



The British Housewife: Cookery Books, Cooking and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain

Gilly Lehmann

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This is the first full-scale study of the world of eighteenth-century British cookery books, their authors, their readers and their recipes. For many decades, we have treated them as collectables - often fetching thousands at auction and in rare-book catalogues - or as quaint survivors, while ignoring their true history or what they have to tell us about the Georgians at table. The publication of cookery books was pursued more vigorously in Britain than in any other west European country: it was also the genre that attracted more women writers to its ranks - indeed, perhaps the very first woman to earn her living from her writing in modern Britain was Hannah Woolley, author of *The Cook's Guide* and other works. Reason enough to look more closely at the form. This book pursues the authors: their identity, their intentions, their biographies; and it weighs up their audience. How far did the one determine the other? How far did the character of the authors and their output direct the course of British cookery during the eighteenth century?

While books advised and encouraged their readers to cook, create and compound, the experience at table may have been very different. *The British Housewife* tests the fantasy against the reality perceived in contemporary diaries, correspondence and other sources. Meal-times, table manners and the actual procedures of dining are laid out for the modern reader in much greater detail than hitherto. And the curious may discover how eighteenth-century noblemen fought for the favours of the best French chefs, how cookery book writers traded insults in the public print, or how celebrity chefs' of the day wrote not a word of the books that were put out under their name. *La plus ça change...*

There is an extensive bibliography together with a long appendix giving the full wording of the title pages of many of the cookery books under discussion, making this an indispensable handbook as well as a major contribution to understanding a subject we know too little about. There are several illustrations of table layouts, title pages and frontispieces from the original books.

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Paul Evans:

The particular book The British Housewife: Cookery Books, Cooking and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain has a lot of knowledge on it. So when you check out this book you can get a lot of help. The book was authored by the very famous author. The writer makes some research prior to write this book. This particular book very easy to read you can find the point easily after scanning this book.

Harrison Bowman:

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