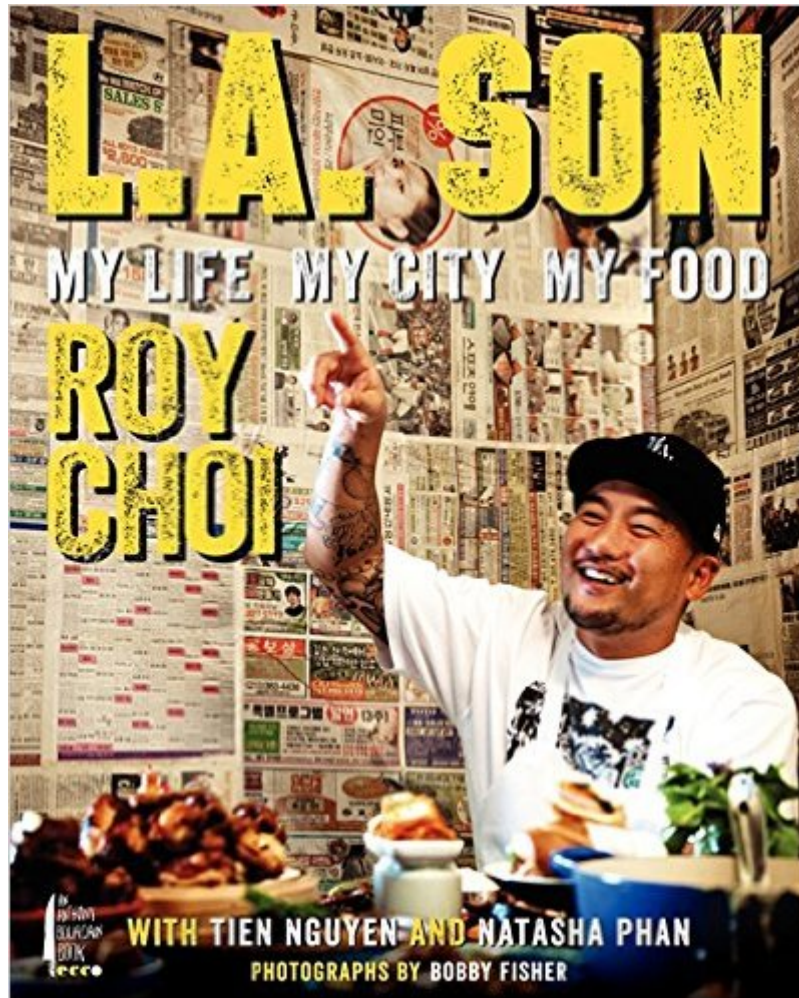


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L.A. Son: My Life, My City, My Food



Synopsis

Los Angeles: A patchwork megalopolis defined by its unlikely cultural collisions; the city that raised and shaped Roy Choi, the boundary-breaking chef who decided to leave behind fine dining to feed the city he loved—and, with the creation of the Korean taco, reinvented street food along the way. Abounding with both the food and the stories that gave rise to Choi's inspired cooking, L.A. Son takes us through the neighborhoods and streets most tourists never see, from the hidden casinos where gamblers slurp fragrant bowls of pho to Downtown's Jewelry District, where a ten-year-old Choi wolfed down Jewish deli classics between diamond deliveries; from the kitchen of his parents' Korean restaurant and his mother's pungent kimchi to the boulevards of East L.A. and the best taquerias in the country, to, at last, the curbside view from one of his emblematic Kogi taco trucks, where people from all walks of life line up for a revolutionary meal. Filled with over 85 inspired recipes that meld the overlapping traditions and flavors of L.A.—including Korean fried chicken, tempura potato pancakes, homemade chorizo, and Kimchi and Pork Belly Stuffed Pupusas—L.A. Son embodies the sense of invention, resourcefulness, and hybrid attitude of the city from which it takes its name, as it tells the transporting, unlikely story of how a Korean American kid went from lowriding in the streets of L.A. to becoming an acclaimed chef.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I'm lucky that I live in LA and can eat at a Roy Choi spot at least twice a month. My favorite is Chego but A-Frame and Sunny Spot are also great. (I gave up on trying to find the Kogi trucks and

honestly, I lost patience with having to wait on those long food truck lines.) But my point is: I love Roy Choi's food. The Sour Cream Hen House is probably among my top 5 things to eat in all of LA. That's part of why I was disappointed with this book. I was hoping for some recipes that resembled some of the amazing dishes I've tried at Choi's restaurants -- the pickles and dressing at A-Frame, the meatballs at Chego, the wings at Sunny Spot, and so on. Instead, the book contains recipes like Roy Choi's version of Scott Conant's spaghetti and tomato sauce (there's also a separate recipe for spaghetti with chili sauce.) I appreciate how he intersperses recipes while telling his life story but that's why I think this book works better as a biography first and the recipes as a bonus. The recipes are in the book for nostalgia and sentimental value -- not because they're unique or groundbreaking. This is the bummer. The other thing is, I've had this book for a couple of weeks and I've tried several of the recipes with varying results. One of the things I like about Roy Choi, besides how his food tastes, is his philosophy and his "keeping it real" roots. I'm glad the cookbook is riddled with f-bombs and real, raw emotion. It makes for a fascinating read. My only problem is with the recipes. They're written as if Roy Choi was standing next to you, telling you how to do it, which is cool. Except -- I always seem to have a question about the recipe. It almost seems like nobody tested or proofread the recipes.

This part autobiography, part cookbook is a bit over hyped. The man, the myth (ok maybe not myth) Mr. Roy Choi, not to be confused with all the other Roy Choi's you might know. I had high expectations for this book and felt compelled to give it at least four stars, but yet I'm giving it 3 stars. I love some of his food (Kogi), repulsed by some of his food (Chego), and have a similar but much less exciting background as him (minority growing up in a mostly white LA suburb having somewhat of an identity crisis). The hardcover book itself is printed on some high quality thick paper and I do admire the artistic creative photos contained through out the book. His autobiography can be slow and a snoozer at times, but does a good job explaining why his cooking today is the way it is. My problem with the book are the recipes. Some recipes are hits, most are mediocre and are not worth spending half a day in the kitchen. Some recipes are down right insulting: Roasted Sweet Potatoes (potatoes, salt, roasted at 350...can we say "filler material"?) I'm probably one of the few customers who bought the book, who has tried to actually make some of the recipes. Here's some tidbits and my take on the recipes:- You will need access to a Latino supermarket and a Korean and/or Thai supermarket to make most of the recipes. This should come as no surprise given Choi's background and influences. If you don't have easy access to these markets, I wouldn't waste your time. Ordering ingredients online won't cut it.- Be prepared to burn a lot of time in the kitchen literally

(see below)- You need a blender/food processor to make a lot of these marinades and sauces along with knives, pots, pans etc.- If you are diabetic/overweight/health conscious do not attempt at home.

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