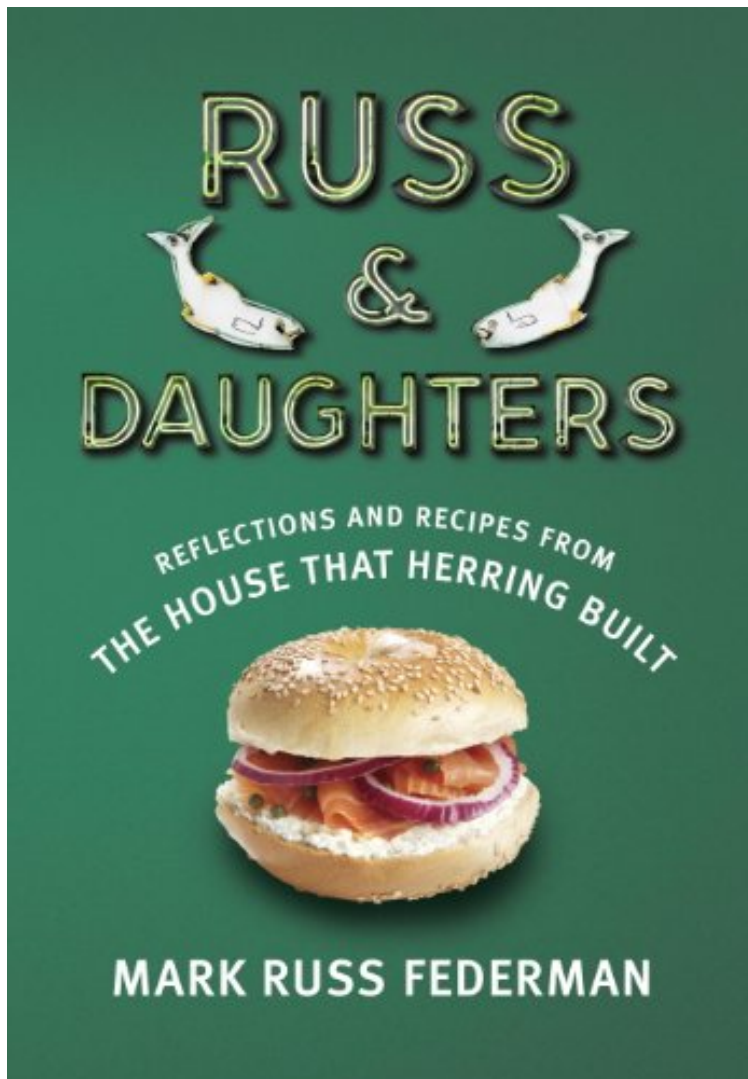


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Russ Daughters: Reflections and Recipes from the House That Herring Built



Par Mark Russ Federman
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Par Mark Russ Federman : Russ Daughters: Reflections and Recipes from the House That Herring Built before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Russ Daughters: Reflections and Recipes from the House That Herring Built:

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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteur WITH 8 PAGES OF FULL-COLOR PHOTOGRAPHS AND BLACK-AND-WHITE IMAGES THROUGHOUT The former owner/proprietor of the beloved appetizing store on Manhattans Lower East Side tells the delightful, mouthwatering story of an immigrant familys journey from a pushcart in 1907 to New Yorks most hallowed shrine to the miracle of caviar, smoked salmon, ethereal herring, and silken chopped liver (The New York Times Magazine). When Joel Russ started peddling herring from a barrel shortly after his arrival in America from Poland, he could not have imagined that he was giving birth to a gastronomic legend. Here is the story of this Louvre of lox (The Sunday Times, London): its humble beginnings, the struggle to keep it going during the Great Depression, the food rationing of World War II,

the passing of the torch to the next generation as the flight from the Lower East Side was beginning, the heartbreaking years of neighborhood blight, and the almost miraculous renaissance of an area from which hundreds of other family-owned stores had fled. Filled with delightful anecdotes about how a ferociously hardworking family turned a passion for selling perfectly smoked and pickled fish into an institution with a devoted national clientele, Mark Russ Federmans reminiscences combine a heartwarming and triumphant immigrant saga with a panoramic history of twentieth-century New York, a meditation on the creation and selling of gourmet food by a family that has mastered this art, and an enchanting behind-the-scenes look at four generations of people who are just a little bit crazy on the subject of fish. Color photographs Matthew Hranek

