



Love and Hunger

Charlotte Wood

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The award-winning author of *The Children and Animal People*, explores the solitary and shared pleasures of cooking and eating in an ode to good food, prepared and presented with minimum fuss and maximum love.

'What's important is the fact of eating together - the gathering at the table, the conviviality.'

Love & Hunger is a distillation of everything Charlotte Wood has learned over more than twenty years about cooking and the pleasures of simple food well made. In this age of gastro-porn and the fetishisation of food, the pressure to be as expert as the chefs we've turned into celebrities can feel overwhelming.

An instant antidote to such madness is this wise and practical book - an ode to good food, prepared and presented with minimum fuss and maximum love.

Cooking represents 'creativity in its purest form'. It is meditation and stimulation, celebration and solace, a gift both offered and received. It can nourish the soul - and the mind - as well as the body. *Love & Hunger* will make you long to get into the kitchen to try the surprising tips and delicious recipes, and will leave you feeling freshly inspired to cook with joy for the people you love. *Love & Hunger* is a gift for all who value the solitary and shared pleasures of cooking and eating. Like a simple but glorious meal, this feast of a book is infused with warmth and generosity.

Acclaimed and award-winning novelist Charlotte Wood also writes the popular cookery blog *How to Shuck an Oyster* and is a brilliant home cook and food enthusiast. An invitation to dinner at Charlotte's house is always cause for celebration.

Love and Hunger Details

Date : Published May 1st 2012 by Allen and Unwin (first published January 1st 2012)

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From Reader Review Love and Hunger for online ebook

Ben Nielsen says

Memories of food and life interwoven with recipes.

The author eloquently articulates everything I've felt about cooking, but have never known exactly how to express.

Kate says

Stand-by for a bit of a rave because I LOVED this book. I am partial to good food. In fact, I enjoy cooking almost as much as reading... so when the two interests combine, it's thrilling (for me, anyway). Charlotte Wood's Love & Hunger is part memoir, part cookbook.

The book is a wonderful collection of Wood's thoughts on food, cooking and enjoying meals with friends and family. It includes practical kitchen advice and a generous serving of tempting recipes, accompanied by Wood's warm commentary on everything from shared meals and picky eaters to discovering offal.

Charlotte Wood is perhaps best known for her novels (notably The Children and Animal People) but Love & Hunger is likely to change that. In moving to non-fiction with Love & Hunger, Wood maintains her particular brand of wry humour, her thoughtful observations of people and also manages to put a great deal of emotion into her words – and yes, you can get emotional about Puy lentils!

Every chapter in this book evoked a personal response whether it be recalling fond memories about food (ranging from my grandpa making me thick slices of white bread spread liberally with jam and cream to my Mum's crisp, salty homemade potato 'cakes'); considering what constitutes 'good, honest food'; thinking about the last time I felt hungry (real, stomach-grumbling hunger); to simply agreeing with Wood about the uninspired fare cooked in a school 'Home Ec' class (and yes, I still have my Home Ec cookbook, Cookery the Australian Way).

5/5 It's tempting to 'devour' this book in one sitting but instead, treat it like 'slow-food' and enjoy the nuggets of wisdom bit by bit.

See my full review here: <http://booksaremyfavouriteandbest.wor...>

Lucy says

I hate cooking with a passion and I work with eating disorders. So yes, my relationship with food is complicated.

A friend lent this to me as one of my 2013 goals was to get in to cooking and the literature I tend to read around food involves being literally afraid of food. I think her words were "Here's someone who actually has a healthy relationship with food. Read." So I did, and she was right. Very right. In more ways than one.

Admittedly I was bored at times, but this book did something I never thought possible, it ignited in me a desire to cook. Dare I say - a passion to cook, even though at said time, I hadn't actually cooked anything... yet. It also inspired me to cook as way of expressing love to others.

So not the best read ever, but I owe this book a great deal of thanks.

Ps. I actually have been cooking since. About twice a week, sometimes three! This from the person who had not cooked in over three years. If I could work out how to put than in bold I would.

Manda Lees says

I enjoyed this book immensely. More a collection of vignettes on food and the way it figures in Wood's life, **Love and Hunger** fulfilled my already burgeoning foodie tendencies and has inspired me to get back into the kitchen and create.

