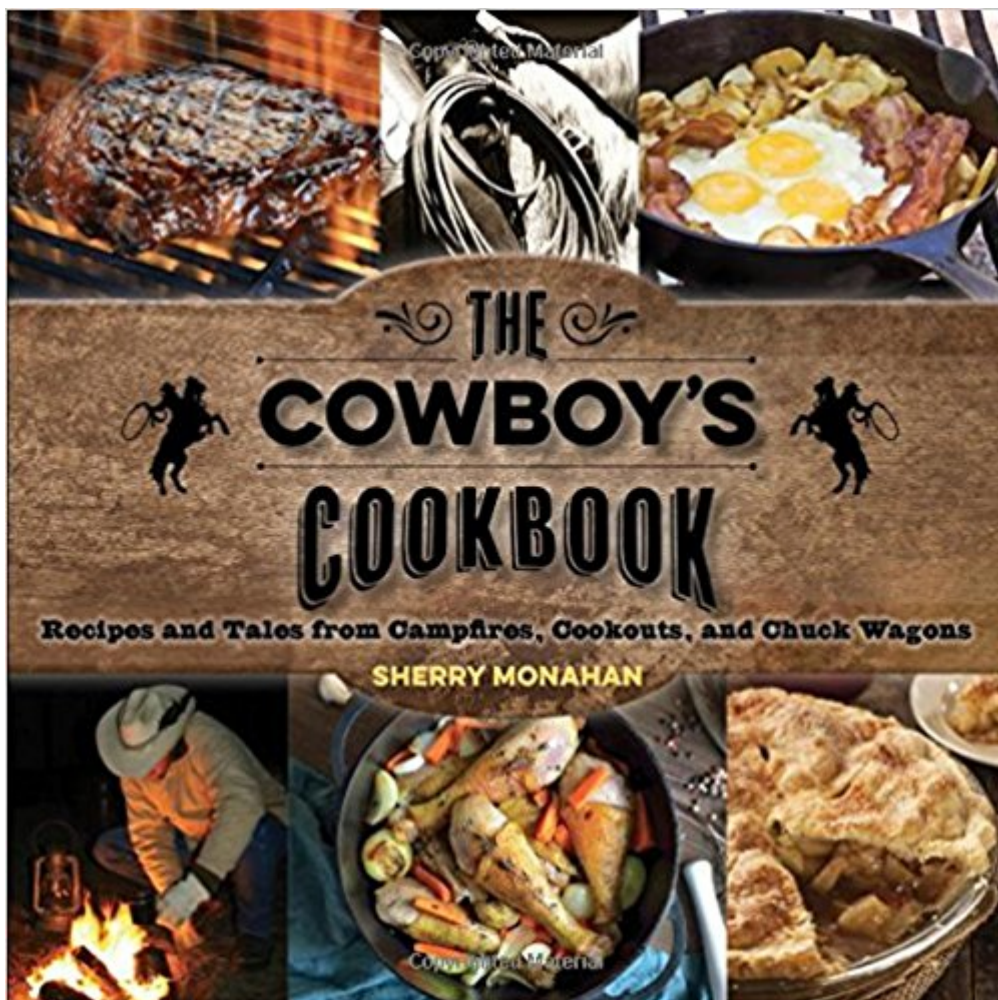




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The Cowboy's Cookbook: Recipes And Tales From Campfires, Cookouts, And Chuck Wagons



Synopsis

From chuckwagon recipes to dutch-oven favorites for your own campfire, *The Cowboy's Cookbook* features recipes, photos, and lore celebrating the cowboy's role in the shaping of the American West. From songs sung around the campfire after hearty meals of steak, beans, and skillet cornbread to the recipes you'll need to recreate those trailside meals in your own kitchen, this book will get you in touch with the spirit of the Old West.

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Customer Reviews

Readers who don't know their cow grease (butter) from their lizard scorcher (camp stove) will appreciate the time and effort Monahan (*Frontier Fare*) has spent poring through newspapers and other sources from the late 19th century to come up with this guide to authentic cowboy cooking. Even if they aren't using the classic Dutch oven to whip up cowboy classics such as chili and fruit cobbler, amateur cooks will appreciate the simple and straightforward recipes for frontier classics such as coconut cake and baked prairie chicken, both sourced from the 1874 *Kansas Home Cook Book*. Recipes for mashed potatoes (called 'Potato Snow' by the *Omaha Daily World* in 1886), panfried chicken with cream gravy, and chicken salad are virtually identical to the ones we're using over a century later. Monahan sprinkles in stories of chuck wagon cooks, called 'Cookies,' and the cowboys they cooked for, and even includes a bit of cowboy poetry and the occasional menu from a frontier restaurant. Though the dishes and stories don't differ all that much from other recent cowboy cuisine coverage, Monahan's dutiful research adds authenticity to her compilation and is sure to

surprise a few city slickers. (Publishers Weekly)

Sherry Monahan is the President of Western Writers of America (2014-2016), and holds memberships in the James Beard Foundation, Women Writing the West, the Author's Guild, National Genealogical Society, and the Association of Professional Genealogists. She has her own column in and is a contributing editor for True West magazine. Other publications include Frontier Fare, *California Vines, Wines and Pioneers*, *Mrs. Earp: Wives and Lovers of the Earp Brothers*, *The Wicked West*, *Tombstone's Treasures*, *Taste of Tombstone*, and *Pikes Peak: Adventurers, Communities and Lifestyles*. She resides in North Carolina. She has also appeared on the History Channel, FoxNews, and the American Heroes Channel. She won a Wrangler Award for her appearance on *Cowboys and Outlaws: Wyatt Earp* in 2010.

