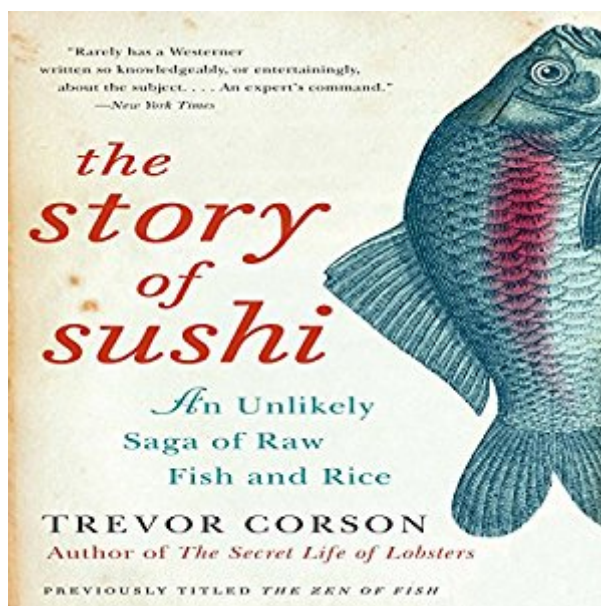


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# The Story Of Sushi: An Unlikely Saga Of Raw Fish And Rice



## Synopsis

Everything you never knew about sushi: its surprising origins, the colorful lives of its chefs, and the bizarre behavior of the creatures that compose it. Trevor Corson takes us behind the scenes at America's first sushi-chef training academy, as eager novices strive to master the elusive art of cooking without cooking. He delves into the biology and natural history of the edible creatures of the sea, and tells the fascinating story of an Indo-Chinese meal reinvented in 19th-century Tokyo as a cheap fast food. He reveals the pioneers who brought sushi to the United States and explores how this unlikely meal is exploding into the American heartland just as the long-term future of sushi may be unraveling. *The Story of Sushi* is at once a compelling tale of human determination and a delectable smorgasbord of surprising food science, intrepid reporting, and provocative cultural history.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*The Story of Sushi: An Unlikely Saga of Raw Fish and Rice* by Trevor Corson (previously titled, *The Zen of Fish: The Story of Sushi, from Samurai to Supermarket*), intertwines history with entertainment. Corson focuses on the story of a young woman named Kate, described as a fun down to earth girl who was athletic and one of the guys until she broke a finger in High School. Unable to play sports anymore she became depressed and developed an eating disorder. As her depression and eating habits grew worse a friend recommended Kate try sushi. Hesitant at first Kate tried it and ended up loving it. Seemingly, more than the sushi, Kate enjoyed the attitude of the

chefs who were comical and outgoing, reminding her of herself before getting sick. As Kate continued visiting this sushi bar her overall health improved. As she pondered her future, she knew she wanted a career in which she could build friendships with customers, helping them to enjoy life. As if it was fate, Kate saw an ad for the California Sushi Academy. After a year of debating, she walked out on a leap of faith, leaving everything and everyone behind on a quest to be a sushi chef. The California Sushi Academy, California's first Sushi Academy, consisted of an extensive 12-week training program. Corson explains how this is different from Japan where sushi apprentices spend 5 years or more just learning to make the rice before being allowed to handle anything else. The sushi-related history and culture lessons carefully woven into Kate's story were very interesting and informative. Corson brought his readers through sushi's humble beginnings in Japan to its worldwide fame today. Corson did a good job painting a picture allowing his readers to "see" exactly what he was talking about. Scenes displaying Japanese culture like the auctions at the Tsukiji fish market in Tokyo, the history of Japanese knives and even the use of Japanese terms throughout the book tied the culture in nicely. The history of the food itself was also interesting. The precision put into preparing meals requires lots of practice. The process of making certain foods like miso and soy sauce were eye opening and the natural history of the different types of fish and how to catch/farm, cook, and/or present them was informative. Some of the other facts mentioned by Carson that were particularly interesting is that the California Roll was invented due to a Californian sushi chef running out of fatty tuna; the term mack daddy was derived from mackerels, and that the organisms eaten by flamingos are responsible for their color. Overall, the book was interesting and educational. Carson's choice to focus on Kate, instead of others in the class, was smart because Kate being new to Sushi and Japanese culture, like many of his readers, was a nice relatable gateway to the "story of sushi". This review was originally written for 27Press.com.

Very well written book with interesting (real) characters (live people that is). Here I am having eaten sushi all my life and could not imagine the global infrastructure that goes into that one seemingly simple dish. And the history of sushi, now that is surprising; but logical - and no spoiler alert, read the book. Nor did I know how to properly eat sushi, having been a child of the mass produced super-market type of sushi. In reading the book, I considered being a sushi chef, but by the end after the descriptions of preparing fish, (which the author does with coolness of a well-trained surgeon) I decided there is a place in this world for a highly skilled vegan sushi chef and restaurant.

But it won't have the same allure as biting into a piece of almost live meat from a creature carefully harvested and prepared by the loving hands of a real sushi chef. Read it, you'll like it! And you will appreciate sushi even more after you read the book.

Cute story focuses on one student of the California Sushi Academy and intermixes her tale with history and other interesting facts about sushi. A light read and worth the time if you happen to like sushi. I did not know, for example that you are supposed to pick it up with your hand not chopsticks and if you like putting soy sauce and wasabi on it, you're supposed to put it on the fish, not the rice!

The author has no affiliation with the California Sushi Academy. He paid for all sushi consumed in the course of his research. This book made me crave sushi for the entire week that I was reading it. I'm a sushi fiend so this isn't surprising, but it was a little odd when I was reading at 8 AM. This had been on my wish list for a long time. As much as I enjoyed the info that I learned about sushi through Zoran, Kate, Marcos, Toshi and the others, I enjoyed the people. Although this was a work of documentary non-fiction, it read like a novel at times and the central figures were key. Toshi, the pioneer of American sushi; Kate the unsettled student; Zoran the teacher who is disappeared back to Australia midway through the semester; Takumi the former JPop singer. The Academy itself was a bit of a character as well. Luckily for this sushi fiend, little beyond the author's explanation of mold's role in miso and sushi rice made me think twice about the food I devour. I fell in love with sushi at the tail end of my first stint in Japan but never really had a huge interest in its creation. I don't think I've made sushi since a friend's obon party in August 2002! This book made me curious about some of the behind the scenes and probably made me a more educated consumer at the sushi bar. I learned a lot about the different fish without too much overwhelming detail. Disease isn't the only problem. Humans like to eat yellowtail, but yellowtail also like to eat yellowtail. Of the author's comments on fish that's the one I loved the most. I'm picturing carnivorous yellowtail on the sushi bar. I really enjoyed the background on the rice as its status in the US is so different to its standing in Japan. I'm glad to see the Toshi's California Sushi Academy is still going (despite an awful website) and to "see" Kate and company on Corson's site. I look forward to reading more of Corson's work.

Inspiring because it makes you want to rush to the nearest sushi bar and order all the things.  
Frustrating because there isn't a proper sushi bar within 90 miles of where I live. Very well written.  
One of the most compelling nonfiction books I've read this year.

Prior to reading this book, I had been quite critical of "modern sushi", such as the California rolls and the Spicy tuna rolls. However, this book proves that there is no "correct" way of preparing sushi, as the food itself changes repeatedly through time. Modern sushi would just be another stage of the history of sushi making.

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