

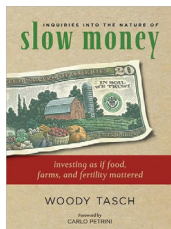
farmers in his search for wisdom. Unlike most of his peers, he wrote for the common man as well as for the elite classes, using unpretentious language that nearly anyone could understand. His book on the plants of Japan classified more than 1,500 species, while his book on the topography of Chikuzen Province (now part of Fukuoka Prefecture) is still studied today.

Warning against the dangers of excess, Ekiken preached balance in all things: eating, drinking, work, rest, and even sexual relations. His approach was preventative, believing that herbal medicine, acupuncture, *moxa* (heat) treatments, and hot springs, all common remedies of the day, should be considered treatments of last resort. In a society where his compatriots were focused on honor in death, Ekiken boldly declared the body a “treasured gift from Heaven and Earth,” stating that “to damage or destroy it thoughtlessly is the highest ingratitude.” By balancing one’s mental, physical and spiritual health Ekiken believed that most people could live happily and healthily for a hundred years.

Practicing what he preached, Ekiken lived to be eighty-four at a time when the average person rarely lasted more than sixty-two years. The book holistically covers everything from healthy eating and drinking to sleeping, bathing, preparing tea, choosing a good doctor, using medicine, sustaining old age, and raising children. Much of Ekiken’s advice is as relevant today as it was when first written nearly 300 years ago. Good advice is timeless.

This particular translation omits certain details of the original work that cover treatments best left to professionals such as recipes for medicinal herbal remedies. The only odd thing about the books is the translator’s use of the Chinese word *ch’i* rather than the Japanese *ki* when referring to the flow of life energy. Perhaps this is because Ekiken’s work frequently referred to *The Yellow Emperor’s Classic on Medicine*, the definitive medical text of the ancient world that came to Japan via China. Nevertheless, *Yojokun* is a fascinating and surprisingly relevant read. (January) *Lawrence Kane*

BUSINESS & ECONOMICS



Inquiries into the Nature of Slow Money: Investing as if Food, Farms, and Fertility Mattered

Woody Tasch
Chelsea Green Publishing
Hardcover \$21.95 (232pp)
978-1-60358-006-9

Put your money where your mouth is. Woody Tasch urges us to take a look at this old adage in new light, or rather, in old light—like daylight or starlight instead of the glow of a television screen. Tasch, the chairman of Investor’s Circle, a non-profit organization which supports sustain-

able enterprises, isn’t necessarily against making money. But he wants people to think before they spend, whether they are buying a hamburger or investing in a mutual fund.

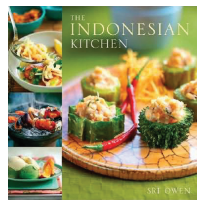
In a series of provocative essays that makes up *Inquiries Into the Nature of Slow Money*, Tasch draws on the values of the slow food movement which encourages producing food with the environment in mind by focusing on organic systems and fostering a connection between the people who grow food and the people who consume it.

When investors direct their money toward companies that do more harm than good to the environment, the world suffers for it. “If we cannot grow food in a way that leaves the soil as fertile or more fertile than we found it...what does this say about the health of our society... or about the prospect for future generations?” he writes.

Practicing the art of slow money would mean investing in companies like High Moving Seeds, an organic seed company, or Butterworks Farm, an organic yogurt brand which took “approximately twenty-five years to reach \$1 million in sales.” Investors who choose the route of slow money would watch their portfolio grow over years as opposed to months.

In his foreword, Tasch admits that his writing does not follow a clear-cut path of reason and proof. But the rambling, associative nature of his chapters adds to an overall organic, inspired impression. At times his paragraphs are objective and fairly formal in tone; at other times his frame of reference includes his own patch of earth, his independent way of life, and he makes no apologies for acting as his own example. And he shouldn’t; his arguments are strongest when he ponders his unique space in the world.

Slow Money has come at a serendipitous time as the globe teeters on the edge of great economic change; when the dust settles, we may be looking at a very different economic world. With the help of thinkers like Tasch, perhaps our money will lead us toward a new era where everyone has enough to eat and the soil is eager and able to produce more. *Andi Diehm*



The Indonesian Kitchen: Recipes and Stories

Sri Owen
Interlink Books
Hardcover
\$35.00 (288pp)
978-1-56656-739-8

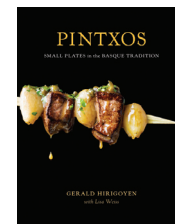
Not yet an Asian Tiger in the mold of Thai or Vietnamese cooking, Indonesia is rich with indigenous, island-food sensibilities complemented by Chinese, Portuguese, Dutch, British, and Spanish influences. Over the past 500 years, European spice traders looked to the islands of Bali, Java, Sumatra, and hundreds of others as their honey

pot to prosperity. Fortunes were made, pirates did their mischief, many lives were lost, and in the end, Indonesia deserves credit for contributing to a fascinating clash of culinary conventions between Europe and the East.

Do you think ingredients like coconut, chilies, citrus, mangoes, peanut sauces, and any number of marinades and curries were well received in the dank kitchens of fifteenth-century London, Amsterdam, and Lisbon? “No coconut ice cream for me, mum. May I have another serving of boiled tripe, please?”

This latest book from Sri Owen, one of the “grandes dames” of England’s culinary awakening along with Elizabeth David, Jane Grigson, and Claudia Roden, may just earn the attention needed to lift Indonesian cooking into warm stove-light of universal acceptance. She has collected 120 recipes including dishes from her grandmother’s kitchen through to the street food of her college years, and onward. Of great interest is her embrace of regional Indonesian cooking including, for example, Javeneze *sambel* (curry-type sauces), *rendang* (beef or buffalo preserved in spiced coconut milk) from west Sumatra, *ikan pismol* (Jakarta-style fried fish), and a traditional Bali recipe of slow-cooked duck named *bebek betutu*.

Born in Sumatra, Owen has lived in London since 1964, although travel, especially in Italy, is an indispensable part of her life. She writes, “An Indonesian food lover who has chosen permanent exile: is that how I think of myself? Perhaps I have become a bit of a missionary. My mission is to show my readers the real goodness of Indonesian food—and my dream is to convince my countrymen and women of its excellence and make them proud of it.” Her many cookbooks include *The Home Book of Indonesian Cookery* (1976), *The Rice Book*, *New Wave Asian*, and *Indonesian Regional Food and Cookery*. *Matt Sutherland*



Pintxos: Small Plates in the Basque Tradition

Gerald Hirigoyen, with Lisa Weiss
Ten Speed Press
Hardcover \$24.95 (224pp)
978-1-58008-922-7

Spain is such a large, diverse, historic, and passionate country, no one should question why it continues to captivate the culinary world’s imagination. Sandwiched between two bountiful seas, rippled with mountains, plains, and rivers drenched in ample amounts of life-giving sunlight, she is a splendidly talented landmass ideal for food production. Furthermore, her African, Middle Eastern, and European heritage assures a mixing pot of culinary influences resulting in homegrown chefs conversant in the broadest palate of skills.

Yes, we’ve seen our share of Spanish / tapas cookbooks over the past few years and