Great History of the Old West and trail drives. The recipes are authentic and are not always practical to make at home. Great History though!

I really enjoyed all the history and background for the trail cooking. I gave a western theme party and it was a great help!

A "bunch" of great recipes

Great

Fun

Just learning to use a dutch oven over a campfire, new experience. A lot of easy to do recipes.

Wow!!!

Authentic recipes taken mostly from 19th Century newspapers, old Western cookbooks and from families, passed down through the generations. There are some amazing historical images in this cookbook, by the way. And some delightful silhouette illustrations. The "Dutch Oven" or heavy duty cast iron pan (I guess today's version would

be a Le Creuset type of pan) was used for everything from stews and meats to bread and cakes. It was the major appliance of the day. I remember reading about this type of cooking in the Little House on the Prairie books as well. The cast iron oven could sit directly on coals or be lifted above (they used something called a *spider* in the Little House books). There's some good information about charcoal briquettes and how to best arrange them for the desired distribution of heat for proper results. There's a very humorous (though I don't think it was meant to be humorous) section on Cowboy Vernacular. Some of the terms are familiar (cow chips, chuck wagon, grub house, jerky, etc.) but there are others that stood out, such as Dough Gods (slang name for biscuits), Gut Shrunk (no food for a while), Jamoka (coffee made with java and mocha - translation in my mind: Little Starbuck on the Prairie!), Old Woman (insult for a male cook, said behind his back), and the best of the best: Son of a B Stew (stew made of brains, sweetbreads and calf's tongue, liver, heart, kidneys, etc.). Page 10: "You throw everything in the pot but the hair, horns, and holler." Moving on. The recipes. First, I will never make the Son of a B Stew (for obvious reasons). I will, however, try the Texas Corn Bread, which accompanies the stew and contains molasses since I've never tried a cornbread with molasses. And there is a rather lovely recipe for fruit cobbler made in the Dutch oven, which was adapted into a modern day recipe from the original that appeared in the Nebraska World Herald in 1896. There's also an interesting recipe for a Buttermilk Pie that seems to be lemon flavored. Of course there are recipes for the staples of cowboy cuisine like chili and hot cakes but there are some other, more unique varieties of meals that were eaten on the go. But the most interesting chapter, to me anyway, is the chapter on coffee. Coffee wasn't always coffee. In fact when they ran out of the green coffee beans, which they roasted themselves, they would use various grains like parched corn, wheat or rye. Later on, two brothers (the Arbuckles) figured out a way to roast the beans to a consistent level and then sold them in pound bags to cowboys to take along in the chuck wagons. For a number of reasons, the company, which had been exceedingly successful, was broken up by the family with the only surviving brand of Yuban. Yes, Yuban of 1970s game show consolation prize fame! From the prairie, the book shifts into eating on ranches, where the cowboys worked long and hard, performing backbreaking work. They lived in bunkhouses together on the ranches with their cook, the same one who would have fed them on the trail. Living on the ranch also afforded them the time to participate in recreation such as the rodeo and picnics as well as other town activities and religious services. On special occasions, like Christmas, for example, the cowboys were even welcome in the

rancher's main house to enjoy home cooked meals. Food on the ranch was mainly beef and beans, as they were economical, and these staples were supplemented by various biscuits, corn breads, a few canned vegetables and dried fruits as well as some sweets in the form of pies, puddings or cakes. There are even a few recipes for fish (such as bass) as some cowboys had places to fish while living on ranches. The book goes on to give some history on cow towns and how they benefited from the cattle boom as cattle were transported by rail to Chicago. When the trail ended in a cattle town and the cowboys were paid for their work, they spent their money at the end of the trail celebrating in the saloons and "dance halls" (if you get my meaning). And while sometimes there was rowdiness, for the most part, they held themselves accountable to saloon owners and paid damages. Restaurants and hotels served a variety of meals that included pork, poultry, beef, pickled vegetables, sweets, coffee and even English Breakfast Tea (that was a surprise to me). They even served lemon meringue pies, which I thought were more of a 20th Century thing. Other occasions for special meals, other than general holidays, included weddings and anniversary celebrations on ranches and the frontier. There were cakes with icing, chicken salad with homemade mayonnaise and square dancing. I could go on and on but I won't. This is a rather fascinating history of the American West, told not just through food, but through the traditions, work and customs of the American Cowboy in the 19th Century. This is a major part of American history that shouldn't be missed. I loved reading through the historical information and looking at the old, surviving images of the time and the recipes provided, as the fare was such an important part of the cowboys' ability to survive the conditions they worked in. Fascinating from cover to cover. My highest recommendation. I read a free digital, advanced reader's copy of this book through NetGalley.

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