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To the Bone

By Paul Liebrandt, Andrew Friedman



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In this meditation on the culinary life that blends elements of memoir and cookbook, Paul Liebrandt shares the story of his own struggle to become a chef and define his personal style.

To the Bone is Liebrandt's exploration of his culinary roots and creative development. At fifteen, he began his foray into the restaurant world and soon found himself cooking in the finest dining temples of London, Paris, and ultimately, New York. Taking inspiration from the methods and menus of Marco Pierre White, Raymond Blanc, Jean-Georges Vongerichten, and Pierre Gagnaire, Liebrandt dedicated himself to learning his craft for close to a decade. Then, at New York City's Atlas, he announced himself as a worldclass talent, putting his hard-earned technique to the test with a startlingly personal cuisine. He continued to further his reputation at restaurants such as Gilt, Corton, and now the Elm, becoming known for a singular, graphic style that has captured the public's imagination and earned him the respect of his peers.

Punctuated throughout with dishes that mark the stages of his personal and professional life, all of them captured in breathtaking color photography, this is Liebrandt's literary tasting menu, a portrait of a chef putting it together and constantly pushing himself to challenge the way he, and we, think about the possibilities of food.



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Editorial Review

Review

“By any measure, Paul Liebrandt’s career in the kitchen has been a wild success. But it hasn’t been a mad dash toward celebrity, as anyone who reads *To the Bone* will see. More than a collection of recipes, this impressive book is a coming-of-age story, a narrative that tells of a chef’s often painstaking creative growth. Liebrandt spares us any phony glamour, focusing instead on the desire and commitment that restaurant work requires. That’s a lot more real than anything you see on ‘reality’ TV.”

—Thomas Keller

“Ever since first learning about Paul’s cooking while he was Atlas, I have followed him for his no-holds-barred risk-taking style of cooking. It takes a determined and self-confident person to eschew the standard conventions, and by doing so Paul has changed the way people view cooking and its possibilities.”

—Grant Achatz

“Paul is not a categorically ‘French,’ ‘American,’ or ‘British’ chef, but he has absorbed knowledge from three cultures . . . solidifying his reputation as a chef to be reckoned with through his passion and hard work. His food is more than art on the plate—it is an intricate extension of himself . . . and showcases the evolution of one of America’s most creative young chefs today.”

—Daniel Boulud

“If you’ve ever wondered where the heck a modern chef gets his inspiration from, these pages will give you some idea of how it works. [This is] privileged access to one of the most innovative, skillful, and idiosyncratic chefs in America. . . . Dig in and enjoy.”

—from the foreword by Heston Blumenthal

About the Author

PAUL LIEBRANDT is one of the superstars of the culinary world, having received two Michelin stars and three stars from the *New York Times* (at age twenty-four, the youngest chef to do so). He was the star of the Emmy-nominated HBO documentary *A Matter of Taste: Serving Up Paul Liebrandt* (winner of a James Beard Award for best documentary). He lives in New York.

ANDREW FRIEDMAN is the author of *Knives at Dawn*, about the Bocuse d’Or culinary competition, and the founder and chief contributor to the chef-focused website Toqueland.com. He is also the coeditor of the popular anthology *Don’t Try This at Home*, and has collaborated on more than twenty books with some of America’s finest and most well-known chefs, including Alfred Portale, Michelle Bernstein, Laurent Tourondel, and former White House chef Walter Scheib. He lives in Brooklyn, New York, with his family.

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From the Introduction

From the time I was old enough to make decisions about such things, my life has been defined by The Food.

I write it that way because that’s how I think of it: as the object of an existential quest, to be pursued at the expense of just about anything else. In the name of The Food, at one time or another, I’ve worked for nothing in faraway lands where I didn’t speak the language, lived in meager and unsanitary quarters, commuted to and from work at times and in places that would make any mother fear for her son’s safety, and slept on a

banquette or the floor in my own restaurant for days on end.

Why would I, or anyone, voluntarily do such things? It might be difficult for those not blessed and burdened by such attachments to understand, but at some level, cooking is an art that relies on the marriage of craft and inspiration. Craft is the easy part: anybody armed with the requisite aptitude and discipline can master the technical part of cooking, though it might take years. Inspiration, on the other hand, is like a demanding lover who flits in and out of your life as she pleases, insisting that you be available for her arrival and ready to act on a moment's notice, lest the opportunity pass you by.

Then, of course, there's the cruel joke perpetrated on chefs by the cosmos. It's not enough to have one perfect idea; it must be realized dozens of times each day, at great expense, with most of the work carried out by people who don't have the benefit of living in your head. There are no Emily Dickinsons in the cooking trade, no chefs who toil anonymously and independently in their family attics, leaving their work to future generations to discover and appreciate. On a daily basis, chefs need a well-equipped place in which to work, cooks to prepare our food, and guests to pay for the privilege of eating it. If you've ever wondered why so many chefs are known to terrorize their staffs, or behave like alcoholics after a night on the line, or burn out and fade away at tragically young ages, much of the answer can be found in the pressures created by that unholy trinity.

Does all of that sound unhealthy? It can be. But in my experience, the highs justify the lows. I discovered *The Food* as a painfully shy, unhappy boy, and it gave shape and meaning to my life. Hailing from a single-parent household, it offered me an alternate home in which to pass my days and nights. Without a specific ambition, it provided something to strive for; as a child never given to words, it gifted me with a vocabulary of flavors, colors, and textures with which to address and engage the world.

It also became the lens through which I see my life. Where some people have photo albums and journals, I have *The Food*. The ingredients and techniques I have worked with, and the way they come together in my dishes, are nothing less than snapshots of my life—not only of the kitchens in which I've worked and the influences I took from them, but also of where I was living and what I was thinking and feeling at any given time.

In these pages, I share a bit of my story, along with some dishes that mark the stops along the way—all with the hope that they might give a sense of what it's like to become and to be a chef. I'm too young to consider this a memoir. And there are not enough recipes to qualify it as a cookbook. Think of it, then, as a literary tasting menu, a representation of one chef's life so far, summed up—as all chefs inevitably are—by the dishes cooked and eaten along the way.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Michael Coffman:

What do you think of book? It is just for students since they are still students or the item for all people in the world, the particular best subject for that? Only you can be answered for that problem above. Every person has distinct personality and hobby for each and every other. Don't to be pressured someone or something that they don't wish do that. You must know how great as well as important the book *To the Bone*. All type of book is it possible to see on many solutions. You can look for the internet options or other social media.

Terrance Allen:

Your reading sixth sense will not betray a person, why because this To the Bone e-book written by well-known writer who really knows well how to make book that may be understand by anyone who have read the book. Written throughout good manner for you, leaking every ideas and creating skill only for eliminate your current hunger then you still hesitation To the Bone as good book not simply by the cover but also from the content. This is one guide that can break don't assess book by its handle, so do you still needing a different sixth sense to pick this!? Oh come on your looking at sixth sense already told you so why you have to listening to one more sixth sense.

David Barr:

Is it you actually who having spare time subsequently spend it whole day simply by watching television programs or just resting on the bed? Do you need something totally new? This To the Bone can be the reply, oh how comes? A book you know. You are therefore out of date, spending your free time by reading in this new era is common not a nerd activity. So what these guides have than the others?

David Manning:

A lot of reserve has printed but it is unique. You can get it by web on social media. You can choose the best book for you, science, comedy, novel, or whatever simply by searching from it. It is called of book To the Bone. You'll be able to your knowledge by it. Without making the printed book, it could possibly add your knowledge and make you happier to read. It is most essential that, you must aware about guide. It can bring you from one place to other place.

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