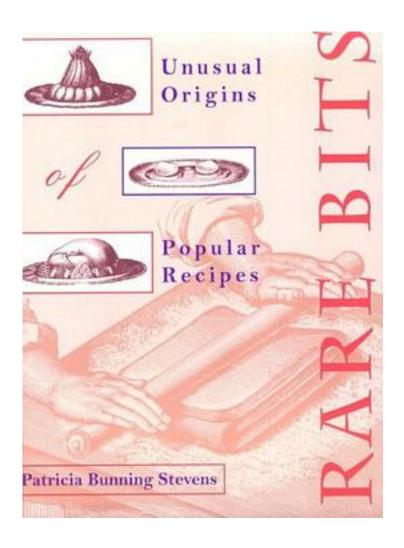
## Rare Bits



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In terms of geological time, good cooks are a young species. They've been evolving for a scant half a million years, since fire was first tamed and tended. Rare Bits is a

delightful and illuminating account of humankind's progression from skewering meat to whipping up a batch of Strawberries Sarah Bernhardt. The range is wide, from Bismarcks to Green Goddess dressing. Stevens provides much food for thought as she delves always deeper, brushing aside spurious anecdotes to find the truth. This is culinary history at its most appetizing. Stevens brings serious historical research to a neglected field, her lively prose underscoring the fact that cooking may be one of the most civilized and civilizing of human activities. Understanding the serendipitous, eccentric, or historic origins of famous recipes deepens appreciation for the loving gestures they represent. The beautiful cakes that mark the milestones of our lives, the Chicken Divan prepared by the smilling young couple, Mom's hearty Beef Stroganoff, and the Oysters Rockefeller consumed by candlelight are a precious legacy. Rare Bits indeed.

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