportage, part history, part travelogue — proving that, for the Chinese people, what they eat and if they eat has always been their primary preoccupation and greatest pleasure." —Leslie Li, author of *Daughter of Heaven* "A mouth-watering taste of modern China. A hard-

boiled journalist and bon viveur, Ang eats her way across the Middle Kingdom and provides us with a sumptuous feast of food anecdotes and journalistic insights."mdash;Jonathan Watts, author of *When a Billion Chinese Jump*