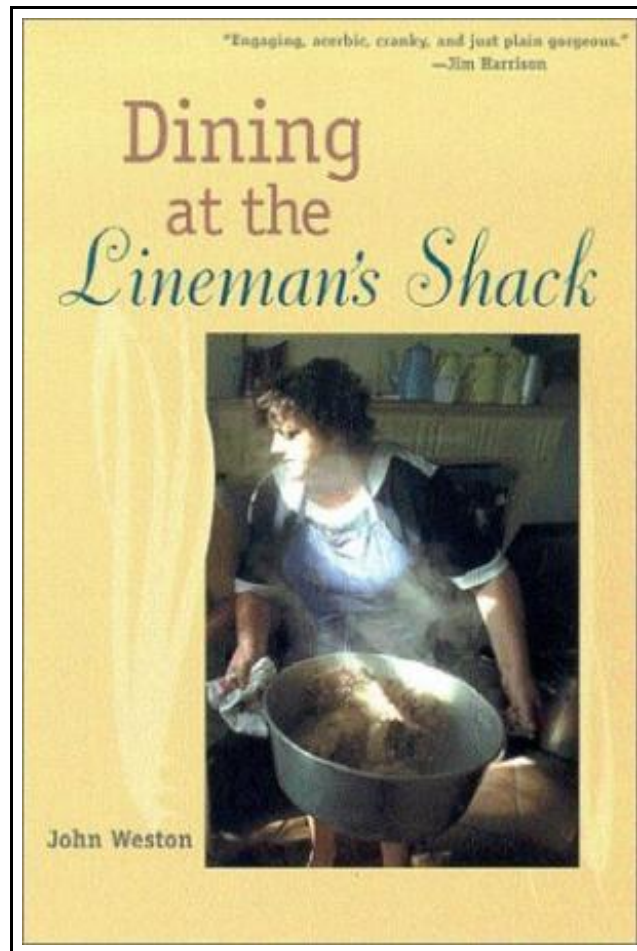


Dining at the Lineman's Shack



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University of Arizona Press. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Dining at the Lineman's Shack, John Weston, Mountain lion barbacoa. Margarita's yam souffle. Pastel de Choclo, a.k.a. Rodeo Pie. And for dessert, perhaps, Miss Ruby Cupcakes. These are but a few of the gustatory memories of John Weston that waft us on a poignant journey into the past in the company of a gifted writer and unabashed bon vivant. The place is Skull Valley in central Arizona, the time the 1930s. Taking food as his theme, Weston paints an instructive and often hilarious portrait of growing up, of rural family life under difficult circumstances, and of a remote Arizona community trying to hold body and soul together during tough times. His book recalls life in a lineman's shack, interlaced with "disquisitions on swamp life, rotting water, and the complex experience of finding enough to eat during the Great Depression." Central to Weston's account is his mother Eloine, a valiant woman rearing a large brood in poverty with little help from her husband. Eloine cooks remarkably well master of a small repertory from which she coaxes ideas surprising even to herself and feeds her family on next to nothing. She is a woman whose first instinct is to cry out "Lord, what am I going to feed them" whenever visitors show up close to mealtime. Recalls Weston, "Her strength lay in a practical- and poverty-born sense that there must be more edible food in the world than most people realized," and he swears that six out of seven meals were from parts of four or five previous meals coming round again, like the buckets on a ferris wheel. Although Weston evokes a fond remembrance of a bygone era that moves from Depression-era Skull Valley to wartime Prescott, rest assured: food its...

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