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Book Review: The Cheese Biscuit Queen Tells All

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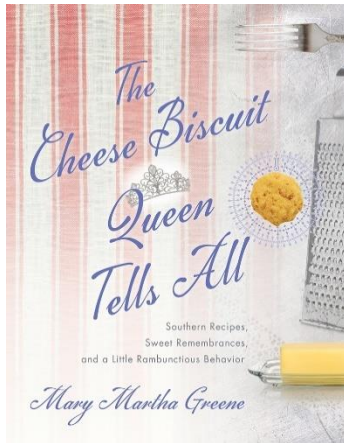
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Abstract

Linda Ray reviews *The Cheese Biscuit Queen Tells All: Southern Recipes, Sweet Remembrances, and a Little Rambunctious Behavior*, written by Mary Martha Green.

The Cheese Biscuit Queen Tells All: Southern Recipes, Sweet Remembrances, and a Little Rambunctious Behavior



Mary Martha Greene
The University of South Carolina Press, 2021
ISBN: 978-1-64336-182-6
Price \$24.99

In *The Cheese Biscuit Queen Tells All: Southern Recipes, Sweet Remembrances, and a Little Rambunctious Behavior*, author Mary Martha Greene definitely accomplishes her purpose as stated in the title! The 232-page book is so much more than a cookbook! It is filled with recipes that can feed the hungry from morning with “Country Ham Scones with Fig Butter” (p. 4) to libations - food to last a True Southerner throughout the entire day and into an evening filled with entertaining and dinner parties. Recipes use local produce, such as okra and summer squash, as well as local seafood delicacies, such as shrimp, oysters, crab, and crawfish.

The included recipes are shared in the midst of Greene’s retelling of her family’s history of growing up in Beaufort to her years working in Columbia, South Carolina. Greene sentimentally “tells all” about her childhood along with her years working in Columbia with the South Carolina Legislature as a government relations consultant. Family photographs are included to enrich the “sweet remembrances” shared.

Along with Greene's personal family history, she also shares stories of political events that occurred while she was working for the Legislature. There is a mention of then-Governor Mark Sanford going on his hiking excursion. The tell-all tale of how crawfish invaded the Congaree River and were found marching to the University of South Carolina Gamecock practice football field is also included.

Food has played a crucial role in Greene's life, so much so that currently she volunteers with at-risk and homeless youth teaching them baking skills. In fact, this book was written to help teach Greene's college-aged goddaughter to cook, as well as share, her family legacy of recipes that are loved, cherished, and full of sweet memories, which she so freely and thankfully shares.

Greene begins the book with the story of her Aunt Mimi and her world-famous cheese biscuit recipe. These biscuits have frequently traveled up and down the East Coast and the world. Personally, I am afraid to try the recipe, as I do not believe that my waistline can handle all the melt-in-your-mouth deliciousness and the need to frequently replenish the supply!

Greene shares her "Queenly Insight" (p. xv) into choosing the correct baking utensils to create the culinary delights that she shares. This section could be used to help a newly-emancipated adult furnish their kitchen for a life of cooking and entertaining.

The recipes use simple steps with explanations that would allow even a novice cook to create and enjoy them. Greene's use of leftovers as a basis for other recipes is a definite plus. Society today is becoming more mindful of wisely using our resources and her acknowledgment of this is an added bonus to the collection of recipes she has chosen.

This book is a must for all public libraries in South Carolina due to the shared history of the state of South Carolina and local cuisine. It would also make a delicious addition to middle and high school libraries due to the easy directions given for crafting mouth-watering dishes!

Linda Ray, Training and Outreach Coordinator at Florence County Library System, Headquarters. Linda has worked at the Florence County Library System for over 11 years in both the Children's and Information Services Department.