



Duck Season: Eating, Drinking, and Other Misadventures in Gascony--France's Last Best Place

David McAninch

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A delicious memoir about the eight months food writer David McAninch spent in Gascony—a deeply rural region of France virtually untouched by mass tourism—meeting extraordinary characters and eating the best meals of his life.

Though he'd been a card-carrying Francophile all of his life, David McAninch knew little about Gascony, an ancient region in Southwest France mostly overlooked by Americans. Then an assignment sent him to research a story on duck. After enjoying a string of rich meals—Armagnac-flambéed duck tenderloins; skewered duck hearts with chanterelles; a duck-confit shepherd's pie strewn with shavings of foie gras—he soon realized what he'd been missing.

McAninch decided he needed a more permanent fix. He'd fallen in love—not only with the food but with the people, and with the sheer unspoiled beauty of the place. So, along with his wife and young daughter, he moved to an old millhouse in the small village of Plaisance du Gers, where they would spend the next eight months living as Gascons. *Duck Season* is the delightful, mouthwatering chronicle of McAninch's time in this tradition-bound corner of France. There he herds sheep in the Pyrenees, harvests grapes, attends a pig slaughter, hunts for pigeons, distills Armagnac, and, of course, makes and eats all manner of delicious duck specialties—learning to rewire his own thinking about cooking, eating, drinking, and the art of living a full and happy life.

With wit and warmth, McAninch brings us deep into this enchanting world, where eating what makes you happy isn't a sin but a commandment and where, to the eternal surprise of outsiders, locals' life expectancy is higher than in any other region of France. Featuring a dozen choice recipes and beautiful line drawings, *Duck Season* is an irresistible treat for Francophiles and gourmands alike.

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