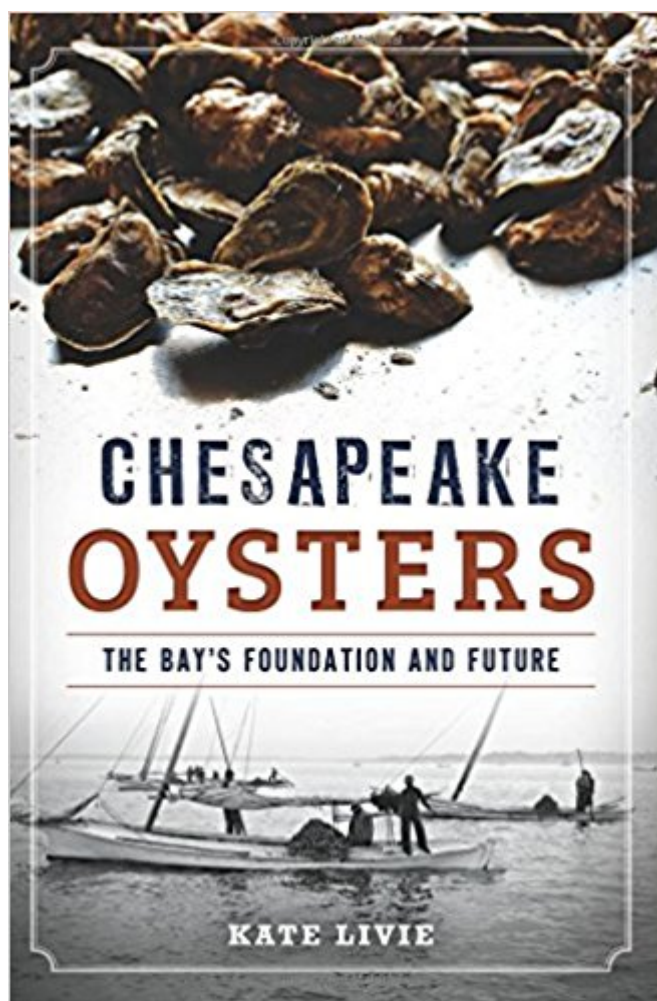


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Chesapeake Oysters: The Bay's Foundation And Future (American Palate)



Synopsis

Crassostrea virginica, the eastern oyster. These humble bivalves are the living bones of the Chesapeake and the ecological and historical lifeblood of the region. When colonists first sailed these impossibly abundant shores, they described massive shoals of foot-long oysters. But the bottomless appetite of the Gilded Age and great fleets of skipjacks took their toll. Disease, environmental pressures and overconsumption decimated the population by the end of the twentieth century. While Virginia turned to bottom-leasing, passionate debate continues in Maryland among scientists and oystermen whether aquaculture or wild harvesting is the better way forward. Today, boutique oyster farming in the Bay is sustainably meeting the culinary demand of a new generation of connoisseurs. With careful research and interviews with experts, author Kate Livie presents this dynamic story and a glimpse of what the future may hold.

Book Information

Series: American Palate

Paperback: 192 pages

Publisher: Arcadia Publishing (October 26, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 162619825X

ISBN-13: 978-1626198258

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.3 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars 15 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #567,614 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #182 in [Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Cooking by Ingredient > Fish & Seafood](#) #330 in [Books > Business & Money > Industries > Agriculture](#) #1155 in [Books > Science & Math > Agricultural Sciences > Food Science](#)

Customer Reviews

"Selected for its breadth of research in terms of the Bay's oyster fishery and its economic and cultural impact on the development of the Chesapeake Bay region and beyond; the importance of the topic for those who would understand the ecological impact of oystering upon the health of the Bay; author Livie's graceful prose and selection of lively anecdotes; and her valuable contribution linking the history of oystering, oystermen, politics, and the current role of aquaculture in the future of the seafood industry." Dr. William S. Dudley, Maryland Historical Society

Kate Livie is a professional Chesapeake educator, writer and historian. An Eastern Shore native, Livie is passionate about the Chesapeake Bay's culture, heritage and landscape. She currently serves as the director of education at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in St. Michaels, Maryland, and writes for the Chesapeake Bay Journal and beautifulswimmers.tumblr.com. She lives with her husband in Chestertown, Maryland, and to date she owns thirteen oyster knives.

I savored this book as if I were consuming the delectable oysters it describes. Deliciously written, using lyrical language to honestly present the complex ties between man and this "simple" marine staple, "Chesapeake Oysters" presents a thoroughly convincing treatise on one of the defining commodities in our history. If you are interested in history, especially that of the Chesapeake Bay, this book is a must. But more importantly, it is an interesting tale, well told, with wit and intelligence and an obvious attention to research. A really wonderful read.

Well written! And they are tasty.

Really a good book. Recommend highly.

A must read for oyster lovers.

Great book.excellent history of evolving oyster problems in Chesapeake Bay

nice book

Good reading

With lyrical prose and impeccable research, this book serves as THE definitive resource about the Chesapeake oyster. One would think a book written about a humble bivalve would certainly be informative, but perhaps not a book that would fly off the shelves. Livie's book, however, proves this assumption wrong-- reading like historical fiction-- I found myself forgetting I was reading non-fiction. The author's uncanny ability to pull the reader into the context of the time period and weave a narrative tale made this a page turner that I finished in two days. In particular, the chapters about

the Jamestown settlers felt as though I'd hopped in a time machine as Livie described the daily life, smells and missteps of these intrepid colonists. Growing up on the Eastern Shore, I've always enjoyed seafood, and oysters in particular, but I never understood the importance of their role in shaping not only the lives and land of the Chesapeake region, but the United States as a whole. As the book weaves its tale to present times, and the oyster becomes a source of intense political contention, Livie painstakingly presents multiple sides of the issue, interviewing watermen, elected officials, environmentalist and oyster farmers. Although the issue of oyster sustainability both as a possible solution to clean up the Bay and as a viable fishery continues to be a hot button issue, the author ends the book with a note of hope, offering a synopsis on how both of these goals could be accomplished. I sincerely hope this author continues to write more books about Chesapeake-related subjects, because it's clear that is where her passion lies.

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