



## Food in Art: from Prehistory to the Renaissance

By Gillian Riley



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From ancient Rome to early modern Europe, the relationship between humans and food has been portrayed in artworks for thousands of years. From farming, cooking and feasting scenes depicted in the Middle Ages in books of hours to the fish and fruit of ancient frescoes and mosaics, Food in Art gives fresh insights into how food items were cultivated, hunted, trapped, stored, traded, prepared and served throughout the ages.

In this richly illustrated book, leading food historian Gillian Riley demonstrates how works of art can provide us with detailed information about the preparation and preservation of food that is missing from the history books. Artists of all periods and in all places have portrayed the tools and environments of the gastronomic world – of the drying, salting or smoking of meat, fish or vegetables, for example – and the enjoyment of eating, from the simplest peasant meals to the grandest banquets. These works allow us, as twenty-first-century viewers, to appreciate the colours, imagine the smells and salivate over the recipes of the foods, kitchens and dishes of the past.

The book also explores the many links between food and myth, religion and legend in an array of artworks: is our perception of fruit in Christian art skewed by their symbolic meaning? Were the golden apples of the Hesperides indeed apples, or were they quinces or oranges? Covering everything from ancient wall paintings and medieval illuminated manuscripts to stained glass and funerary monuments, Food in Art explores these questions and many more in this aesthetically pleasing and highly readable volume.



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### Editorial Review

#### Review

“A joyful and sumptuously illustrated ramble through visual feasts from the Stone Age to Renaissance Italy.”

*(Times Literary Supplement)*

“*Food in Art* shows how paintings teach us about everyday life after other evidence has vanished. Roman frescos and mosaics provide useful information about the use of humble utensils such as strainers, pots, and skillets, which, previously, archaeologists and historians tended to dismiss as ‘possible rituals objects of uncertain use.’”

*(Country Life)*

“Filtered through Riley’s irreverent, witty, and ever-imaginative style, *Food in Art* is a guide through the sprawling past of art’s many interpretations of food, from the divine to the profound, and crucially the dark, humorous, and absurd. From the practicality of ancient Egyptian illustrated breadmaking techniques to the strange vanity of Roman mosaic floors designed to look covered in the remnants of a lavish banquet, mice and all, *Food in Art* calls for some self-reflection.”

*(Hackney Citizen)*

“This lavishly illustrated survey of art depicting food throughout history will surprise and delight readers, who will learn about edible animals, plants, and the culinary arts from unexpected sources such as Paleolithic cave paintings, Mesopotamian seals, Egyptian art, Pompeian frescoes, illuminated manuscripts, and Renaissance paintings.”

*(Choice)*

#### About the Author

**Gillian Riley** is a food writer and leading authority on the history of Italian cuisine. Her books include *The Fruit, Herbs and Vegetables of Italy* and the *Oxford Companion to Italian Food*. She lives in London.

### Users Review

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##### **Bobby Kile:**

A lot of people always spent their particular free time to vacation or even go to the outside with them household or their friend. Are you aware? Many a lot of people spent that they free time just watching TV, or playing video games all day long. If you need to try to find a new activity that is look different you can read some sort of book. It is really fun in your case. If you enjoy the book that you just read you can spent all day every day to reading a reserve. The book Food in Art: from Prehistory to the Renaissance it is rather good to read. There are a lot of those who recommended this book. They were enjoying reading this book. Should you did not have enough space to bring this book you can buy the actual e-book. You can m0ore quickly to read this book from a smart phone. The price is not very costly but this book offers high quality.

**Ena Clark:**

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