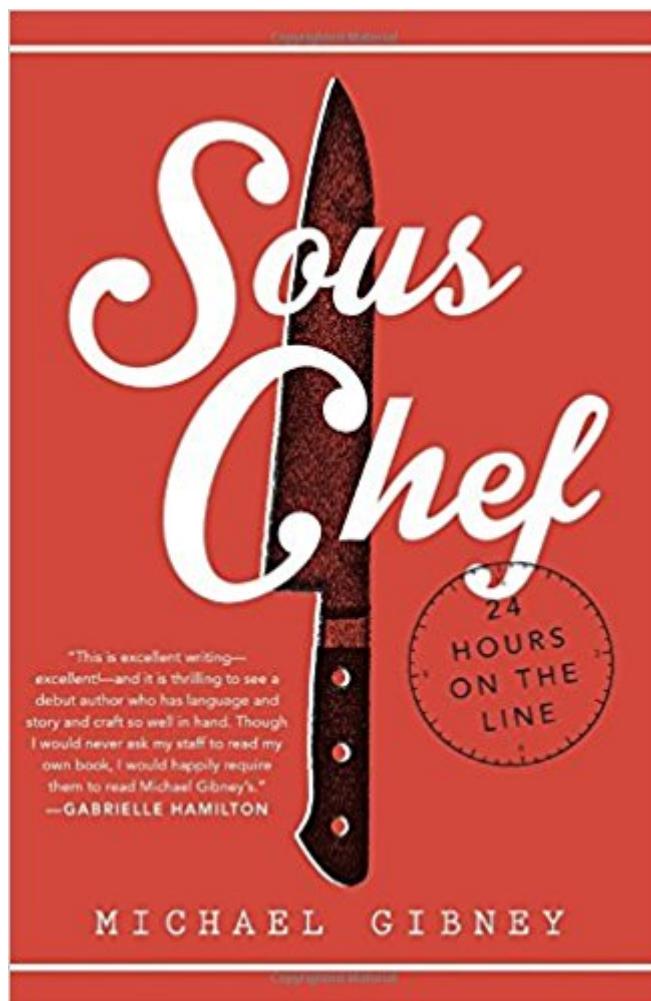


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# Sous Chef: 24 Hours On The Line



## Synopsis

NAMED ONE OF THE TEN BEST NONFICTION BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY TIME

The back must slave to feed the belly. . . . In this urgent and unique book, chef Michael Gibney uses twenty-four hours to animate the intricate camaraderie and culinary choreography in an upscale New York restaurant kitchen. Here readers will find all the details, in rapid-fire succession, of what it takes to deliver an exceptional plate of food—“the journey to excellence by way of exhaustion.”

Told in second-person narrative, *Sous Chef* is an immersive, adrenaline-fueled run that offers a fly-on-the-wall perspective on the food service industry, allowing readers to briefly inhabit the hidden world behind the kitchen doors, in real time. This exhilarating account provides regular diners and food enthusiasts alike a detailed insider’s perspective, while offering fledgling professional cooks an honest picture of what the future holds, ultimately giving voice to the hard work and dedication around which chefs have built their careers.

In a kitchen where the highest standards are upheld and one misstep can result in disaster, *Sous Chef* conjures a greater appreciation for the thought, care, and focus that go into creating memorable and delicious fare. With grit, wit, and remarkable prose, Michael Gibney renders a beautiful and raw account of this demanding and sometimes overlooked profession, offering a nuanced perspective on the craft and art of food and service.

Praise for *Sous Chef*

“This is excellent writing—excellent!—and it is thrilling to see a debut author who has language and story and craft so well in hand. Though I would never ask my staff to read my own book, I would happily require them to read Michael Gibney’s. Gabrielle Hamilton “[Michael] Gibney has the soul of a poet and the stamina of a stevedore. . . . Tender and profane, his book will leave you with a permanent appreciation for all those people who desire to feed, to nourish, to dish out the tasty bits of life.”

The New York Times Book Review “A terrific nuts-and-bolts account of the real business of cooking as told from the trenches. No nonsense. This is what it takes.”

Anthony Bourdain “A wild ride, not unlike a roller coaster, and the reader experiences all the drama, tension, exhilaration, exhaustion and relief that accompany cooking in an upscale Manhattan restaurant.”

USA Today “Vibrantly written.”

Entertainment Weekly “Sizzling . . . Such culinary experience paired with linguistic panache is a rarity.”

