

97 Orchard: An Edible History of Five Immigrant Families in One New York Tenement

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In *97 Orchard*, Jane Ziegelman explores the culinary life that was the heart and soul of New York's Lower East Side around the turn of the twentieth century—a city within a city, where Germans, Irish, Italians, and Eastern European Jews attempted to forge a new life. Through the experiences of five families, all of them residents of 97 Orchard Street, Ziegelman takes readers on a vivid and unforgettable tour, from impossibly cramped tenement apartments, down dimly lit stairwells, beyond the front stoops where housewives congregated, and out into the hubbub of the dirty, teeming streets. Ziegelman shows how immigrant cooks brought their ingenuity to the daily task of feeding their families, preserving traditions from home but always ready to improvise. *97 Orchard* lays bare the roots of our collective culinary heritage.

Jane Ziegelman is the director of the Tenement Museum's culinary center and the founder and director of Kids Cook!, a multiethnic cooking program for children. Her writing on food has appeared in numerous publications, and she is the coauthor of *Foie Gras: A Passion*. She lives in Brooklyn, New York.

Ziegelman (*Foie Gras: A Passion*) puts a historical spin to the notion that you are what you eat by looking at five immigrant families from what she calls the "elemental perspective of the foods they ate." They are German, Italian, Irish, and Jewish (both Orthodox and Reform) from Russia and Germany—they are new Americans, and each family, sometime between 1863 and 1935, lived on Manhattan's Lower East Side. Each represents the predicaments faced in adapting the food traditions it knew to the country it adopted. From census data, newspaper accounts, sociological studies, and cookbooks of the time, Ziegelman vividly renders a proud, diverse community learning to be American. She describes the funk of fermenting sauerkraut, the bounty of a pushcart market, the culinary versatility of a potato, as well as such treats as hamburger, spaghetti, and lager beer. Beyond the foodstuffs and recipes of the time, however, are the mores, histories, and identities that food evokes. Through food, the author records the immigrants' struggle to reinterpret themselves in an American context and their reciprocal impact on American culture at large.

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These Shallow Graves. A wealthy family. A deadly secret. A young woman with more to lose than she knows. Josephine Montfort is from one of New York's oldest, most respected, and wealthiest families. Like most well-off girls of the Gilded Age, her future looks set—after a finishing school education, she will be favourably married off to a handsome gentleman, after which she'll want for nothing. But Jo has other dreams and desires that make her long for a very different kind of future. She wants a more meaningful and exciting life: she wants to be an investigative journalist like her heroine Nellie Bly. But when Jo's father is found dead in his study after an alleged accident, her life becomes far more exciting than even Jo would wish. Unable to accept that her father could have been so careless, she begins to investigate his death with the help of a young reporter, Eddie Gallagher. It quickly becomes clear he was murdered, and in their race against time to discover the culprit and his motive, Jo and Eddie find themselves not only battling dark characters on the violent and gritty streets of New York, but also their growing feelings for

each other.

“ . A wealthy family.”