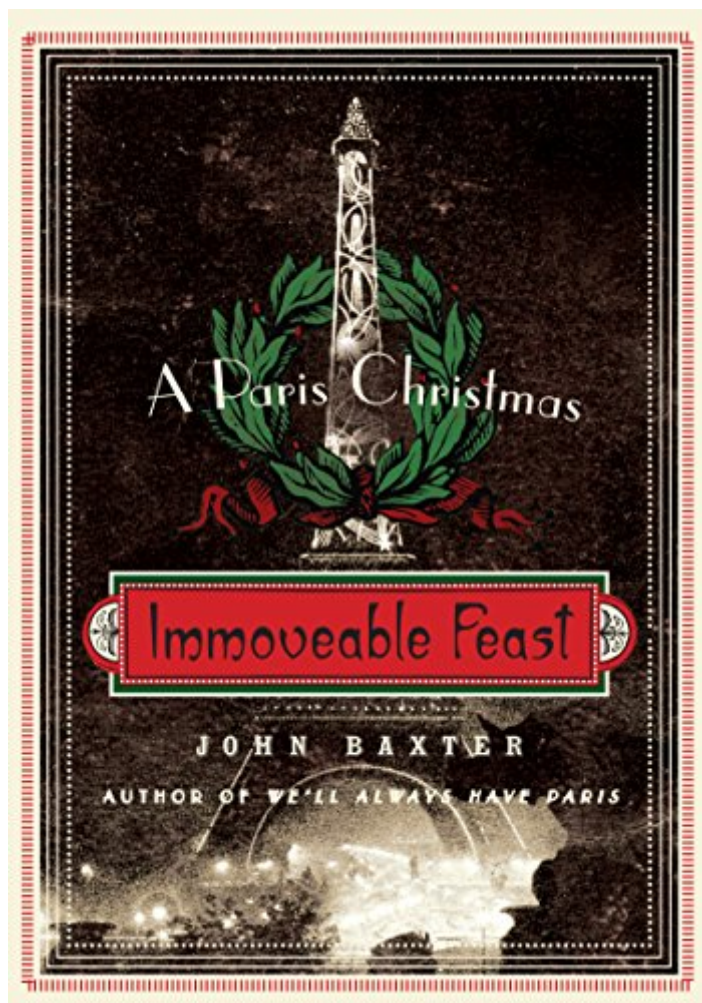


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Immoveable Feast: A Paris Christmas (P.S.)



Synopsis

A witty cultural and culinary education, *Immoveable Feast* is the charming, funny, and improbable tale of how a man who was raised on white bread "and didn't speak a word of French" unexpectedly ended up with the sacred duty of preparing the annual Christmas dinner for a venerable Parisian family. Ernest Hemingway called Paris "a moveable feast" "a city ready to embrace you at any time in life. For Los Angeles-based film critic John Baxter, that moment came when he fell in love with a French woman and impulsively moved to Paris to marry her. As a test of his love, his skeptical in-laws charged him with cooking the next Christmas banquet "for eighteen people in their ancestral country home. Baxter's memoir of his yearlong quest takes readers along his misadventures and delicious triumphs as he visits the farthest corners of France in search of the country's best recipes and ingredients. Irresistible and fascinating, *Immoveable Feast* is a warmhearted tale of good food, romance, family, and the Christmas spirit, Parisian style.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I loved reading every word on every page of this book! I was virtual tasting everything the author

was describing, longing to be back in France! I found this book very interesting from a story about how the French dine on the holidays getting out of the cities to meet families in the country. How they take such care in the preparation of every aspect of the meal from start to finish. How everything has to meld but yet have distinct flavors to make the meal a perfect gathering of family. Even though the author is not French, he has now assume the role of planning and preparing holiday meals for his wife's French family. I am so missing France. I am missing all the delicious cheeses that I cannot get here like Epoisses de Bourgogne. The oysters with such a variety, so fresh, hand picked and bought moments later and the meats..... here where I live, the butcher is extinct, we have a mega grocery store with meats already wrapped. There is no one to ask for a special cut or how the lamb was raised. I have been busy researching the apples and pears he describes. I have to taste them! There are recipe ideas that I will try.... As we are racing around in our hectic lives, dinner with the family rarely, this book brings it all back to nostalgia. Family should be all together for the holiday dinner. There is a certain savoir faire about the French and their foods. I miss France!

