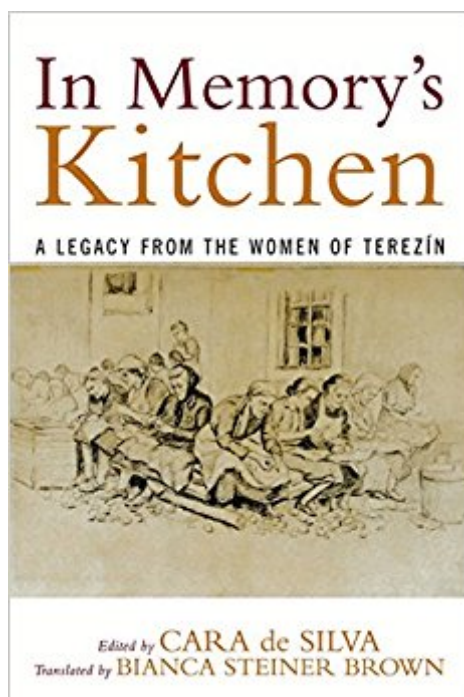


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In Memory's Kitchen: A Legacy From The Women Of Terezin



Synopsis

The sheets of paper are as brittle as fallen leaves; the faltering handwriting changes from page to page; the words, a faded brown, are almost indecipherable. The pages are filled with recipes. Each is a memory, a fantasy, a hope for the future. Written by undernourished and starving women in the Czechoslovakian ghetto/concentration camp of Terezín (also known as Theresienstadt), the recipes give instructions for making beloved dishes in the rich, robust Czech tradition. Sometimes steps or ingredients are missing, the gaps a painful illustration of the condition and situation in which the authors lived. Reprinting the contents of the original hand-sewn copybook, *In Memory's Kitchen: A Legacy from the Women of Terezín* is a beautiful memorial to the brave women who defied Hitler by preserving a part of their heritage and a part of themselves. Despite the harsh conditions in the Nazis' "model" ghetto - which in reality was a way station to Auschwitz and other death camps - cultural, intellectual, and artistic life did exist within the walls of the ghetto. Like the heart-breaking book *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*, which contains the poetry and drawings of the children of Terezín, the handwritten cookbook is proof that the Nazis could not break the spirit of the Jewish people.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The horrors of the camps in World War II are among the worst humanity has ever seen. It's hard to fathom just how little the people murdered by the Nazis seemed to matter -- visiting the New England Holocaust Memorial in Boston, with its towers of numbers etched in the glass and the creepy fog machines blowing over simulated cinders, proves that. But even then it's hard to focus

on the humanity involved -- six million Jews alone, and millions more gays, Romani, "lesser races", "defectives", and dissenters murdered at the same time. This book is a tiny spot of humanity in the masses of the dead, a memory of a few dedicated cooks who struggled to keep some kind of creativity going in a city that became the last stop before Auschwitz. I had wanted a copy since I first heard of it over a decade ago, and I stumbled across it in a Massachusetts bookstore notorious as a money vacuum for cookbook collectors. I had to grab it. Many of the recipes are in fragmented form; a cooking beginner would struggle with many of them, since they often assume intimate familiarity with a kitchen and style of cooking that most English-speaking readers have never seen. Many of the dishes (the original recipes written largely in broken, Czech-accented German, with a few in Czech) are what might be seen as party food, and more importantly a large number of them are desserts; Michael Berenbaum of the US Holocaust Museum, the writer of the foreword, points out that food was an obsession in the camps since the Nazis fed most of the inmates on starvation rations (if they bothered to feed them at all), and sweets are a human obsession even in the best of times.

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