

SOURCES

scholar.” Several of them are listed on the contributors’ page. Who are these folks? What are their credentials? How were they selected to participate in this project? These questions must go unanswered, for there is no information given as to their background.

Considering the middling quality of this work and the fact that so many wars in the middle east/south-central Asia theater were interwoven and being fought concurrently, it is suggested that a better use of reference collection development dollars would be the acquisition of a competing title, namely, Spencer C. Tucker’s five-volume *The Encyclopedia of Middle East Wars* (ABC-Clio, 2010). While not quite as current, and necessarily more expensive, this set takes in the whole of the armed conflicts that have flared up in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Persian Gulf, and other hot spots in this region, fought over the course of the past thirty years. Tucker, of course, is a well-respected military historian who has written and edited a goodly number of award-winning reference sets. He’s at the top of his game here, as *The Encyclopedia of Middle East Wars* received a starred review in both *Booklist* and *Library Journal*, for instance. Need we say more?—*Michael F. Bemis, Independent Reference Book Reviewer*

Street Food around the World: An Encyclopedia of Food and Culture. Ed. By Bruce Kraig and Colleen Taylor. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2013. 504 p. Acid free \$100 (ISBN: 978-1-59884-954-7).

Street food has enjoyed a surge in popularity in recent years, gaining a great deal of television attention on cooking and travel channels. Its appeal is further evidenced by the proliferation of food truck festivals and its prominence at county fairs. The food is as big a draw as the rides, farm animals, games, and other attractions. Existing books on the topic tend to be cookbooks that are generally focused on a

particular region. The timing is perfect for a comprehensive book of international street foods.

The introduction provides an overview of street food that includes a definition, the basic types of street food, and common methods of preparation. Following the introduction, the encyclopedia includes seventy-six entries listed by country or region. Entries provide some background information about the country, its population and history and goes on to describe the country’s most popular street foods as well as how street food is perceived in the country. It further explains how the population tends to consume the food, whether it is on the go or enjoyed at tables, purchased from a peripatetic vendor or from a fixed food stand, etc.

The index includes occasional headings for cooking terms or broad food categories, such as dumplings, but is comprised primarily of the countries listed as entries in the encyclopedia and then subdivided by the foods described in those entries. This is helpful but its usefulness is limited for a reader wanting information about a street food but who is uncertain of the dish’s origin since the foods are listed under the country of origin.

The text is jargon-free, employing general, everyday language, making it highly accessible to the casual reader. The book would likely be of greatest interest to foodies or fans of cooking shows, though readers interested in travel might also enjoy learning about the foods and cultures covered in the encyclopedia. It would be best suited for public libraries, though it would also be a welcome addition in the libraries of culinary academies or colleges offering culinary programs. The book is an entertaining as well as informative read. As an added bonus, it includes over 100 recipes of dishes described in the book; as such, it would be equally appropriate in a library’s circulating collection as it would in the reference collection.—*Susan Trujillo, Reference Librarian, West Los Angeles College*