If you want a fast read, this is it. It's interesting to read about the ways of the French, but if you remove the meaningless graphics throughout, and remove the book quotes, with a slightly smaller print, you'll get a booklet. He really doesn't delve into the guests and their meaning to him very much, so I was a bit disappointed. It sounds like he's related to some interesting people. Judging by the sheer volume of books he's produced, I guess booklets are all he can produce. Perhaps put them all together to make a real tome? Anyway, purchase for a penny if you can.

This is one of my favorite books. I read it every December, wherever I am. John Baxter weaves a tale that speaks to the traveler, the one with wanderlust in his or her heart, even though he is writing about his own household and extended family. What I love about this book is his zeal for the food, the wine, the cheese, the places, the people, and most of all, the stories. For John Baxter is a story teller. And a bit of a gossip. But all in fun. I think that what really speaks to me about this book is his ability to take me along on the journey - to the family dinners after leaving an almost deserted Paris at Christmas; to the remote oyster farm for the succulent oysters; to the marché for the whole piglet with the skin; and to Australia, Los Angeles, and other places as the story weaves in and out. It is as if he is telling this tale of the evolution of a French traditional family dinner and his being welcomed into that family to a group of us around a huge hearth as we sip some nicely aged Burgundy. Not a guidebook, *An Immovable Feast* won't tell you where to stay or how to take the

metro to get to Montparnesse. But it will give you a feel for what it is like to become Parisian - at least as much as any expat Australian by way of Los Angeles can. This is a good read.

I was trying to find a book here on about French Christmas cooking when I stumbled upon this book. In fact, I thought there were some recipes in the book, but there is only a vague explanation of a couple dishes. However, that took nothing away from my enjoyment of this wonderful book! The author's writing was very approachable, and allows the reader to run through the book. The story, however, was amazing and inspirational. It is filled with personal anecdotes from his life as he tells the journey of putting together a Christmas dinner for a traditional French family who knows their way around the kitchen. These short narratives might seem like filler to some, but I thought they were what gave the novel life, from his friend's experience of a Napoleon era wine, his trip to India for spices, and, in particular, his amazing daughter Louise. While reading this book, Louise reminded me of the light that Pearl brought to the "Scarlet Letter." I am probably over-emphasizing her involvement in the novel, but her sophistication shines through and represents the character of France that is exhibited throughout the novel. Plus, as a 19-year-old, I am able to see how other people of the same age live in other parts of the world. But, I digress, as the main story is just as fascinating to imagine, which in particular has inspired me to try and replicate such an event, sadly without the Roast Suckling Pig! So, if you are looking for a quick read for the weekend, with an insight into the French and their cooking, I cannot see how you could wrong with A Paris Christmas!

A rather disappointing book (I read *The Most Beautiful Walk in the World* first. The overall story is his preparations for and making of Christmas dinner for the French family he married into. However most of it is him telling us how little he used to know about food. Now he knows about as much as most people likely to be reading this book. It is poorly seasoned with food related anecdotes that seem more like name dropping than contributions to the story or offering of interesting asides. One idiosyncratic feature, Mr Baxter seems never to have heard a story describing a woman or group of women who believe in the medicinal power of swallowing semen that he cannot find a way to fit into the story.

John Baxter is a treasure. He is a grand story teller and a pretty good cook. He knows more about wine than I do. And he lives with a younger woman in an historic apartment building on a famous street in the most beautiful city in the world. *Immoveable Feast* is simply a well-old story about Christmas and love in Paris. What more could you ask for at Christmas or any other time of the

year?.

A funny and delicious story about an American chef creating a Christmas feast for his wife's French family. In the typical French fashion, his in-laws are skeptical of the culinary skills of an American chef. Each chapter is an expose of his pursuit of the perfect ingredients for each part of the meal. Prepare to be hungry!

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