

Joan M. Harper

In 2010 Joan's friend and cooking mentor, Adrienne Zausner, was diagnosed with Primary Progressive Aphasia or Pick's Disease – a form of dementia that destroys the frontal lobe of the brain which controls language and organizational tasks. As the disease progressed she watched helplessly as Adrienne's ability to cook and communicate deteriorated. In a race against time she gathered together Adrienne's recipes, food notes and diaries from 50 years of cooking, eating and travelling. As she did, it quickly became clear that there was much more here than a book of recipes – this was the history of a food revolution.

Beginning in 1960 Adrienne and her husband travelled to Europe three times a year on what they called a food odyssey, the goal of which was to find and eat the very best food. Her pursuit of great food - in restaurants and in her own home - led her to develop a wide network of chefs, restaurateurs, critics and writers. Adrienne's inner circle included Michelin three-starred chefs Gerard Boyer, Alain Chapel, Michel Guerard, Fredy Girardet, Jean and Pierre Troisgros (and later Michel), Roger Vergé and Pierre Wynants; restaurateur M. Vrinat of Taillevent, Paris; restaurant critic Craig Claiborne and food writer, critic and personal friend, Gael Greene. For more information, see [The chefs, the food and Adrienne](#).

Joan started travelling with Adrienne and her husband in 1990 and for the next 20 years was a regular companion on their food odysseys. Auberge du Noves, Eugenie les Bain, Maison Troisgros, Taillevent, Tetou and Girardet became regular haunts alongside discovering new restaurants and up and coming chefs.

She is a native of Tewksbury, Massachusetts and attended Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts. She moved to New York in 1979. She joined Arthur Schmidt & Associates, an investor relations/financial communications firm, in 1986, where Adrienne's husband was senior partner. She became partner in 1994 and Managing Director in 2000. Her role introducing clients to potential investors in the financial capitals of Europe and the UK enabled her to travel extensively.

When they weren't travelling, Joan and Adrienne were cooking, or talking about cooking, or growing food to cook. Almost every weekend beginning in 1995, when Joan moved to Port Washington, New York, they made dinner together at her house or theirs. During the week they would discuss ingredients and ideas, usually based on something they had eaten in a restaurant or read about in a book or magazine. Recreating restaurant food became an underlying theme of their cooking.

Joan currently lives in Gloucestershire, England with her husband. She has two children, David, 35, and Morgan, 30, and a granddaughter, Penelope, 1 year old.

Cooking with Adrienne is the first in a series of books based on Adrienne's life and the food that she and Joan spent many happy hours growing, cooking and consuming.

For more details go to www.cookingwithadrienne.com, [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).

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