The Daily Beast “Reveals the high-adrenaline dance behind your dinner.”

NPR

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

An Best Book of the Month, April 2014: Reading Michael Gibney's *Sous Chef*--a debut that plays at the outer bounds of memoir--may be the closest most of us will ever come to living a day as the second-in-command at a Michelin-starred New York City restaurant. Written in the second person, it's intense and immediately devourable. *Sous Chef* has all the drama, disaster, and triumph people have come to expect from reality restaurant TV, but far more intimate and nuanced. On every page, Gibney turns out phrases to savor: this is kitchen writing on par with Gabrielle Hamilton's *Blood, Bones & Butter*. No one who's read Anthony Bourdain's *Kitchen Confidential* will be surprised by the more licentious elements, but the real thrills are those transcendent moments when every player is absorbed by their role, moving together to assemble a fantastic meal. In Gibney's hands, the anonymous act of preparing and serving great food to ravenous multitudes feels authentically noble, verging on heroic. --Mari Malcolm --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Trained both as a chef and a writer, Gibney leads readers on an excursion through the preparation and service of a single Friday night's dinner in an upscale Manhattan French restaurant. The day starts early for the kitchen staff, who inventory goods on hand; await the chef's decision on the evening's specials; make sure all the arrangements meet requirements for the appetizers, entrées, and desserts to be served; deal with the state of mind and body of the cooking staff; coordinate with the waiters; and ultimately get the proper dishes, properly prepared, to

the proper tables at the proper time. Such coordination of disparate activities is a restaurant's stock-in-trade, and Gibney documents how the system works and what can go wrong as the complex process moves along. Cooks don't always have mastery of English, some show up hungover or ill, and some may not show up at all. Culinary students can learn plenty here. --Mark Knoblauch --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Great book on what's its like to work a double shift as a cook, especially the after work part where he talks about going to the bodega to get a 40 and the clerk asks "no sandwich, no ice cream tonight?" Which is was pretty accurate of what a lot cooks crave after a 12+ hour shift of fancy food.

Well written, detailed look at the BOH. Better than anything you'll see on television...Gibney paints a clear picture of the sights, sounds and smells as he takes you through his day. All the ups and downs and thoughtful insights of an experienced sous chef in the kitchen and out. A wonderful look at the people as individuals and as a team, and the personalities of those who often amaze us with their talents and hard work.

Interesting story about the workings of a large French restaurant kitchen. Interesting but so many French words- made it impossible to hold a thread of the content together. The glossary was at the back of the book- as it normally is, but in this case it would have been so much easier for the reader to follow if it was at the front.

I enjoyed reading this account of a 24 hour period in a restaurant kitchen. It would have been easier to read if the technical terms were explained. I wish I could have touched the word and had a definition appear. I enjoy cooking, but wouldn't make it in a professional kitchen. The pace alone would kill it for me.

I really like TV cooking competition shows and it was very interesting to read this "behind the scenes" view of what happens in a real kitchen. I could never work in food services - that's brutal, hard, work; but I never knew how military the kitchen and levels of workers are. Thanks for all you folks do!

This book goes by very quickly--since it only covers 24 hrs on the line and the "chef" is busy for most of that time. You are caught up in the pace of the kitchen and his life. I enjoyed it, read it

quickly as an e-book, and was left about as wrung out as the narrator when the book is over. The various other kitchen people were personalized fairly well given the limited time covered. I know I would never have the discipline or strength or talent to execute performance on such a quality level--day in and day out. It is not inflated to say the effort and intensity highlighted in the arena of the restaurant's kitchen resembles a top-notch surgeon or maybe a fire house if you have read books in that vein. Eye-opening--- and makes you feel the difference in the last meal you ate at local restaurant and one of this level.

A good read for anyone who wants an inside look of the real day to day workings of a good restaurant and the people who toil behind the scenes. This is the first cooking book that puts you behind the grill. If you are thinking about becoming a chef or working in the food industry, this is a must read. Kudos for giving us a good picture of what it takes to create a fine dining experience. Thanks for introducing readers to the folks who toil behind the scenes to provide quality meals. Glad to have a better understanding of the passion it takes to be a true professional chef.

I've always wondered what it was like to work in a professional kitchen. Could I handle it? What is it really like? I love these behind the scenes types of books. This was a great look at the life of a sous chef, in NYC no less. I really enjoyed it.

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