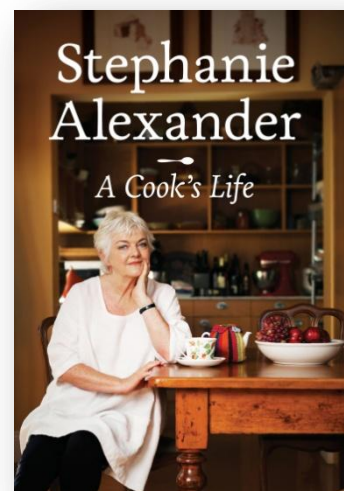


A Cook's Life

Author: Stephanie Alexander



Q & A with Stephanie Alexander, author of A Cook's Life

What is your new book about?

It is a memoir attempting to recall and record the major moments in my life and also to include my experiences of more than forty years in the world of food and restaurants.

What was the biggest challenge, writing it?

Memory is elusive and I had to chase down many dates with the help of friends to be sure that the chronology was correct.

Did you enjoy the research aspect of writing this book?

It was lightly researched deliberately, concentrating on how people and events affected me, or how I perceived them. I did rely on my own notebooks maintained over the last thirty years or so.

What do you hope for your book?

I hope it is thought-provoking and interesting for those in the food world, and that it allows anyone interested to understand where my present passions come from.

Did the title come instantly to you or did you labour over it?

The title seemed obvious.

To whom have you dedicated the book and why?

To my daughters who are the light of my life.

Who do you think will enjoy your book?

Hopefully a broad range of those intrigued by Melbourne's development as a 'food city'. Also the Melbourne I grew up in was a very different place to the city nowadays. And I think the stresses of restaurant life will be familiar to anyone working in the industry.

Do you have a special 'spot' for writing at home? (If so, describe it)

My desk looks onto the garden and the laden lemon tree and there is a climbing Gertrude Jekyll rose that frames my window. A lovely environment.

Do you like silence or music playing while you're writing?

Silence always.

When did you start writing?

When I was about twelve years old.

If you've had other jobs outside of writing, what were they?

So many – cleaner whilst a student, au pair in France, language assistant also in France, usherette in London, librarian in various places, restaurateur, founder and director not-for-profit foundation.

Describe yourself in three words?

Driven, loyal, energetic.