Each chapter is a self-contained story, followed by corresponding recipes. Sometimes I would skip ahead just to see the deliciousness that the chapter would allude to. Wood's recipes are simple, but fresh and colourful, and this is way I prefer to cook. Her emphasis on the best produce (without the wank) prepared with love and flavour mirror my own aspirations for the kitchen. Anyone with any love of cooking will find this book an inspiration.

Kate Forsyth says

Charlotte Wood is best known as the Stella-award-winning author of *The Natural Way of Things*, but she is also a brilliant cook and food writer. For quite a few years, she wrote a food blog called 'How to Shuck an Oyster' in which philosophical musings on the importance of food and eating were mixed with helpful tips on how to be a better cook.

Love & Hunger grew out of this blog, and is a warm, wise, personal and practical collection of essays, recipes and cooking advice. Charlotte shares her own discovery of the art of cooking, gives guidance on how to be a good host, offers shrewd insights into the causes of picky eating, mediates on the fear of death in the disgust of offal, and brings me to tears discussing the best way to cook for people who are ill and dying.

I love to cook myself, and relish reading books about food and cooking. It is rare, however, to find one written with such intelligence, sensitivity, and skill. There is not a sentence in the whole book that is not beautifully constructed, and not an essay which does not enlighten and inspire. *Love & Hunger* is a book to be read in a single gulp, and then returned to again and again for savouring.

Kylie Cardell says

Light, indulgent, thoughtful -- just like the kind of food Wood writes about so lovingly. I enjoyed the mix of personal reflection and enquiry into the everyday rituals of eating and sharing food & it made me think about the little rituals that permeate my own family and that have shaped an approach to food. My Mum is a wonderful cook, but a cookbook cook -- never deviating from the recipe while I tend to (sometimes at my peril) experiment and play with hold and flavours. Can't get over a little quirk in the book where Wood offers up fish as food for vegetarian friends (!) but I folded many corners over on recipes to try and all up this was a little treasure of a read.

Newtown Review of Books says

The best food writers are those who delight in the preparation of good food and in sharing it with loved ones, and novelist Charlotte Wood is one such writer. In her memoir, *Love and Hunger*, Wood writes about her passion for cooking in the plain-spoken lyricism readers of her novels have come to love.

Read full review here: <http://newtownreviewofbooks.com/2012/...>

Sue Liu says

A Christmas gift from a friend.

A very thoughtful gift at that - and I read it immediately and "gobbled it up" in 2 days or so.

I only rated it 3 stars because I liked it and enjoyed Charlotte's musings and sentiments on food, giving and sharing as a form of nurturing and love. It was a very gentle read and I sure loved seeing her recipes.

John Purcell says

I have just finished Charlotte Wood's *Love and Hunger* and urge everyone to read it, especially those who must cook every night and resent it, or avoids cooking when they can because they consider it a chore. This book has the power to reignite a passion for life, friendship, food and the everyday.

Part memoir and part recipe book, *Love and Hunger* can be read cover to cover, as I did, just like a novel, or can be dipped into when the moment requires. Charlotte's unusual cook book is the wise friend many of us do not have ready at hand 24/7.

Love and Hunger is a guide, an encouragement and an inspiration.

MichelleG says

This book is fully of little insights and personal commentary from the author, and what looks like some delightful recipes throughout the book - although I haven't tried any of them.

I didn't really like the first person narrative, and by the end of the book found it rather boring, almost like I was being lectured about food - how I should think/ feel, and even react to food. I mean honestly! On and on it goes about this was my experience, and so it should also be yours, right?! No, I don't think so! It reminded me of an aunt lecturing me when I was growing up to remember to put the butter back in the fridge... over and over again.

I know a lot of people really love this book, and while I didn't absolutely hate, I just don't happen to be one of those who liked it!

Shelleyrae at Book'd Out says

Charlotte Wood's *Love & Hunger* combines delicious yet simple recipes and cooking tips with philosophical and personal ruminations. It is easily read from cover to cover but then deserves a place amongst your shelves of recipe books, to be pulled out frequently when looking for menu inspiration. Charlotte derives great pleasure from cooking and this book is infused with her passion, but rather than preaching about the correct steps and right tools, *Love & Hunger* is a conversation about food and cooking.

Love & Hunger encourages an approach to meals that considers food not just merely as fuel for the body but also as a form of nourishment for the mind and soul - from the satisfaction of learning a new skill, like making pastry, to the kindness in providing assistance in times of crisis. Wood urges simplicity and generosity over complicated, intricate dishes and the beauty of fresh ingredients. That is not to say she derides creativity, for she encourages experimentation with ingredients and methods as a way to promote confidence in skills.

