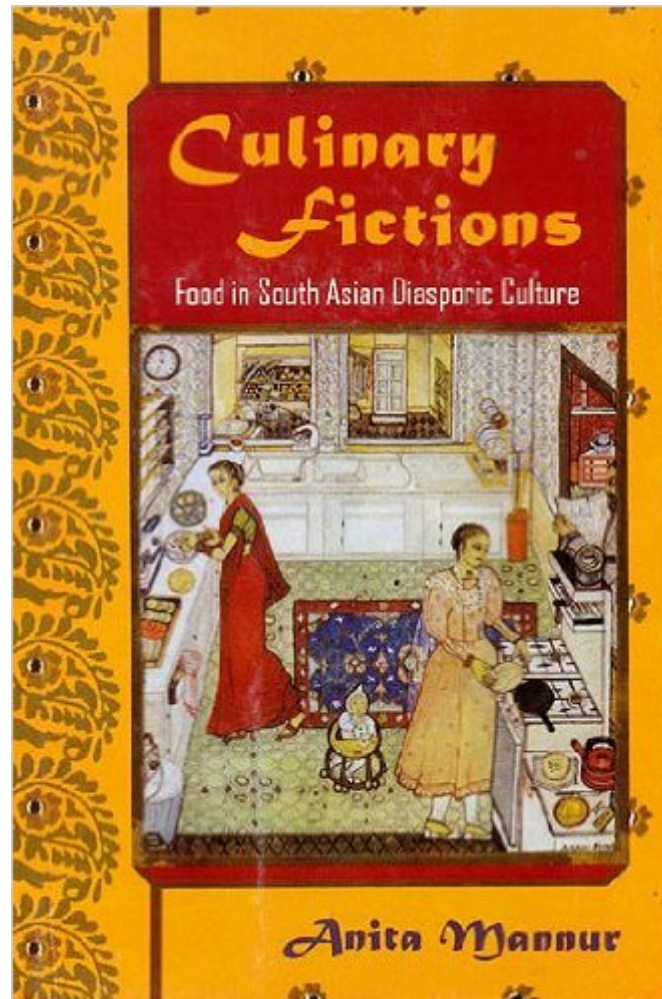


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Culinary Fictions: Food In South Asian Diasporic Culture



Synopsis

For South Asians, food regularly plays a role in how issues of race, class, gender, ethnicity, and national identity are imagined as well as how notions of belonging are affirmed or resisted. "Culinary Fictions" provides food for thought as it considers the metaphors literature, film, and TV shows use to describe Indians abroad. When an immigrant mother in Jhumpa Lahiri's "The Namesake" combines Rice Krispies, Planters peanuts, onions, salt, lemon juice, and green chili peppers to create a dish similar to one found on Calcutta sidewalks, it evokes not only the character's Americanization, but also her nostalgia for India. Food, Anita Mannur writes, is a central part of the cultural imagination of diasporic populations, and "Culinary Fictions" maps how it figures in various expressive forms. Mannur examines the cultural production from the Anglo-American reaches of the South Asian diaspora. Using texts from novels like Chitra Divakaruni's "Mistress of Spices" and Shani Mootoo's "Cereus Blooms at Night" and cookbooks such as Madhur Jaffrey's "Invitation to Indian Cooking" and Padma Lakshmi's "Easy Exotic," she illustrates how national identities are consolidated in culinary terms." --This text refers to an alternate Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

Anita Mannur's book *Culinary Fictions* opens one's mind in exploring the representation of South Asian food and the discourse surrounding it in relation to South Asian communities all over the world. Deftly weaving in discussions of everything from episodes of *Sex in the City* and the film

Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle to Jhumpa Lahiri's novels and short stories and Padma Lakshmi's television appearances, Mannur's readings impress the reader with both their range and her ability to place familiar objects in fresh, new, and thought provoking contexts. While this is a book for academic readers, Mannur steers clear of jargon and invites the reader through beautifully rendered prose. Her discussions should be of interest to anybody interested in food, media studies, South Asian culture in the diaspora, Asian-American Studies and literature, and immigration.

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