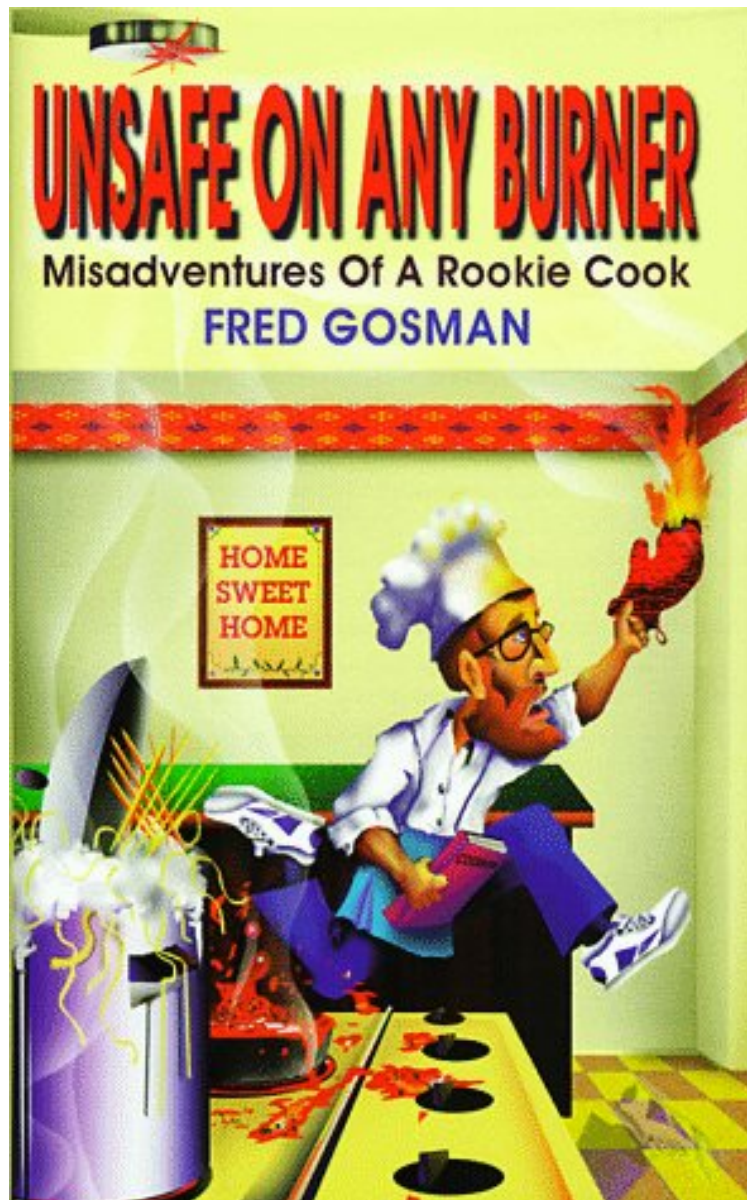


(Download pdf) Unsafe on Any Burner: Misadventures of a Rookie Cook

## Unsafe on Any Burner: Misadventures of a Rookie Cook

*Fred Gosman*

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**Fred Gosman : Unsafe on Any Burner: Misadventures of a Rookie Cook** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Unsafe on Any Burner: Misadventures of a Rookie Cook:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Reasonably amusing and informative, but vastly overpriced...By Lemon MagicThis is one of those books that is something of a "problem child" to rate. On one hand, the subject matter

(a newly divorced fellow coming to terms with his kitchen) has potential, as does the approach - first person with a light touch, with helpful recipes and kitchen hints for other newbie cooks. Unfortunately, "Unsafe On Any Burner" doesn't quite deliver. I don't mean to impugn the author's character - quite the contrary, I think I'd like him if I met him - but his sense of humor just can't carry this book. If you want humor in your cookbooks, you can find much better in Alton Brown, Peg Bracken (the "I Hate To Cook Book", which had me cackling hysterically 40 years ago), M.F.K. Fisher, Patrick F McManus ("Whatchagot Stew"), Ayun Halliday ("Dirty sugar Cookies") or Ann Hodgman ("One Bite Won't Kill You"). Compared to those cook/authors (especially Halliday, who mixes recipes with autobiographical anecdotes that will leave you in stitches), Gosman comes off as lacking any comedic edge. It's not that he is unfunny or unappealing; he just needed to punch up his writing style quite a bit if he wanted to center a cookbook around his misadventures in the kitchen and grocery store. By this, I mean that these anecdotes wouldn't be out of place in a Reader's Digest humor column like "Notes From All Over" or "Life In These United States". So they're OK, but you can't base a book around them without considerable dressing up. Similarly, as a cookbook, this doesn't come off either. There are recipes scattered throughout this slim volume, and some of them seem appealing, but there are hardly enough to justify the purchase. I count less than 30 here. That's fewer than you'd find in a typical two issue run of "Woman's Day" or "Real Simple" magazines, and far far less than a helpful beginner's volume like "Dad's Own Cookbook" or "Help! My Apartment Has A Kitchen In It!", both of which cost far less. And in the autobiographical memoir category, Halliday's "Dirty Sugar Cookies" has an equal number of recipes for little more than 1/2 the price...and as I said, the writing is much sharper, more mordant and funnier. Even with these weaknesses, I'd still rate "Unsafe..." higher if it hadn't been issued as a hardcover with a \$23 cover price. The publisher claims 200 pages, but this is a small digest sized book (with wide margins and a lot of large blank spaces) that happens to be in hardcover. Right next to it on the stands, I found copies of "Cooking Healthy For Two", "Cooking School Secrets For Real World Cooks", and "How To Peel A Peach"; all these volumes were vastly superior in instructional value, content and all had over 100 recipes...and all three were less than \$20. With that kind of competition for your 'newbie cook' dollar, I honestly can't rate it higher than 3 stars. Still, I am sure that some will find this slim volume as a very helpful entry into 'real world' cooking if they get this as a graduation or birthday gift from a sympathetic friend or relative. And if the book is ever issued in trade paperback at a price under \$12, I may get it just for amusement value. If Gosman ever does a follow up volume, I may well have a look at it on the stands and see if his cookbook writing skills have improved. I'm pulling for you, Fred...but your editor isn't doing you any favors letting material this bland and tame out with your name on it. Lock yourself in a room with the collected works of Erma Bombeck and learn how to sharpen your wit, and you might turn out something to be proud of.

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A tour d'force of writing! By A Customer This masterpiece can only be described as Dave Barry meets Emilio the Chef. Unsafe on Any Burner is filled with historical anticdotes, recipes, and cooking blunders for the beginning cook. Fred Gosman hits a homerun with this hard to put down classic. The humor, wisdom, and prose of this literary triumph would even impress the likes of Mark Twain (god rest his soul). My only complaint is the \$23 price tag. Please try to price the book for the likes of the common man. Kudos to Mr. Gosman for this gift to humanity.

Book by Gosman, Fred G.