The recipes Charlotte shares are varied and include tempting snacks, sides, main meals and deserts. Basics are demystified in chapters like 'How To Roast a Chicken' and the provision of an 'Essential Ingredients' list. Legumes and vegetables are featured quite heavily but there are also recipes for standards such as spaghetti bolognese and Chicken Marbella. The index is sorted both traditionally and by main ingredient so it is a simple task to find a recipe and blank lined pages invite you to add your own notes.

While the recipes are a feature of *Love & Hunger*, it is Wood's thoughts on food and cooking that makes this much more than a cookbook. Wood writes wonderfully of the way in which food promotes the bonds between families and friends. The ways in which we celebrate with shared feasts, console with hearty dishes or comfort with a favourite meal. She talks of 'mercy meals' shared amongst mourners, relaxed dinners during beach holidays and dinner parties amongst friends. She reminds us that food is a gift, that cooking should be a work of heart, rather than art, to be enjoyed by those who provide and those who receive it.

Once a month or so my husband and I host a barbeque for friends. Each couple contributes to the meal by bringing either salad, snacks or desert while I serve my own 'secret recipe' versions of fried rice and potato

bake. It's always a wonderful night as the children run riot while we adults relax with few drinks to chat. Eventually the men fire up the BBQ (usually when the children start complaining of being starved) and us women gather in the kitchen (I know, terribly sexist of us) to toss salad, butter rolls and then lay out the dishes family style for everyone to fill their plates. As we gnaw on ribs and pass the tomato sauce around the table we talk, and laugh and share. I look forward to these Saturday nights, the food is simple but the ritual of preparing and cooking and eating gives us a reason to gather and helps to reinforce our friendships.

Love & Hunger is an inspiring book which offers something for both the accomplished and novice home cook. It is a reminder to take pleasure in food and cooking and a guide for renewing the joy in preparing and serving meals to loved ones. Love & Hunger will make the perfect addition to your own kitchen, and to the kitchen of those you love.

starwolvie says

I'm quite partial to reading books about food. It was a quick read that was part memoir part musing on food. What did shine through was her love of food and how it can bring people together.

I skipped through the recipes that were included at the end of each chapter - but they may be useful for cooks who aren't as experienced.

Kathryn says

I have to confess that my motives for reading this book were not initially as pure as the driven snow. I originally borrowed it from the library because I needed a book written by an Australian author with a bright cover to satisfy the criteria for one of the challenges I was doing this year. And I realised, as I scrolled through my Australian author bookshelf on Goodreads, that most of the covers I could see (and admittedly there are sometimes different cover variations on the books I get from the library, but I couldn't be bothered looking at all of the different options and then turning up at my library to find the book I wanted didn't have the same cover!) looked fairly drab, muted, pale, or colourless. So I looked further afield and found this one, which sounded like it would interest me.

Once I started it, at first I was a little surprised as I expected more of Charlotte Wood's attitudes and responses to foods and her observations or research of other people's attitudes and responses - which we do get a little of (and there is more further on in the book), but in the first chapters there is more focussing on specific procedures such as how to roast a chook, or concepts such as regaining your mojo in the kitchen when you've lost the desire to cook. Which is all fine - just not quite what I was expecting!

I liked the author's mention of how far we have come in culinary matters - pointing out that in The Commonsense Cookery Book, published in 1976, that out of 130 recipes, only three called for garlic - and in quite measured quantities - "three thin slices of garlic" for spaghetti bolognese!! I already had a mantra that garlic in recipes can normally be safely doubled, but if I'm referring to a cook book from the 1980s or earlier, I think I'll increase that factor to at least 5 times as much!

I enjoyed her comparisons of cooking with writing and some of the associated quotes:

"What pleases me first as a reader is the feeling that I'm in completely safe hands - at times I think this is the

aspect of reading that gives me the most pleasure of all; a writer's control of their material, their effortless-seeming blend of form and content to create something seamless, something beautiful. It's a kind of beauty that has nothing to do with the story itself, but everything to do with its construction."