From the Hardcover edition. Extrait The Art of the Schmooze You're either born a great schmoozer or you're not. Grandma Russ was always happy to schmooze. Since she spoke so little English, her schmoozing was limited to Yiddish with the pushcart vendors on Orchard Street. They were happy to schmooze with her because she was one of their few customers who never hounded. Grandpa Russ, on the other hand, had neither the time nor the patience to schmooze. But Aunt Hattie and Aunt Ida were great schmoozers; they could charm a herring right out of the barrel. My mom took after her father; no patience for schmoozing there. But my dad was a natural-born schmoozer, and the customers lined up to be waited on by him. I was lucky enough to inherit the family schmoozing gene. Maria is a terrible schmoozer. Whatever the opposite of a schmoozer is, that's Maria. Fortunately for our business, Niki is an even better schmoozer than I am. Josh is not a natural-born schmoozer. Until he came into the business he was an engineer, and they are not known for their schmoozing skills. But he has other essential qualities. For example, Josh finishes one task before starting another, a definite asset in running a business. Schmoozers, on the other hand, have difficulty getting things done; they're too busy schmoozing. But as I have watched Josh run the business these past few years, I have seen his ability to schmooze improve along with his slicing skills. Customers now line up to wait for Josh to slice their salmon and listen to their stories. Behind the counter, he has become his Grandpa Herbie, world-renowned salmon slicer and schmoozer. People who are born schmoozers often go into retail businesses, usually small, family-owned ones. They like, and maybe even need, the personal interactions such places offer. People shop in small retail stores because they, too, like and maybe need that same personal interaction. Among people who work in retail, the great schmoozer doesn't just talk but also knows how to listen. The ability to be a good listener is derived from a basic love of people. This must be genuine. It cannot be faked. There is no doubt in my mind that this joy in listening to people, in hearing their stories, sharing in their nachas and their tsuris, is genetic in origin. The schmoozing gene will soon be mapped. Some things distinguish a great schmoozer from a merely good one. The ability to make the customer feel as if he or she is the only thing the schmoozer is interested in at that given moment is essential. To achieve this, you yourself must feel that this customer is your friend, and that the interaction is personal as well as commercial. Of course, the schmoozer must not forget that he is running a business, so this is where multitasking comes in. While listening intently, eyes and ears fixed on the customer, the schmoozer will be able to notice that there are dirty spots on the showcase, herrings in disarray, salads that need to be filled in, and a ringing phone that needs to be answered. A truly great schmoozer can direct other people to accomplish these tasks without ever taking his focus away from the customer with whom he is schmoozing. A good memory is essential, even if you are a natural-born schmoozer. Memory for names is a given, not only the name of the customer as he or she walks in the door but the names of the customer's spouse and children, as well as any tsuris or nachas related during the last visit. A quality schmoozer remembers what the customer bought last time, which part of the fish he prefers, how she likes it sliced. The perfect schmooze must be a seamless resumption of your last conversation, even if the customer's last visit was six months ago. For example: The good schmoozer: Hello, Mrs. Schwartz. How's your daughter Rebecca? The great schmoozer: Hello, Mrs. Schwartz. How's your daughter Rebecca? Did she recover from that twisted ankle? Did you help take care of her two kids, Betsy and Andy? Your grandchildren are so adorable. And smart, too. The great schmoozer will attempt to bring other customers into the schmooze. When two or more customers are introduced into the schmooze, they are likely to discover things they have in common: their kids go to the same school, their grandparents came from the same shtetl in Poland, they used the same top doctor for hip-replacement surgery. This provides them with a more unique experience, a story to tell over the salmon and bagels when they get home. The schmoozer is humble, more of a good listener than a good talker. While the customers may ask the schmoozer personal questions, that is merely a rhetorical device. They don't really want to hear about you; they want to talk about themselves. And since they are spending their money in your store, your conversation should be about them. The schmoozer must be able to

distinguish between nachas and tsuris, and show the appropriate amount of joy or sympathy, depending on the individual situation. This is not always as easy as it seems. Of course, a birth, bris, bar/bat mitzvah, or wedding is clearly a major nachasdik life event that requires a great display of empathetic joy. Illness, death, and investments with Bernie Madoff clearly fit into the tsuris category. But be careful: divorce, which could be tsuris for the son who is being divorced, might be regarded as a joyful occasion by the mother who never

