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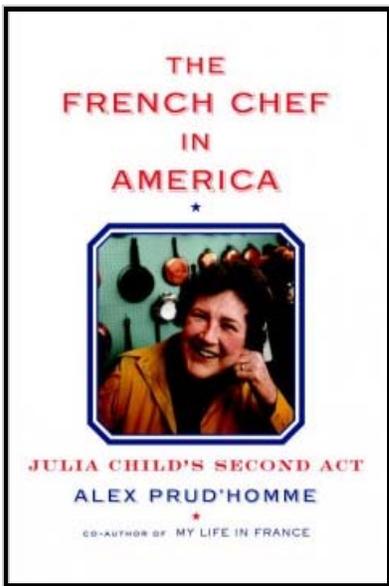


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The French Chef in America

by Alex Prud'homme

Price: **\$27.95**(Hardcover)

Published: October 04, 2016



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From the Publisher: The enchanting story of Julia Child's years as TV personality and beloved cookbook author--a sequel in spirit to *My Life in France*--by her great-nephew

Julia Child is synonymous with French cooking, but her legacy runs much deeper. Now, her great-nephew and *My Life in France* coauthor vividly recounts the myriad ways in which she profoundly shaped how we eat today. He shows us Child in the aftermath of the publication of *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*, suddenly finding herself America's first lady of French food and under considerable pressure to embrace her new mantle. We see her dealing with difficult colleagues and the challenges of fame, ultimately using her newfound celebrity to create what would become a totally new type of food television. Every bit as entertaining, inspiring, and delectable as *My Life in France*,...

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About The Author

Alex Prud'homme

ALEX PRUD'HOMME is Julia Child's great-nephew and the coauthor of her autobiography, *My Life in France*, which was adapted into the movie *Julie & Julia*. He is also the author of *The Ripple Effect: The Fate of Freshwater in the Twenty-First Century*, *Hydrofracking: What Everyone...and The Cell Game*, and he is the coauthor (with Michael Cherkasky) of *Forewarned: Why the Government Is Failing to Protect Us--and What We Must Do to Protect Ourselves*. Prud'homme's journalism has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *Vanity Fair*, *Time*, and *People*.

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What We Say

The subtitle of this biography about the chef, cookbook innovator and TV personality is "Julia Child's Second Act In America." It's written by the journalist Alex Prud'homme, who also happens to be Child's grand-nephew. They cowrote her delightful memoir "My Life In France" (which was the basis for one-half -- and the far, far better half -- of the film "Julie & Julia"). This book does indeed track her life right up to the end, when Child died just days before her 92nd birthday. But in truth if you have any interest in Child or cooking, you really must read "My Life In France." And if you have, you'll readily spot "The French Chef In America" as covering much the same territory, albeit with a wider focus. While her memoir was

great fun, it could at times be circumspect and polite about those still living. On his own Prud'homme is far more eager to give Child her due and perhaps chide others when she would not. That's all well and good and it's nice to hear other voices and delve further into the impact she had. But what this book lacks to a degree is Child herself, her witty, intelligent and vivid voice. In fact, perhaps the most useful passages are the ones that DO repeat themselves because Prud'homme gives a slightly different perspective, that is, his own rather than hers. When he ventures into new territory, it feels like we're being loaded up on bread rolls because the main dish simply isn't coming. The first chapter is devoted to how Child ended up doing a TV special on a White House state dinner. Fair enough, for many reasons. But an entire other chapter (the book only has fourteen of them) is devoted to ANOTHER TV special about a state dinner, this one honoring the Queen Of England. And this special was a disaster all around, liked by no one and wasn't even her special anyway -- she was just a commentator. Similarly, mini-bios of some notable chefs who crossed her path feel like padding. I was especially eager to hear about her decades-long friendship and TV partnership with Jacques Pépin, but beyond some very mild platitudes, even this section was fairly devoid of interest or revealing anecdote. It lacks spice. Prud'homme is convincing when he makes the case for her vast influence on cooking, grocery stores (and the ingredients they stock), restaurants, TV food shows and celebrity chefs. But he made that case more convincingly with the more satisfying fare of "My Life In France." -- Michael Giltz

What Others Say

"Prud'homme deftly chronicles the years after Julia Child left France and settled in Cambridge, Massachusetts. . . . As Child's grandnephew, Prud'homme is able to provide an intimate portrait of Child's life by sharing photographs, excerpts of key letters and daily journals, and personal memories. He dishes up the story of Child's life from the strain of the medical issues she and her husband experienced to the pressures and excitement of becoming a trendsetter in televised cooking shows and a household name—in a manner as engaging as Julia Child herself and as delicious as one of her recipes." —*Booklist*

"Julia Child's great-nephew, journalist Alex Prud'homme, treats Child's 'second act' like a carefully crafted menu. He pays exquisite attention to the details without ever losing sight of the overall experience. The effervescent Child is alive and well in these pages, which include scenes from her hit TV show, *The French Chef*, as well as an intimate look at her boundless relationship with her husband, Paul. . . . The depth of Prud'homme's research is evident in the particulars." —*BookPage*

"Child's voice comes through clearly in this affectionate account...

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