And while I agree with a lot of the things that the author says about foods and cooking and our attitudes to all such things, I have to say - although perhaps I am on my own here out in the land of the food Philistines - that I still like apricot chicken when I have it on occasion, despite her statement that apricot chicken has been consigned to the "retro joke book".

I am now interested to read Charlotte Woods' fiction books to see if her fiction writing style is as good as her nonfiction style!

Bree T says

I've talked before on my blog here about how I don't really like cooking that much. I like the idea of cooking. I like finding things that I'd like to eat and cutting the recipes out of magazines, or whatever, for a rainy day. I buy cookbooks. But when it comes down to it, I don't really like the creation process of cooking, especially with 2 young children underfoot. My husband works nights and I find the time between say 5-8pm the most difficult to get things done. The kids are bored, they're hungry for their own dinner, they're demanding attention. And I really hate the mess that cooking makes. Ok, the mess that I make when I'm cooking.

Luckily my husband pretty much loves to cook. Since I moved in with him nearly 7 years ago, I haven't cooked more than probably a dozen or so times. I bake things, like cakes, biscuits, banana bread etc. But cooking a full meal? That's his job. I just provide the inspiration. He eats everything so whatever I tell him I feel like, is what we eat.

It's clear that my feeling on cooking and preparing food is almost borderline opposite to Charlotte Wood's. An Australian author of such books as *Animal People* and *The Children*, this book *Love & Hunger* is part memoir and part homage to her love of produce and preparing it. It's filled with simple recipes and handy tips like her idea of staples for any cupboard, fridge or freezer. In all honesty, Wood's attitude towards food and cooking it is, in an ideal world, the one that I'd like to have myself. The passion and enthusiasm she has for good, local and fresh produce shines off the page and she infuses beautiful memories of her childhood and the people in it and how so many things revolve around food. Whenever anyone was sick, or had passed on, there were plenty of people who gathered around to provide nourishing meals for the family, a strengthening of friendship ties by a simple gesture to let the family know they were cared about and being thought of. So much of our lives revolves around food and the consumption of it that it's possible to tie it into just about every major event in our lives and many minor ones. Be they good or bad, I carry so many food memories and the mere mention of some foods can have me desperate for another taste or in the case of beef stroganoff or chicken teriyaki, looking around for the nearest bathroom. Vivid memories of food poisoning courtesy of those two in my university dining hall will never leave me. I cannot see myself ever trying to eat any of those meals ever again.

I have to admit, I have relatively simple food tastes. I'm definitely never going to be the type to go to the latest Michelin starred restaurant and book some 12 course gastronomic feast. I'm virtually un-Australian because I don't eat seafood at all. Even though I love looking through cookbooks, to be honest, a large portion of them I skim over because they do feature food I'd never eat. Whilst this book also features recipes

for meals I probably wouldn't eat (such as the sardines!) it's the beautiful collection of stories that is contained within it that sticks in my mind. Wood has a fantastic conversational style of writing, like you're two people sitting down to have a chat and she's simply telling you a few anecdotes. People in these stories come to life – they're all people that we ourselves might know, stories that everyone can relate to and bring up a reader's own memories. This book was a celebration of love, family, relationships and friendships as much as it was an admiration and devotion to food cooked well and prepared simply. Wood herself admits she doesn't "plate up", a new fad since Masterchef and My Kitchen Rules rocketed to the top of the TV ratings lists. Now everyone wants to serve up their dinner like they're at a hatted restaurant. Wood's simple back to basics, all about the food dishes are diverse in ranges of difficulty but none of them really seem utterly too daunting for even someone like me to attempt.

I'm going to pass this one along to my husband for him to enjoy as well. It's the type of book where a wide variety of people can get such a pleasurable experience out of it, whether you are passionate about cooking and food or not. And I definitely think that there's a few things in there that will help us be more efficient with the food we do buy and with stocking our cupboards.

Rogue Wilson says

Not quite a memoir, not quite a cook book, I was recommended this by a new friend at work and thought I had best push on through even though I was bored. I love cookbooks but really prefer to have pictures throughout which this doesn't have and I didn't find her memoirs engaged me either. Maybe this just isn't my kind of book. Having said that, I know now I am never attempting to make pastry again, I will make labneh and I have new great recipes for puy lentils and wild rice, decadent looking spag bol and slice recipe plus a new tagine recipe which I've been wanting for an age....so it aint all bad! It's these recipes that made me change my mind from a two stars to three. My advice, just skim the book for the recipes.
