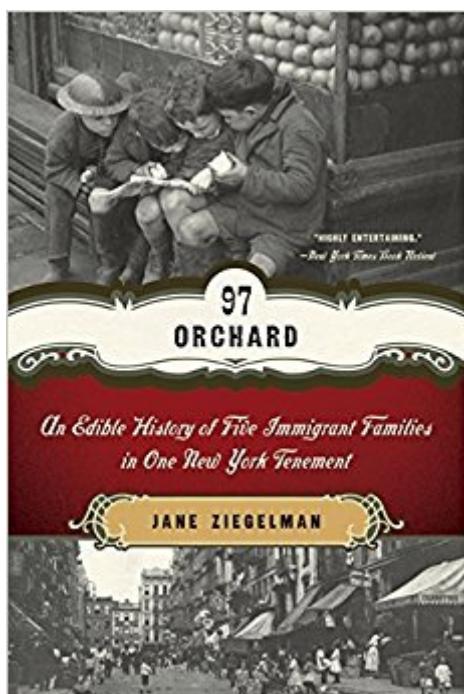


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# 97 Orchard: An Edible History Of Five Immigrant Families In One New York Tenement



## Synopsis

“Social history is, most elementally, food history. Jane Ziegelman had the great idea to zero in on one Lower East Side tenement building, and through it she has crafted a unique and aromatic narrative of New York’s immigrant culture: with bread in the oven, steam rising from pots, and the family gathering round.” Russell Shorto, author of *The Island at the Center of the World*

97 Orchard is a richly detailed investigation of the lives and culinary habits—shopping, cooking, and eating—of five families of various ethnicities living at the turn of the twentieth century in one tenement on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. With 40 recipes included, 97 Orchard is perfect for fans of *Rachel Ray’s Hometown Eats*; anyone interested in the history of how immigrant food became American food; and “foodies” of every stripe.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Ziegelman (*Foie Gras: A Passion*) puts a historical spin to the notion that you are what you eat by looking at five immigrant families from what she calls the "elemental perspective of the foods they ate." They are German, Italian, Irish, and Jewish (both Orthodox and Reform) from Russia and Germany--they are new Americans, and each family, sometime between 1863 and 1935, lived on Manhattan’s Lower East Side. Each represents the predicaments faced in adapting the food traditions it knew to the country it adopted. From census data, newspaper accounts, sociological studies, and cookbooks of the time, Ziegelman vividly renders a proud, diverse community learning

to be American. She describes the funk of fermenting sauerkraut, the bounty of a pushcart market, the culinary versatility of a potato, as well as such treats as hamburger, spaghetti, and lager beer. Beyond the foodstuffs and recipes of the time, however, are the mores, histories, and identities that food evokes. Through food, the author records the immigrants' struggle to reinterpret themselves in an American context and their reciprocal impact on American culture at large.

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In this compelling foray into forensic gastronomy, Ziegelman pulls the facade off the titular 97 Orchard Street tenement. The result is a living dollhouse that invites us to gaze in from the sidewalk. With minds open and mouths agape, we witness the comings and goings of the building's inhabitants in the years surrounding the turn of the twentieth century. By focusing on the culinary lives of individuals from a variety of ethnic groups, Ziegelman pieces together a thorough sketch of Manhattan's Lower East Side at a time when these immigrants were at the forefront of a rapidly changing urban life. The food facts she uncovers are sure to interest and astound even those outside the culinary community, and guarantee that the reader will never look at a kosher dill pickle, a wrapped hard candy, or even the delectable foie gras the same way again. Ziegelman cleverly takes this opportunity to show us that in learning about food, we're actually learning about history--and when it comes to the sometimes surprising journey some of our favorite meals have taken to get here, it's fascinating stuff. --Annie Bostrom --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

What a great historical overview of the immigrants we probably all descended from! Did you know that 97 Orchard still stands as a museum today? Wish I could travel to see it. There is information about the food that the Irish, Germans, European Jews and Polish, and Italians ate both at home and in their newly established deli's and restaurants. How they changed the food scene in New York with their way of cooking and eating. How they picnicked and drank and socialized. How they made do by learning their neighbors tricks, making hashes and stews and scrapple. If you like Food History, this is a good read!

I love to cook and many of my recipes came from My parents or their families during the early Part of the nineteen hundreds. Noodle recipe was same as my mother's who got it from my Grandmother making the time period fit. May order hard copy of this book to keep for my grandchildren.

For an immigrant daughter from New York, this was fascinating. the recipes wherein for me--who has eatenmost of the things mentioned.

What an unusual and fascinating book! I was excited to discover that I was in the homes of two of the featured families when I visited the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in New York City - at 97 Orchard Street. Although it's such a huge part of our lives, historians tend to neglect food and eating habits - not Jane Ziegelman! Enjoy!

Wonderful book detailing much of the immigrants' journey to assimilation in the new country through food and work. The book showcases one small area while the information can be translated to most areas, especially along the East Coast.

Love to read about immigrants and food so this book was something I just ate up. I have been to the Tenement Museum and the book certainly helped me remember going there.

I think the subtitle of 97 ORCHARD (AN EDIBLE HISTORY OF FIVE IMMIGRANT FAMILIES IN ONE NEW YORK TENEMENT) provides the reader with a great quick summary of the book.

Ziegelman describes the lives of five families of various ethnic/national backgrounds who lived at the above-noted 97 Orchard Street on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. Within each chapter the author discusses not only a particular family, but also the period in which that family immigrated to the U.S., along with the factors influencing immigration for that specific group, and the food ways they brought with them and how those food ways were adapted and adopted into mainstream American life. Included throughout the book are recipes from each group. Ziegelman shows a deft understanding of the forces at work in shaping her story of how important food was in maintaining ethnic identities, and how the various food ways were woven into a rich American tapestry. Well done!

I was awed by the scope of 97 ORCHARD. Thoroughly researched -- a masterpiece! -- and beautifully written, it links the history of late 19th Century/early 20th Century immigration to New York. Over the course of more than fifty years, author Jane Ziegelman cleverly utilizes the device of comparing the tenants of one specific slum apartment building and the changing cuisines they brought with them from their old countries. In the process, she displays great knowledge of the topic,

and empathy for the people she features. Her descriptions of the various foods they favored is informative and enlightening. Jane Ziegelman is a true scholar and a lyrical writer.

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