liked her daughter-in-law in the first place. I learned something very interesting during my years of schmoozing with my customers: the less you say, the greater the aura of knowledge and wisdom you acquire. From years of schmoozing, I came to be regarded by some of my customers as a chochom, a wise man, and I was often asked for my opinions about politics, finance, international relations, religion, and even car repair. Of course, true schmoozer and chochom that I am, I would never give them. Truthfully, beyond the fish we sell, I know very little about anything else. It is assumed that I am a repository of great bits of worldly knowledge just because for thirty years I stood behind the counter in the same store in the same neighborhood and sold the same fish products that my family had been selling for a hundred years. So I try to accept the role with some grace, and have grown a beard by now a very white beard. I continue to say very little and listen very well, and at least try to look the part. *Revue de presse* If you've ever lived in New York or have any affection for a bagel and lox, you'll appreciate this look at one of New York's most iconic food stores. Federman's history of his family and his store will give you a crazy feeling of nostalgia, even if you weren't yet born during the times he describes. *Huffington Post*, Best Food Books of 2013 The only thing better than this forshpays of memories, photographs, and recipes would be a trip to East Houston Street to the house that herring built. Dawn Drzal, *The New York Times Book Review* Federman's voice pops from the page. . . Russ Daughters is a good story well told, packed with zinging Yiddishisms and better-than-average jokes that bubble up organically. You soak in it, like brine, until you're pleasantly pickled. Dwight Garner, *The New York Times* For centuries on end philosophers have tried and failed to define the good life. Federman's life as revealed here can hardly be reduced to a set of impersonal abstractions, but if philosophers are willing to settle for a case in point rather than a developed theory, let them read his marvelous book. Jason Epstein,

The Wall Street Journal With crisp and evocative details worthy of a Malamud short story, Federman conveys an avuncular ardor for the feisty characters on both sides of the Russ Daughters counter. . . . He has turned over a bounty of fish tales, immigrant lore, family photos, and recipes, assembling them into a memoir as abundant in charm as the Russ inventory is in gastronomic seductions. Jan Stuart, *The Boston Globe* Much like its author, the Russ Daughters book is blunt and breezy. Along with family history and Russ Daughters lore, Federman shares recipes from the haute (lox chowder) to the humble (classic egg cream). There's also a glossary of fish that's as much social history as culinary reference who knew sturgeon once figured in a federal bribery investigation? Michael Kaminer, *New York Daily News* A charming tale of a Jewish immigrant family whose business grew from humble pushcart origins to the internationally known powerhouse it is today. [The book] bottles Federman's talent as a master schmoozer and offers a nibble at the

Russ Daughters experience for those who can't make it to New York's Lower East Side on a regular basis. *Gothamist* Federman is an engaging narrator, and his consideration of his grandfathers' rise in the world of herring is both honest and charming. . . . He traced his family history by visiting rabbis and aged aunts, talking with longtime customers, and calling on his memory of a childhood spent in the shop. Now that his daughter and nephew run the store, Federman has enough distance to talk about his years behind the counter and write this thoughtful history of both a family and a neighborhood. *The Brooklyn Rail* When I was a child, my father and I would often stop at Russ Daughters on Sundays, on our way to Brooklyn to visit cousins. It was there, in that friendly, wonderful store, that I learned the difference between nova and lox, poppy seed and plain, cream cheese and farmer cheese, sable and sturgeon. And now I am continuing the family tradition. Jude, my two-year-old granddaughter, just visited the store and started learning about the many types of herring, which she loves. I will start reading this book to her just as soon as she can enjoy a bagel with Baltic salmon and cream cheese. Martha Stewart The grandson of the founder of J. Russ Cut Rate Appetizing (the name changed to Russ Daughters in 1935) tells a remarkable story of family foresight and resiliency, and gives fascinating details of early life among the teeming streets of New York's Lower East Side in the first decades of the century. . . . Including precious pictures and recipes, this work offers a savory wealth of social history, told humorously and endearingly. Kirkus's The best thing in the world is to go to Russ Daughters. The next-best thing in the world is to read Russ Daughters. Oliver Sacks Forget the Empire State Building, the Statue of Liberty . . . New York City's greatest living institution is very likely Russ Daughters: a temple of uniquely New York deliciousness, Zen-like perfection, and a repository of

generations of wisdom and experience. Mark Russ Federmans book is a story not just about the food that made New York great, but a deeply felt personal history. When visiting a new city for the first time, Ive always asked the question: What do they do here better than anywhere else?When visiting New York City for the first time, the answer is always Russ Daughters. Anthony Bourdain