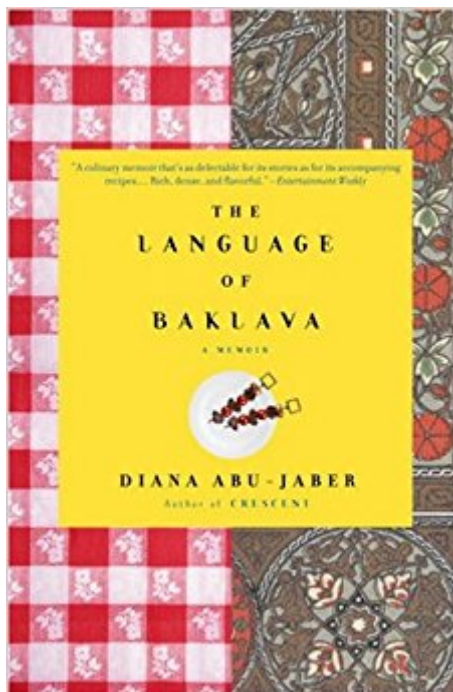


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# The Language Of Baklava



## Synopsis

Diana Abu-Jaber's vibrant, humorous memoir weaves together delicious food memories that illuminate the two cultures of her childhood—American and Jordanian. Here are stories of being raised by a food-obsessed Jordanian father and tales of Lake Ontario shish kabob cookouts and goat stew feasts under Bedouin tents in the desert. These sensuously evoked repasts, complete with recipes, paint a loving and complex portrait of Diana's impractical, displaced immigrant father who, like many an immigrant before him, cooked to remember the place he came from and to pass that connection on to his children. *The Language of Baklava* irresistibly invites us to sit down at the table with Diana's family, sharing unforgettable meals that turn out to be as much about "grace, difference, faith, love" as they are about food.

## Book Information

File Size: 1787 KB

Print Length: 354 pages

Publisher: Anchor (December 18, 2007)

Publication Date: December 18, 2007

Sold by: Amazon Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B000XUDGTO

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #362,918 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #35

in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Regional & International > Middle

Eastern #131 in Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Regional & International > Middle

Eastern #565 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Biographies & Memoirs > Ethnic & National

## Customer Reviews

This is a seminal piece of work. Abu-Jaber writes with insight, honesty, humor and compassion about the ups and downs of growing up bi-cultural. She'll have you laughing on one page and

tearing up on the next. Your mouth will water too, while Abu-Jaber describes the experience of cuisine from childhood to adulthood and includes the recipes for a number of traditional Jordanian dishes. This book is a gateway to understanding the Arab-American experience and the immigrant experience one generation removed. Whether your usual fare is novel or nonfiction, you'll enjoy this remarkable and important book. It's perfect for reading aloud, alone, or with a book club. Whatever you do, don't miss the chance to savor this read. "The Language of Baklava" has become a family favorite at our bi-cultural house.

Reading the Language of Baklava, transported me to many similar childhood and young adult memories. I am a first generation Lebanese-American. My parents immigrated to the US when I was a baby. I was 7 years old when my dad's work sent us abroad. While living abroad we frequently went to visit family in Lebanon, Egypt, and France. I have very vivid memories of our many visits- the feasts, smells, noises, animated conversations in 3 languages without interruption. Upon returning to the states as a young teenager, I felt lost. Life was so different... This made it hard for me to adjust to being back "home". I am happy to be American-Lebanese- I value and hold close to my heart the collection of memories during our time abroad and once back in the US. I also loved the description of meals, and the inclusion of recipes I've grown up with!

The Language Of Baklava is an ode to the author's multicultural heritage, family, and above all, the power of food as the framework of hospitality, healing, and the glue that holds things together. Peopled with lively characters who move in vivid vignettes of life in America and Jordan, the author's journey from resistance to her larger than life Jordanian father's expectations and strictures to embracing their warmth and good intentions, is a mesmerizing read. The chapter entitled The Language Of Baklava

If you love food and imagine in scent and flavor, you may appreciate this memoir. If you want to visit a new place intimately and also look inside an individual to explore a truly vivid and complex family relationship, this book is rich in images and ideas.

Most all of us are immigrants to this country - and somewhere in our family histories are similar stories of challenges, longings and new lives grown into. I love how the author punctuates and celebrates this journey with recipes that touch the spirit as well as tantalize the taste buds !

Anyone who grew up with a protective father can identify with Diana's experience. As an immigrant I can also identify with having to straddle the Atlantic, one foot in America, one foot in Europe. I love the flow of Diana's memoir and her sumptuous language. The addition of the recipes is very clever.

Very enjoyable, easy to read book, intermittently powerful, but mostly an enjoyable read, I felt like I was listening to an engaging story over coffee. I gave it 4 stars instead of 5 because I thought that the last part of the book seemed like an afterthought, wasn't as good as the first 75-80%, almost like I thought it was done but then more pages.

This is an exceptional book. One of the few I've read in Kindle and then bought in print simply so I could give it to friends and family. Very funny, insightful, an excellent observation on living and the blending of two cultures. Highly recommended! (Good grub also).

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