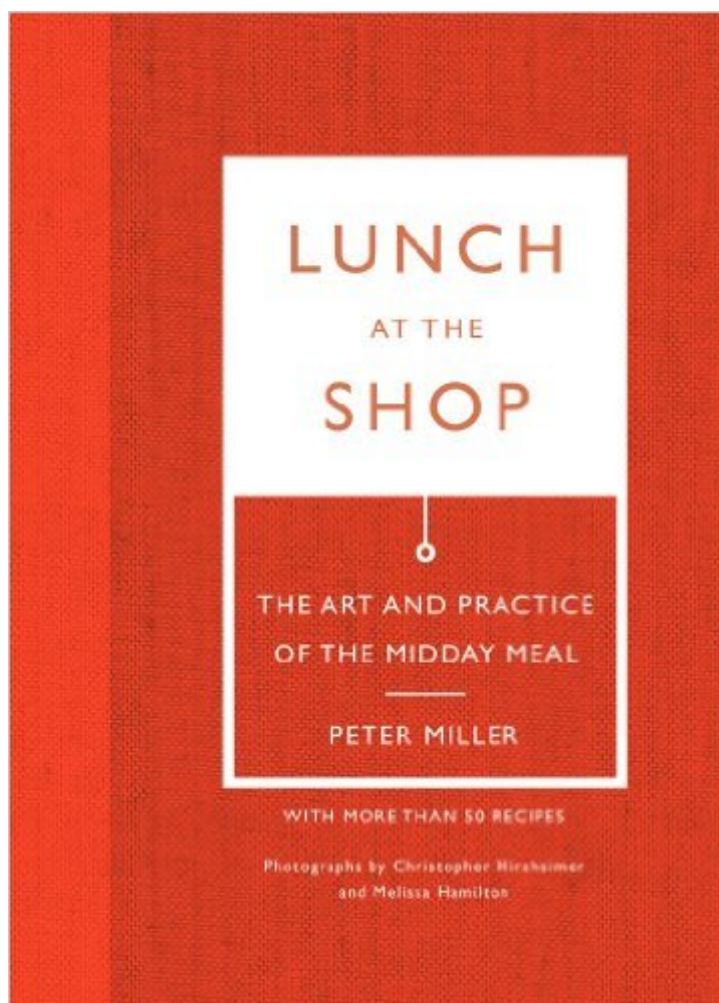


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Lunch At The Shop: The Art And Practice Of The Midday Meal



Synopsis

In our current bustle, lunch has been outsourced to stand-up counters, reduced to take-out platters, wrapped and rolled and packaged. But it doesn't need to be so. Peter Miller makes lunch every day at his bookshop in Seattle. It may be only a salad or a sandwich, but he and his team put it together each day without a formal kitchen. It is a moment set aside, away from the computer and the clock. *Lunch at the Shop* is a call to lunch. On the most basic level, the book is a primer for making lunch for a few people at work, including more than 50 tried-and-tested, deliciously simple recipes. However, the essence of the book is about adopting a lifestyle that allows food to be savored every day, in a way that is easy, fresh, healthy, and a pleasure. "You may not know it yet, but you are hungry for what is bound and written on these pages. As he did for me, Peter Miller will help fill you up. I'm sure of it." —Matthew Dillon, James Beard Award-winning chef of Sitka & Spruce, The Corson Building, and Bar Sajor

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Customer Reviews

The concept of *Lunch at the Shop: The Art and Practice of the Midday Meal* "making lunch at the office" is as American as Kim Kardashian. The photographs are terrific, courtesy of Christopher Hirscheimer and Melissa Hamilton, the creators of the Canal House cookbooks. The book has a wonderfully homemade feel; the author's wife did the charming illustrations. And as for Peter Miller, he's a fine writer doing a very good imitation of a bookstore owner. The book addresses a problem that office-workers know well: Around noon, your

