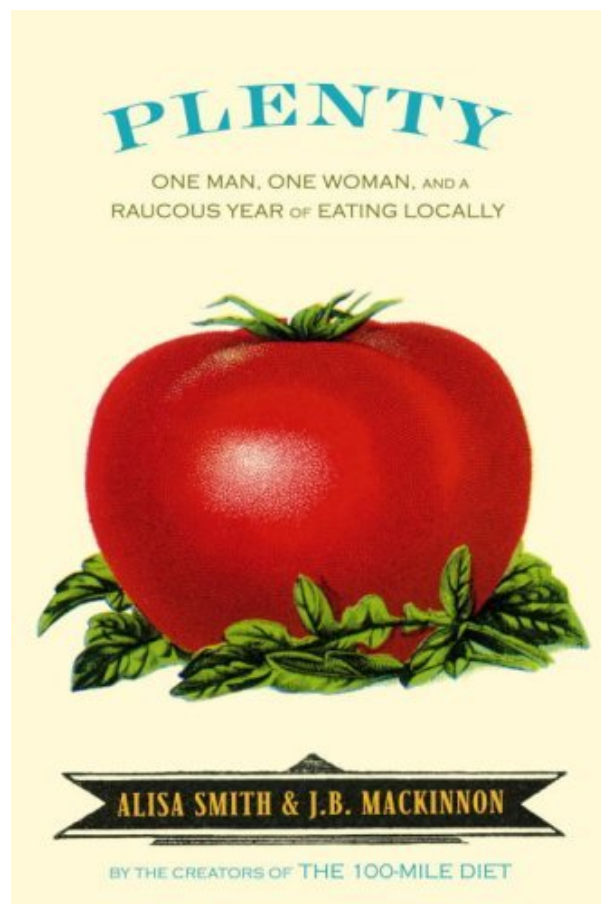


**PLENTY: ONE MAN, ONE WOMAN, AND A  
ROBUST YEAR OF EATING LOCALLY BY  
ALISA SMITH, J.B. MACKINNON**



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# PLENTY

ONE MAN, ONE WOMAN, AND A  
RAUCOUS YEAR OF EATING LOCALLY



ALISA SMITH & J.B. MACKINNON

BY THE CREATORS OF THE 100-MILE DIET

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Over a meal of fish, potatoes, and wild mushrooms foraged outside their cabin in British Columbia, the authors of this charmingly eccentric memoir decide to embark on a year of eating food grown within 100 miles of their Vancouver apartment. Thus begins an exploration of the foodways of the Pacific northwest, along which the authors, both professional writers, learn to can their own vegetables, grow their own herbs, search out local wheat silos and brew jars of blueberry jam. They also lose weight, bicker and down hefty quantities of white wine from local vineyards. Their engaging narrative is sprinkled with thought-provoking reportage, such as a UK study that shows the time people spend shopping the supermarket-driving, parking and wandering the aisles-is "nearly equal to that spent preparing food from scratch twenty years ago." Though their tone can wax preachy, the wisdom of their advice is obvious, and the deliciousness of their bounty is tantalizing-if local eating means a sandwich full of peppers, fried mushrooms, and "delectably oozing goat cheese," their efforts appear justified.

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# **PLENTY: ONE MAN, ONE WOMAN, AND A ROBUST YEAR OF EATING LOCALLY BY ALISA SMITH, J.B. MACKINNON PDF**

Like many great adventures, the 100-mile diet began with a memorable feast. Stranded in their off-the-grid summer cottage in the Canadian wilderness with unexpected guests, Alisa Smith and J.B. MacKinnon turned to the land around them. They caught a trout, picked mushrooms, and mulled apples from an abandoned orchard with rose hips in wine. The meal was truly satisfying; every ingredient had a story, a direct line they could trace from the soil to their forks. The experience raised a question: Was it possible to eat this way in their everyday lives?

Back in the city, they began to research the origins of the items that stocked the shelves of their local supermarket. They were shocked to discover that a typical ingredient in a North American meal travels roughly the distance between Boulder, Colorado, and New York City before it reaches the plate. Like so many people, Smith and MacKinnon were trying to live more lightly on the planet; meanwhile, their “SUV diet” was producing greenhouse gases and smog at an unparalleled rate. So they decided on an experiment: For one year they would eat only food produced within 100 miles of their Vancouver home.

It wouldn't be easy. Stepping outside the industrial food system, Smith and MacKinnon found themselves relying on World War II-era cookbooks and maverick farmers who refused to play by the rules of a global economy. What began as a struggle slowly transformed into one of the deepest pleasures of their lives. For the first time they felt connected to the people and the places that sustain them.

For Smith and MacKinnon, the 100-mile diet became a journey whose destination was, simply, home. From the satisfaction of pulling their own crop of garlic out of the earth to pitched battles over canning tomatoes, *Plenty* is about eating locally and thinking globally.

The authors' food-focused experiment questions globalization, monoculture, the oil economy, environmental collapse, and the tattering threads of community. Thought-provoking and inspiring, *Plenty* offers more than a way of eating. In the end, it's a new way of looking at the world.

From the Hardcover edition.

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40 of 44 people found the following review helpful.

Powerful

By A reader

With all due respect, I have to disagree with the accusation that the authors "finked out" when the winter months came. Yes, they did a lot of traveling, but when they returned home they found "an incredible surplus of good food". Why? Because they had relied on the same techniques that many of our ancestors relied on to get through the harsh winter months (before there were super Walmarts on every corner): they canned, froze/cold stored and dried when things were in season.

I hardly believe that the point of all this is to say "you must eat 100% within a 100 mile radius" or you have failed, but rather to just TRY. Search out your local producers (it takes a lot of leg work at first, but it's worth it), support your local economy. And, in doing so, you'll meet some incredible people who are not just dedicated to protecting the environment, but who are also very concerned about your health.

17 of 17 people found the following review helpful.

I loved this book

By J. Dunn

Eat Locally. The subject of this book has the potential to be incredibly preachy, fundamentalist, and dogmatic. Instead, it's down to earth, fun, and intelligent. The authors teamed up to write about their yearlong adventure from 2 points of view - his and hers - alternating author by chapter. I was afraid when I bought this book that it would end up being another well-intentioned half-read paperweight sitting on my bookshelf. I'm happy to report that I devoured it in just a few sittings. It even has recipes.

It's easy to feel helpless to take any meaningful action when faced with all that is going on. The grassroots effort to eat locally has the potential for effecting real change in our landscape, economy, and health. After reading this book, "Eat Local" is more than just a slogan - its something I intend to do, and just as importantly, its something I intend to have fun with.

30 of 33 people found the following review helpful.

Reading Plenty is like gardening plenty.

By Genee Murphy

Reading Plenty begins with whimsy. I enjoyed its early, leisurely pace. A seemingly perfect read. But, here's the thing: there's a passage that describes tomato picking in a late-season field that's littered with rotting fruit. Surprisingly, though, the sweetest finds are found among pounds of odd-shaped discards. That's how I felt about this gem. And that's why I kept reading.

The day-to-day descriptions of the authors' relationship with each other, their families and their relationships with the land are what hooked me. There's great writing in sincerity. The authors are honest. Reflective. And funny. Sadly, though, the best passages are buried in a lot of context that I suspect the editors thought were important and necessary ... like a magazine feature gone wrong.

Would I read the book again? No. Did I learn something. Yeah. Does it linger and would I recommend it? Absolutely.

See all 23 customer reviews...



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