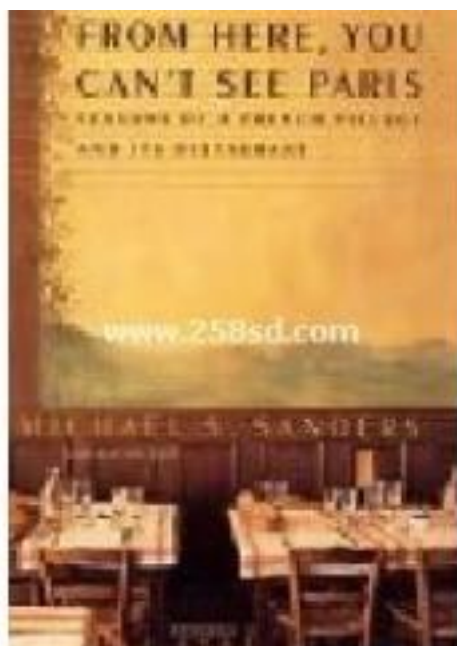


From Here, You Can't See Paris: Seasons of a French Village and Its Restaurant



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著者:

出版者:

出版时间:

装帧:

isbn:9780060184728

From Publishers Weekly With his wife and young daughter, Sanders spent a year in southwestern France, in the village of Les Arques, tracing the rhythm of rural life and the restaurant at the town's heart. As in his first book, *The Yard: Building a Destroyer at the Bath Iron Works* (which followed the construction of the USS Donald Cook at a shipyard struggling against modernization), Sanders explores a threatened way of life: before 1988 (the year citizens founded the Zadkine Museum), Les Arques struggled to barely survive. Inspired by Ossip Zadkine, the Russian sculptor who summered in the town until his death in 1967, the museum attracts resident students

and tourists year-round. Now, the local restaurant, La R‚cr‚ation, not only feeds the locals, it draws an international clientele. Chef Jacques Ratier and his wife, Noelle, established what is locally called La R‚cr‚ (French for "recess") in the town's abandoned schoolhouse in 1993 and this is Les Arques' sole business. Sanders affectionately observes the restaurant in action, from morning prep to full swing service. As he contemplates a bid for star status in the Michelin guide, Mr. Ratier personifies Les Arques' struggle to stay in the game. Sanders also investigates French country ways, devoting entire chapters to foie gras and truffles and explaining the history of a region where every house has a name and children grow up on four-course school lunches. He unveils a culture wholly at odds with fast-food America. The book's back matter offers advice for travelers, but Sanders's account is so lovely, and Les Arques so sensuous and ripe with magic, to visit seems vaguely sacrilegious. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. Book Description From Here, You Can't See Paris is a sweet, leisurely exploration of the life of Les Arques (population 159), a hilltop village in a remote corner of France, untouched by the modern era. It is a story of a dying village's struggle to survive, of a dead artist whose legacy began its rebirth, and of chef Jacques Ratier and his wife, Noëlle, whose bustling restaurant -- the village's sole business -- has helped ensure its future. The author set out to explore the inner workings of a French restaurant kitchen but ended up stumbling onto a wider, much richer world. Whether uncovering the darker secrets of making foie gras, hearing a chef confess his doubts about the Michelin star system, or absorbing the lore of the land around a farmhouse kitchen table after a boar hunt, Michael Sanders learned that life in Les Arques was anything but sleepy. Through the eyes of the author and his family, the reader enters this world, discovers its still-vibrant traditions of food, cooking, and rural living, and comes to know the village's history, sharing along the way an American family's adventures as they find their way in a place that is sometimes lonely, often wondrous, and always fascinating. See all Editorial Reviews

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