leave your place of work, go out and buy something that fills a plastic container, skibble back to your hole and gobble lunch as you read blogs. Miller is more elegant about this: "We fly on by lunch, as we often fly on by seasons and deeds and signals. And thus we buffer our real needs: that we're hungry, tired or just need a break. The solution: make lunch right at the office, take twenty minutes, share a meal with colleagues and the occasional visitor. It takes a certain kind of intelligence to take an idea like this an idea that many of us have surely had, and dismissed as idealistic, too much work or bad office politics and execute it to the point that outsiders want to join you. Peter Miller is that guy. He did time at Harvard in the late 1960s, then went to Philadelphia to teach high school and (of course) change the world. That didn't happen: "On the first day, I put on my nice clothes, walked down the street and was robbed of forty dollars. The next day I left with only ten dollars and was robbed of that. He moved on to Eugene, Oregon and then Seattle, where he knew no one. Seattle was pre-Microsoft, and primitive. He bought houses for \$5,000, rehabbed them and flipped them. He met Raymond Mungo then in flight from his sudden celebrity as the author of "Famous Long Ago: My Life and Hard Times With Liberation News Service." Improbably, they opened a general interest bookstore. The computer people arrived. They were the enemy: "They are mostly soulless, and the perfect example of our city's relentless nature. They aren't really even smart. It's something else, more of a cunning. You know the people, the ones that are buoyant. Buoyant in a time of deep sorrow in this country. It's ugly and inelegant and estranged. This is the curse of the Internet it is totally out of sequence with life." Twenty-odd years later, Peter Miller Books an emporium dedicated to design and architecture books is a Seattle institution, and thriving. The shop lunches began eight years ago. They were basic at first. They're not complex now. It was the idea that mattered. The caring. The ceremony: "It didn't matter to me if I made the whole meal and four people ate together or if we all worked on it and we all eat together. I just liked the idea that it was in common. Miller and his colleagues cook with food they love and, often as not, food they have left over. Their lunches usually include beans or rice, pasta or lentils, the proud and historic opposite of fast food. Also on the menu: a little oomph. That is, you've got to care, you've got to make an effort. At a lunch to celebrate the book, the Canal House cooks made lunch from Miller's recipes. We started with open-faced sandwiches and then lentil soup, with chocolate chip cookies for dessert. As the least foodie person there, I found the lunch thrilling. So did the professionals they too became members of the Clean Plate Club. Lunch started with this. Easy. Elegant. Even, dare I say, soulful. Like the book. Like the author. Fromager

D&A Affinois, Arugula and Almond Butter Sandwich serves 48 slices of bread or 4 split rolls
4 TBS unsalted butter
4 TBS almond butter, preferable crunchy
8 slices Fromager D&A Affinois or Brie, sliced half-inch thick
1 handful of arugula leaves
2 in-season apples or Bosc pears, quartered, cored and thinly sliced
salt
2-3 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
It is an interesting balance: the sweet almond butter, the soft, mild cheese, with the spicy greens and the apple cutting through.
Don't forget the salt " it keeps the gooey parts from having too much input. The sandwiches may be a little tall, but if the bread is not too hard or the layers too heavy, they should hold together. This is also a dish that can be served open-faced. Butter one side of the bread slices or rolls. Spread one side of the bread slices or rolls with the almond butter. Lay one slice of cheese on the buttered side of the roll or bread. Place arugula leaves on top of the cheese. Fan the apple or pear slices over the almond butter; it will help keep them in place. Sprinkle with salt and lemon juice and close the sandwich. The sandwiches can be made in advance and are best at room temperature, which allows the cheese to soften and its taste to mesh with the other ingredients. When you serve the sandwiches, lay extra slices of fruit on the side. Squirt some lemon juice on them so they don't brown. You can also make a simple salad with any extra arugula and serve it alongside.

I bought this book not because I work in a shop, which I don't, or because I eat a fancy lunch, which I don't. I bought it because the recipes looked good. I have only made one so far - the lentils folded into yogurt with spinach and basil, and it is delicious. There are lots more that look interesting and I plan to cook from this book exclusively for a week or so to see if any of them measure up to the fabulous lentils.

Fascinating ideas for improving the luncheon experience, at least in bigger cities. The essence of Miller's vision: "We fly on by lunch, as we often fly on by seasons and deeds and signals." "Spend 20 minutes with any one or more of these recipes, especially preparing the meal daily with others in the back room, and you will soon be hooked. It almost makes me want to go back to commuting. NOT But then I realized, "these recipes work just as well when you are retired, Robert." "But you will miss some great repartee." "Some of cooking is using food you love. And some of cooking is using food you have left. Lunch is about both." "...We always have some combination of beans or rice, pasta or lentils on hand... They are the proud and historic opposite of fast food." "We are the most difficult of critics, being our own customers." "To make lunch every day, in all the varying conditions, you will need a little oomph." "Great fun and great eating. Robert C.

I love this book. I bought it at a museum when out of town for a conference - firstly, I never wanted the book to end; and secondly, I couldn't wait to get home and try some recipes. After reading it, I gave the book a hug and kiss, and wished I had a lunch break during my 12 hour shifts to try these ideas out (yes, I AM a nurse). At least my family has benefitted. There is a sandwich in here that I think is the best sandwich in the world. I even bought a Kindle version, too; because at random times I will be grocery shopping and suddenly want to look up a recipe (although many are guidelines and therefore very flexible).

The dynamics of a group meal goes beyond expectations! I admire the ingenuity of the owner and how it just pays forward with wonderful benefits for all!

Nothing new here, really, but some inspiration for superior lunchtime fare. Nicely done. More appropriate for urban settings, than suburban commuters.

Great lunch ideas but text is rather wordy and redundant in places.

love this book. Easy to follow.

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