



# Life in a Northern Town: Cooking, Eating, and Other Adventures along Lake Superior

*Mary Dougherty*

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"Generations of men and women have stood on these beaches, listened to water rushing over these basalt rocks, and picked wild blueberries here well before I sailed into the Bayfield harbor. The families of those men and women are still here, tethered to a place where they can slip behind their ancestor's eyes and take in essentially the same view."

—from the Introduction

In 2007, Mary Dougherty and her family moved from St. Paul to the tiny Bayfield Peninsula, surrounded by the waters of Lake Superior and Chequamegon Bay in far northwestern Wisconsin. There they set out to live their lives against a backdrop of waterfalls, beaches, farm stands, and a quintessential small town of 487 people. Through recipes, stories, and photos, this book explores what it means to nourish a family and a community. As Mary Dougherty incorporates what is grown and raised in northern Wisconsin into her family's favorite dishes, she continues a cultural tradition begun by immigrants hundreds of years ago. The result is a one-of-a-kind collection of globally and regionally inspired recipes featuring local cheeses, meats, and produce from the farmers in and around Bayfield—pho made with beef bones from a farm in Mellen, Indian meatballs with curry powder made in Washburn, chowder with corn and potatoes from a farm stand in Ashland. As she knits herself into the Bayfield community, Dougherty comes to more fully grasp the intricate relationship between food and community.

## **Life in a Northern Town: Cooking, Eating, and Other Adventures along Lake Superior** Details

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## **From Reader Review Life in a Northern Town: Cooking, Eating, and Other Adventures along Lake Superior for online ebook**

### **Rachel says**

What a fun cookbook - they should all be so thought full! The details of place and people added such a richness to the ingredients and recipes. It made me feel like we all have so many good stories to share. I have a very best friend who lives in the same area as Mary and it warms my heart to know her kids are having many of the same unbounded adventures as the Dougherty children. What a lovely read - and I can't wait to try some recipes!

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### **Sheri says**

Fond memories and good food so often go hand in hand. Mary Dougherty shares her life in the small northern Wisconsin town of Bayfield through essays, recipes, and beautiful photography. She has a love for the region and her book reflects the spirit of the place and her authentic sense of home.

Her essays cover the quintessential activities of each season: turning sap into maple syrup, campfire dinners, preserving, pressing apples into cider, snow days. The recipes are "globally and regionally inspired" and showcase her interest in preparing and enjoying various cuisines.

My favorite reads were the essays in the winter season. Life along the shore of Lake Superior supplies many adventures, but none so unique as those that winter offers. Watch as the ferry plows through ice on the last ferry ride to Madeline Island, drive the ice road once the ice is thick enough, or hike out to view the ice caves along the shoreline. I hope to see the ice caves myself someday, but I don't know if I am brave enough to drive the ice road.

A splendid tribute to Bayfield and the Apostle Islands area with recipes to suit the season. Recommended to foodies with an adventurous spirit.

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### **Carole Knoles says**

What a lovely book! Cannot wait to try the recipes. I must say that they are a serious upgrade from my aunt's endless riffs on the party jello mold that I remember from my childhood. Thank you Wisconsin Historical Society Press.

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### **Josiphine/Tessa says**

Some of the recipes sound good but I didn't like the overall book.

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## Joshua Carney says

My first time ever reading a cook book.

I suppose evaluating a book like this is a different endeavor.

As for the recipes, I'm sure they are good. The reading process requires that you participate in the cooking which i did with the shrimp boil. It was delicious. The book has variety. Everything from curry to dog treats.

As for the writing, I'll start with the two things I found wanting. Some of the brief intros to the actual recipes, seemed a little throw away to me. Almost as if the author had decided to include the recipe because she liked it, and then conjured an intro to make sense of her including it.

the other limitation for me was the repeated references to ingredients that I obviously won't have access to. Sassy Nanny Goat Cheese, would be chief among them. I loved reading about the goat cheese the first time, but could have done with just goat cheese after that.

I was hoping more of the recipes would be about locally sourced food and there is some of that, but often the recipes are taken from all over the world. I suppose that is American heritage and food.

I did love the anecdotes and the ways that Dougherty explores Lake Superior life. I also really enjoyed her artistic choices, by that I mean the photography, storytelling and the authors she chose to include such as Wendell Berry and Terry Tempest Williams. All of that stuff really compliments the ethos of the book.

i'm glad I read it and I look forward to trying more recipes.

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## Kalico says

The pictures are stunning! This is one of those cookbooks you can read like a story book, wrapped in a cozy blanket with a hot drink in your hand. Being from Michigan, I also appreciated the many similarities to my own life. Gorgeous, gorgeous book.

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## Kate Cronin says

If there was ever a book that could convince this snow and winter hating lady to move to northern WI, specifically Bayfield, this is it. Dougherty makes northern life sound particularly idyllic. The recipes she includes are varied and interesting, but I'm not buying that they can be made by anyone in northern WI who doesn't have access to a larger market like the twin cities or at the very least the internet. Beautiful photography also accompany the recipes and stories and this book would make a great gift as it's more than just a cookbook but a treatise on simple living and enjoying the natural world.

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## Kelly says

I didn't cook any of the recipes but the accompanying short stories offer a glimpse into the author's life near

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the Apostle Islands in northern Wisconsin and her slow transformation into an environmentalist and local foods champion.

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### **Hillary says**

I got this book as a Christmas gift and really enjoyed it. It has recipes mixed in with sweet stories from the author about living in northern Wisconsin on Lake Superior with her five kids. I never thought I'd want to live in northern Wisconsin, but she makes it seem so idyllic. Loved her thoughts about how important it is to eat locally sourced food when possible.

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### **Lynne says**

About half the recipes are definitely NOT what I would expect from a cookbook extolling the virtues of "Up North" Wisconsin...lots of jalapeño, Thai spices, Mexican....

It's extremely hard to read because the print (except for recipes) is white/off-white on a fairly dark colored background with small font size. I had to quit.

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### **Melinda says**

Visually, this is a stunning book. Part cookbook, part memoir, it brings to life the tiny town of Bayfield, Wisconsin in a way that will warm the readers heart. The recipes are lovely, centered around seasonal and local fare, but for me beyond practical reach. My life at the moment (mother of two elementary school-aged children with my own legal practice) calls for simple meals, and these recipes are anything but simple. If you have time to spend hours in the kitchen, dive in!

Another reason for the lower star rating is that this book posed an unanswered question that bothered me throughout my reading and lingers after. How does a family go from a 1-week boating vacation to Bayfield (traveling from the Twin Cities), to staying the summer, to moving into a house on Rittenhouse Avenue. There is a back story, and I'd like to know what it is. What did they walk away from in Minnesota? How did they just walk away; did they maintain routine sojourns to their former hometown? What kind of work did they do, and did they continue it in Bayfield? A home on that street and the lifestyle described in the book is anything but inexpensive, and for someone who has harbored a desire to move to Bayfield for close to a decade cannot help but ask -- HOW?

Oddly, it was my fascination with Bayfield that led me to read this book. I can tell when life is too hectic because I start dreaming about living in Bayfield. And it is beyond chaos when I find myself looking at real estate listings for this tiny town. Yet, Dougherty's description of skiing, driving the "ice road", and trekking to the ice caves, all atop a frozen Lake Superior ignited a deep fear I have of venturing out on that frozen lake. Her book made me realize that if I lived there, I'd be far too fearful to get out there and enjoy the frozen landscape in a manner proper to a Bayfield resident. As I finished the book my dream of living in that northern town faded, just a bit.

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