

## Against the Grain

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## Wandering the Web: Food Websites

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# Wandering the Web — Food Websites

by **Dan Forrest** (Faculty Subject Specialist, Western Kentucky University Libraries)

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**Column Editor's Note: Professor Forrest is a well-known local gourmand, food expert and restaurant reviewer with an extensive knowledge of all things food and cooking. As food and food preparation has taken on a new and exciting place in American culture and has a significant subject presence on the Web, I wanted to get his thoughts on what sites might hold a special value. — JM**

## What's Cooking on the Web Now

The past decade and a half has seen the internet explode in size and ubiquity. Where once searchers relied on a few large databases of recipes and food information, now a simple Google search of ingredient + recipe will yield an overwhelming number of results. Food sites have also grown more specialized and sophisticated. The recipe sites are still there, but there are sites devoted to particular cuisines, techniques, and individual creative voices. Here are some of them:

### General

**Serious Eats: the Destination for Delicious** <https://www.seriousseats.com/> epitomizes the modern food website. It features a large collection of recipes searchable by ingredient, technique, cuisine, and more. It also features more in depth articles about particular dishes, techniques, and kitchen gear. Video tutorials and an award-winning podcast also make this site bookmark-worthy.

Part of the Gizmodo family of websites, **The Takeout** <https://thetakeout.com/> has recipes and feature articles, but also restaurant and food industry news, video interviews and cooking demos. It also has articles and info on beverages (both alcoholic and non).

**Eater** <https://www.eater.com/> expands its food coverage to include restaurants, with both best of lists and industry news. Print and video recipes are also available, as well as grocery guides and gadget reviews.

**Munchies** [https://www.vice.com/en\\_us/section/food](https://www.vice.com/en_us/section/food) is the food branch of the Vice media empire. Offbeat food news, recipes, cooking and travel videos, as well as longer form items can be found here.

**The Daily Meal** <https://www.thedailymeal.com/> is "All Things Food & Drink," and it covers grocery stores, restaurants, as well as recipe and food information. Lots of geographic info (i.e., best X restaurants in all 50 states) and videos too.

The **Southern Foodways Alliance** <https://www.southernfoodways.org/> explores the history and culture of food in the American South. Their site includes many in-depth articles on important people, foods, and locations in the south. There is also a large video library, a

podcast, oral history projects, and trails for foods like gumbo, tamales, and barbecue.

**The Kitchn** <https://www.thekitchn.com/> has plenty of recipes of course, but also includes shopping recommendations, videos, interviews with chefs and cookbook authors, as well as kitchen décor and design suggestions.

The website **delish** <https://www.delish.com/> has a large searchable database of recipes, menus, and suggestions for holidays and special occasions. Food news, interviews with chefs, kitchen tips, and videos are here as well.

*New York* magazine's **Grub Street** <http://www.grubstreet.com/> is a Big Apple-centric food blog, providing news about restaurants and the food industry in the city. But since any New Yorker will tell you they are located at the center of everything, Grub Street also covers national and international food stories, about chefs, cuisines, and particular foods.

### Recipes

The **Food Network** site <https://www.food-network.com/> includes a schedule and info about all its shows. It also contains a large recipe database that is searchable by ingredient, meal, and chef/show. There are many videos, including clips from many of the network's shows as well as web exclusive material. Articles about seasonal and special occasion cooking and kitchen gear recommendations are also to be found.

From the same folks that produce *Gourmet* and *Bon Appetit* magazines, **Epicurious** <https://www.epicurious.com/> is a recipe website that archives a lot of their recipes as well as food videos, special occasion plans, and expert advice.

*Allrecipes* magazine likewise has a companion website <https://www.allrecipes.com/> which contains recipes searchable by ingredient, dish, cuisine, cooking method, and more. The site also contains content from their TV show as well as reference guides and nutrition information.

**America's Test Kitchen** from *Cook's Illustrated* <https://www.americastestkitchen.com/> is the only site with a fee to use (after a free trial period). The current season of videos and recipes from the television show is available for free. If you are only going to pay for one cooking site, this is the one. ATK takes a *Consumer Reports* style methodology both to recipes and product reviews. They are always careful to explain why they have chosen a particular cooking method or kitchen tool, how they tested it, and how it compared to the others.

### Specific Foods

*Culture* magazine <https://culturecheesemag.com/> is "the word on cheese," and their website has plenty of information for lovers of the curd. Recipes that use cheese as well as ones on how to make it are featured along with a blog, longer pieces (both print and video), and even travel information for those who want to find the good stuff wherever they go.

**Chocablog** <http://www.chocablog.com/> is one of the longest-running chocolate sites on the net. In addition to recipes (both sweet and savory), they also review many types of chocolate and provide longer pieces on specific kinds and brands. Video how-tos and factory tours help illuminate all the corners of the chocolate world.

**Make Sushi** <http://www.makesushi.com/> will help you do just that. From a basic beginner's guide to elaborate tutorials and a large number of searchable recipes, this site has everything you need to roll your own. A blog and detailed shopping guide of both equipment and ingredients provide even more useful information.

**Steve Raichlen** is familiar to many barbecue fans for his long-running PBS shows. His website **Barbecue Bible** <https://barbecuebible.com/> is perfect for the amateur grill master. There are plenty of recipes as well as longer articles about specific techniques and styles of barbecue. A shopping guide provides plenty of options for books, cookers, equipment, and ingredients. His blog includes longer pieces about barbecue history and famous pitmasters, as well as reviews and recommendations for barbecue restaurants around the country.

