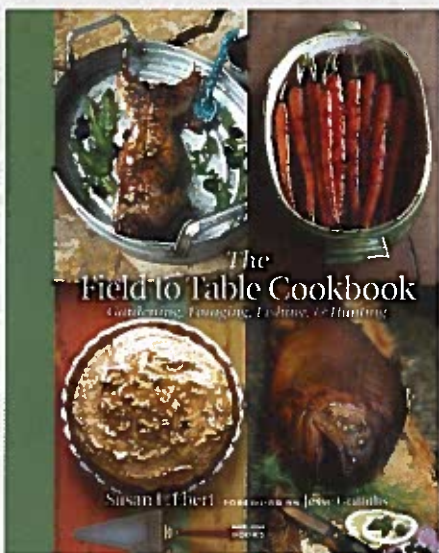


A NATURE-LOVER'S HOLIDAY READING

These books will inspire your family and friends to spend 2017 outdoors.



THE FIELD TO TABLE COOKBOOK: GARDENING, FORAGING, FISHING, AND HUNTING

You don't get far into *The Field to Table Cookbook: Gardening, Foraging, Fishing, and Hunting* before you realize this book isn't just about venison sausage recipes or how to grill redfish.

Susan L. Ebert's new cookbook is as much a philosophical meditation on what it means to hunt and fish as it is a practical guide to using what you harvest from the land, either from your garden or out in nature. Much of it is downright poetic. Take Ebert's description of a duck hunt:

"The predawn marsh evokes

cathedral-like reverence; the dawn of creation itself could not be more stunning. This magical morning as we situate ourselves in the blind among the sennabeans, the Comanche moon is preparing to dip below the western horizon with the ascending sun a mirror image in the east. Scores of egret, heron, ibis, and roseate spoonbills transverse the dawn, the spoonbills' rosy wings as translucent as cathedral glass against the sunrise. The teal will come soon."

Talk about painting a picture with words.

But it's not all poetry. Ebert gets down to the nitty-gritty of how to butcher hogs and pluck doves, as well as useful information on license requirements and bag limits in Texas.

Still, the book has a lovely way of meandering through the seasons while bringing together what's available each month: which hunting or fishing seasons are open, which vegetables will be ready to harvest, what food you can find in the wild. Take June: You can cook sunfish in fat from ducks you harvested in winter, add a side dish of your garden's summer squash, and top it all off with ice cream showcasing foraged elderberries.

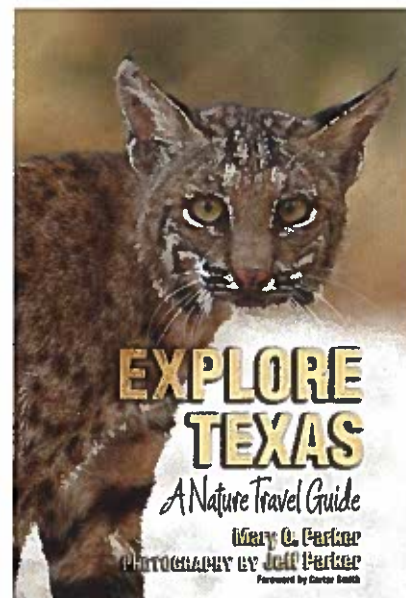
Talk about delicious.

Cooking this way takes time — a lot of time — so why go to all that trouble? It's about the desire to "feed my loved ones the cleanest, healthiest food I can, and to take personal responsibility for the life of the animals that grace our dinner table," Ebert says. As it does for many hunters, that personal responsibility can come with the conflicted feelings she reveals — loving the hunt but sometimes mourning the animal; feeling reverence for life but being honest about our role in the food chain.

Taken as a whole, it's a cookbook that's also a graceful argument for protecting habitats and conserving wildlife, even as we harvest it — a book that can appeal to everyone from the most experienced outdoors enthusiasts to those who have no plans to fish in the Gulf or hunt down wild persimmons. It's at once practical, philosophical and celebratory.

Talk about food for thought.

— Lisa Wyatt Roe



EXPLORE TEXAS

Need inspiration on where to go for your next trip? *Explore Texas: A Nature Travel Guide* by Mary O. Parker and Jeff Parker is guaranteed to make your travel wish list blossom. What makes this travel guide stand out is the information on plants, animals, geology, astronomy and more that make each location special.

A suggested fall foliage drive in East Texas tells you not just a route to take but what to look for — in this case, the multicolored leaves of the sweetgum. You'll also learn about the pigments that create those gorgeous colors and that the sap has been chewed as an oral antiseptic.

The when-to-go tips will help you time your travel to the migration patterns of whooping cranes, for example.

If you love to be outdoors, *Explore Texas* will make sure you don't miss a thing

— Lisa Wyatt Roe