

For immediate release: From **Ken Wells** and **LSU Press** and its *Louisiana True* series:

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“Boudin is what the gods would eat if the gods were looking for the transcendent; a dish as satisfying to the soul as it is to the palate.” So writes Ken Wells, Louisiana native and boudin hound, in this lively travelogue through the aromatic precincts of the makers, sellers, and connoisseurs of what one noted Louisiana chef calls the world’s most versatile sausage.

Sure, boudin is just pork, rice, veggies, and spices in a casing. Yet in creative hands—and there are many in Louisiana—the link becomes a transformative dish, as at home at breakfast as it is as a lunchtime snack in the car. This book tells you where to find boudin in any cuisine: boudin tacos and burritos, boudin eggrolls and wonton, boudin sushi rolls, and more.

But *Boudin* isn’t so much a tasting guide as a journey in which Wells, a former *Wall Street Journal* reporter, explains how a prosaic primal sausage with recipes dating back to the 13th century has evolved into something far more refined and exquisite in the home kitchens of Louisiana Cajun and Creole cooks. Indeed, Wells makes a credible case that boudin, like gumbo and andouille before it, is being reimaged into a national food sensation as boudin moves from the stoves of “maw-maws” and “paw-paws” into production unimaginable a generation ago.

To demonstrate Wells travels to Scott, La., the Boudin Capital of the World, to delve into how the Cormier family has gone from selling boudin out of a rice cooker in a tiny store to creating the Best Stop boudin juggernaut—making tons of boudin a day to rapturous feedback in a state-of-the-art USDA factory and shipping it all over America and even abroad. Yet as lucrative as boudin has become, Wells finds that the burgeoning boudin business is still fueled by the elixir of family pride: an “envie” to share this mouth-watering comfort food with the wider world while sustaining tradition. Consider, for example, Bourgeois Meat Market—making boudin since 1891—is one of the few remaining producers of blood sausage or *boudin noir* in part to honor the cooking heritage of its French-speaking founder, Valery Jean-Baptiste Bourgeois.

Wells dives deep into historical cookbooks to unearth some wild surprises: Medieval British gentry dining on porpoise boudin, for example, and a recipe for crawfish boudin recipe in an 1824 French cookbook. Readers will also learn how the fabled Lewis and Clark expedition of 1804 came to feast on buffalo boudin. There are mysteries to be plumbed, as in the question of when rice entered the Louisiana boudin recipe. And, yes, there is a personalized tour along the Boudin Trail, where Wells discovers some extremely rare boudin as he eats his way across Louisiana.

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