### History

**Atlas Obscura**, famous for its cataloging of curious destinations, has a sister site for interesting and offbeat tales of food around the world and throughout history, **Gastro Obscura**. <https://www.atlasobscura.com/gastro>

**The Food Timeline** is just what it says, a list of food items and their dates of discovery/invention. <http://www.foodtimeline.org/> Also includes info and recipes for most of them. You will boggle at the four thousand year gap between the invention of noodles and that of instant ramen.

### Travel

Eating new and different foods is a big part of vacation travel for many people. There are several types of websites that provide information for travelers to a city or particular area. Let's plan a hypothetical trip to Louisville,

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## Wandering the Web from page 88

Kentucky. Every state has a tourism site, and most have information on food, from local producers and makers to the local dishes that every native craves. **Kentucky's** site <https://www.kentuckytourism.com/ky-taste/> features several trails, such as Bourbon, Barbecue, and Beer Cheese. The local **Convention and Visitors' Bureau** <https://www.gotolouisville.com/culinary/> will have plenty of tips on things to do, eateries to try, and events to enjoy. Local newspapers like the *Courier-Journal* <https://www.courier-journal.com/entertainment/dining/> and alternative publications such as *LEO Weekly* <https://www.leoweekly.com/category/food-drink/> provide plenty for info on the local food scene, usually with much greater depth and context than a traveler would glean from Yelp or other online reviews.

### Awards

The **James Beard** awards are America's premier culinary prizes. <https://www.james-beard.org/> has lists of all the past winners and nominees in categories such as restaurant, chef, book, media, and leadership as well as information on upcoming events and programs.

A century ago the **Michelin Tire Company** began publishing a guide to hotels and restaurants around France to encourage motorists to get out and explore. Today the **Michelin Guide** <https://guide.michelin.com/en> is acknowledged to be the top guide to the best restaurants in the world. Restaurants are searchable by region/country, cuisine, and chef to help you plan your gastronomic journey of a lifetime.

### Government Sites

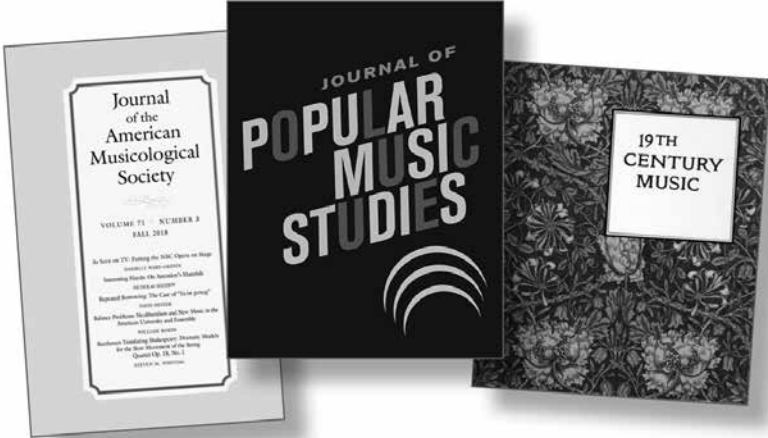
The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** have a Food Safety page <https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety> that provides information on safe food handling and storage as well as current food recalls around the country.

The **U.S. Department of Agriculture's** <https://www.nutrition.gov/> gives information on healthy eating for Americans, with nutritional information for many common food items and recommended diets for people with certain medical conditions.


### Chef pages

Real foodies all have a favorite chef or two. Maybe their cooking style matches your own,

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or perhaps you just find them entertaining. Here are two examples of chef websites.

**Alton Brown** <https://altonbrown.com/> shot to fame as the host of **Food Network's** *Good Eats*. With a background in video production as well as food, his shows and his site are a great source for interesting and informative recipes and primers on technique, as well as his blog and podcast.

**Ree Drummond** <https://thepioneerwoman.com/> began her blog about cooking on a ranch in rural Oklahoma as a creative outlet for herself. It has grown into a TV show, legions of fans, and a brand found across the country. The site still has plenty of recipes and video how-tos as well as updates on the family and Ree's busy itinerary.

### App

Many websites (including several of the ones above) have app versions. Some of these even include shopping lists and nutrition info for use in the grocery store. If you like seafood and only download one food app, make it **Seafood Watch** from the Monterey Bay Aquarium <https://www.seafoodwatch.org/>. It lists most types of seafood you are likely to encounter at a restaurant or fishmonger, and it will tell you whether it's a good choice from an environmental perspective or whether it should be avoided. It also recommends safer/healthier alternatives. 🌱

## Rumors from page 69

a free registration for the **2020 SSP Annual Meeting** to be held May 27-29 in Boston, MA. We appreciate all your comments on this new initiative between Charleston and SSP.

**Andrew McAfee's** book *More from Less: The Surprising Story of How We Learned to Prosper Using Fewer Resources* — and

*What Happens Next* (Scribner). Is that a good **Charleston Conference** theme for 2020? I like it. Do you?

**We have a great lineup for the 2019 Charleston Conference!** Please don't miss the **Charleston Premiers — Five Minute Previews of the New and Noteworthy**, hosted by the marvelous **Trey Shelton, University of Florida**. Companies/products selected for participation include: **Association for Computing Machinery (ACM)**: ACM Digital Li-

brary; **Atypon**: Manuscripts; **Atypon**: Scitrus; **Cambridge University Press**: Open Engage; **Casalini Libri**: Torossa; **Covidence**: Collaboration Platform; **McGraw Hill Professional, Medical**: Teaching Cases; **McGraw-Hill**: AccessEngineering; **Morressier**: Morressier Premium Discovery; **JoVE**: JoVE Core; **JSTOR**: Collaborative Open Access ebook pilot project; and **University of Toronto Press**: The New Jewish Press (NJP).

Whew!!! See you here!! 🌱