

American heritage of particular interest to the many descendants of Norwegian immigrants in the Midwest.

A variety of books have been published that relate the history of knitting, but this volume is specific to the traditions and artifacts from Norwegian immigrants. The authors introduce 30 patterns using traditional stitches or colorful embellishments and integrate their knitting patterns with historic narratives, photographs, recipes, and family stories. The entire book is infused with the authors' sense of the fun of discovery as they tell their own stories about their inspiration from the Vesterheim collection.

These knitting patterns preserve tradition and inspire innovation. Knitters and historians alike will enjoy seeing gems from the Vesterheim collection illustrated in this book along with the patterns and contemporary knitwear inspired by them. The selections made by the authors, who also have midwestern roots, are for an audience that will not only appreciate the complexities of Norwegian knitting, but the historical context of the material.

*The Flavor of Wisconsin: An Informal History of Food and Eating in the Badger State*, by Harva Hachten and Terese Allen. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 2009. xxii, 391 pp. 460 recipes, illustrations, sidebars, notes, bibliography, indexes. \$29.95 cloth.

Reviewer Jill M. Nussel is a lecturer at Indiana University–Purdue University Fort Wayne. Her research and writing's focus on using cookbooks to shed light on immigrants and their communities will be reflected in her forthcoming book, *From Stewpot to Melting Pot: Charity Cookbooks in America's Heartland*.

I am echoing what people in the Badger State already know: There's more to Wisconsin than cheese! In 1973 the late Harva Hachten produced an authoritative book on Wisconsin foodways; 25 years later, Wisconsin culinary commentator Terese Allen has updated *The Flavor of Wisconsin*, making this once again a culinary classic of regional foodways. Part history, part cookbook, this compilation celebrates the kitchens and hearths from Wisconsin's earliest days to the present, serving as a community autobiography of the values and culture that have become a part of the heartland narrative.

The book begins in Wisconsin's earliest days with interactions among Native Americans and fur traders, but the most impressive chapters demonstrate the culinary skills of immigrants and pioneers and the foodways of workers in the early industrial age. By the latter part of the nineteenth century, Wisconsin was populated by Cornish miners, Germans, Belgians, Dutch, Swiss, Finns, Irish, and Poles, with

the largest group being Scandinavian. In the twentieth century, Wisconsin became home to large numbers of Mexicans, African Americans, and, after the Vietnam War, an influx of Hmong — all of whom brought culinary expectations.

Exploring Wisconsin foodways reveals the many layers of ethnic migration. Each group brought its own food traditions, and the Wisconsin foodscape still largely reflects this immigrant and pioneer past. For instance, the Cornish were not the only people who made their meat supply go further by baking it into a “pasty.” The Finns, Estonians, Hungarians, Norwegians, Germans, Lithuanians, and Czechs all have similar recipes represented in this book. Together, such recipes became part of the Wisconsin culinary traditions of frugality and using all of the earth’s bounty.

Ask any fan of the Green Bay Packers and they will tell you it can get cold in Wisconsin, and so preservation of foods during the long winters became paramount to residents before refrigeration. As a result, recipes for preserved meats abound. Magdalena W. Tank of New London shared a recipe for *kartoffelwurst* among the many ways to prepare sausage. As Wisconsin became more of a melting pot, we see the emergence of a truly American “brat” — a staple at any Wisconsin football tailgate party.

A good hunter could make a significant contribution to the family larder. In 1853 citizens of Madison were treated to roasted bear for Thanksgiving. The newspaper suggested slow roasting and marinating the bear for tender results. Pamela Schalk of Milwaukee describes how her Irish great-grandmother prepared venison in the 1890s by frying slices in bacon tallow. People of Wisconsin also enjoyed raccoon, squirrel, pheasant, and rabbit. Although there is no recipe for it in this book, I’m guessing that the occasional badger was also on the dinner table.

In addition to its attention to Wisconsin’s immigrant past, *Flavors of Wisconsin* takes readers into the kitchens of men, the working class, wartime rationing, and agribusiness. What was a woman to do if she could not find lingonberries in her town? With careful, contextualized reading, Hatcher examines the many Wisconsin charity cookbooks, observing how compilers not only found substitutions for native foods but also how cooks saw themselves, projected their values, and offered a vision of Americanization. Perhaps the most successful charity cookbook of all time was the *Settlement Cookbook*, first published in 1901, the proceeds of which benefited Milwaukee’s Jewish charities for more than 90 years.

Important additions are made by Terese Allen, who sheds light on Wisconsin’s more modern cuisine. Through her additions, we see that

Wisconsin is on the national forefront of organic farming, sustainable harvests, and the slow foods movement while redeveloping artisanal cheeses and wheat. Newer immigrants have left their marks as well, demonstrating the ever evolving cornucopia of flavor in the region.

In *Flavors of Wisconsin*, readers explore how the people of Wisconsin plowed their fields, worked their gardens, and built their cities. We see immigrants and migrants, town folk and country folk, the middle class and the working class. *Flavors of Wisconsin* is far more than a cookbook or even a history book — it is a picture of America's heartland. Every state should have a similar contribution to our collective understanding of America through the foods we grow, eat, and share.

*Encore! The Renaissance of Wisconsin Opera Houses*, by Brian Leahy Doyle, with photographs by Mark Fay. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 2009. xvii, 254 pp. Illustrations (many in color), appendixes, maps, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95 cloth.

Reviewer Richard Poole is professor and chair of the Theatre/Speech Communication Department at Briar Cliff University. His work on small-town and rural midwestern theater includes *The Opera Houses of Iowa* (coauthor, 1993) and an article in this journal (1989/1990) on Sioux City theater in the Gilded Age.

Beautifully illustrated and impeccably researched, *Encore!* catalogs in text and images the history of Wisconsin opera houses constructed during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In addition, and perhaps most important, the book reveals an aspect of American culture sadly neglected in both theater history and American studies. It also tells the story of modern day restoration, when communities and individuals banded together to raise funds to restore an essential part of their almost forgotten heritage.

Doyle catalogs a wide range of opera house and theaters, "from the small to large, simple to ostentatious" (xiv). Readers will find a wealth of information about each structure: cultural context; civic backing; architectural design; performers and productions; and restoration initiatives and successes. Informative breakouts that enrich and embellish the text accompany the illustrations and the narrative.

Only a handful of books explore the wealth of information available on state theater history. Such information reveals an astounding number of theatrical activities and venues. *Encore!* joins this select group. Comprehensive research on all types and locations of state theaters, from the largest cities to the smallest hamlets, is essential for a complete picture of theater and culture in the United States. The information is here, waiting to be rediscovered.