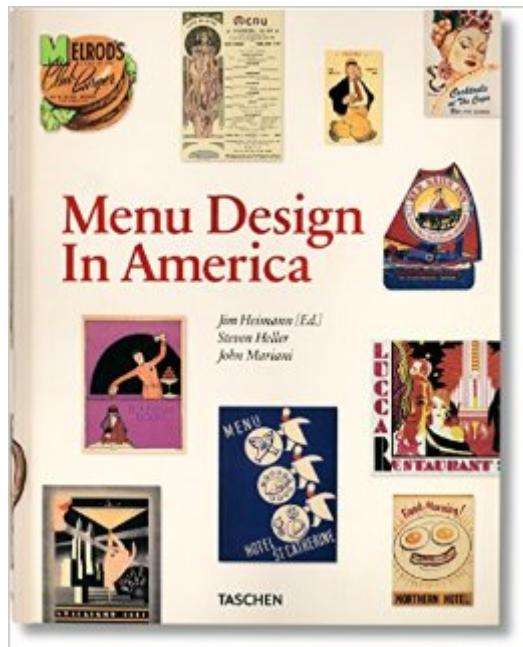


The book was found

Menu Design In America, 1850-1985



Synopsis

À la carte Â Appetite for art: over one hundred years of menu graphics Â Until restaurants became commonplace in the late 1800s, printed menus forÂ meals were rare commodities reserved for special occasions. Â As restaurantsÂ proliferated, the menu became more than just a culinary listing. The designÂ of the menu became an integral part of eating out and as such menus became aÂ marketing tool and a favored keepsake. Menu Design is an omnibusÂ showcasing the best examples of this graphic art. With nearly 800 examples, illustrated in vibrant color, this deluxe volume not onlyÂ showcases this extraordinary collection of paper ephemera but serves as aÂ history of restaurants and dining out in America. InÂ addition to the menu covers, many menu interiors are featured providing aÂ epicurean tour and insight to more than a hundred years of dining out. An introduction on the history of menu design by graphic design writer Steven Heller and extended captions by culinary historian John Mariani accompany the menus throughout the book. Various photographs of restaurants round out this compendium that will appeal toÂ anyone who enjoys dining out and its graphic and gastronomicÂ history. Nearly 800 stunning examples of menu design Covers more than a century of exquisite vintage design Text in English, French, and German

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I hope no other publisher is thinking of doing a book on menu design because Jim Heimann's wonderful collection in this Taschen title can't be beat. With almost eight hundred covers and nicely,

many showing the insides so you can see what was available when your folks ate out decades ago. It's the inside meal listings that I found intriguing: the Palmer House in Chicago, on May 17, 1885, offered Fried frogs, a la Crapotine; when the Iowa Register and Tribune papers had their banquet in 1917 they could tuck into Dross smothered in onions; United States Lines SS America on Monday June 9, 1930 listed a dessert called Blanc mange; the Sea Cave in Oakland, California, had thirty-three oyster dishes and claimed 'We open our oysters daily'. Little snippets of information pop up everywhere. The 1943 San Diego Red Sails Inn menu said 'We are closed on Tuesdays', because of wartime regulations required meatless Tuesdays. The Disney Studio in 1942 had very low prices for breakfast, in the staff canteen, to prevent their workers going of the lot. Many of the menus before 1940 have daily dates printed on them, presumably they were frowned away when the places closed at night. All the up-market menus used a mixture of French and English though the swanky New York Colony in 1954 had every thing in French and handwritten, too. The menus included aren't just restaurants but from anywhere that provided cooked food, the Colony to Bob's Big Boy and everything in between, no early McDonalds though. The covers come in all sorts of sizes and shapes, a few shown include location maps and I found one that featured photographs of the meals. The book is the usual well designed Taschen format. Good page layouts and printing with a 150 screen.

Students of graphic design, fans of Americana, and anyone appreciative of cultural history will find this tome invaluable. An outstanding reference covering the period from the mid-1850s thru the early 1980s - a full century of changing tastes, technical advancements, and even social maturation; revealing our love of and history with dining out. The coverage is surprisingly deep, with menus representing the most elite haute cuisine to what we now call the 'Three Ds' - diners, drive-ins and dives; providing a fascinating look into the past, glimpsing concepts and ideas about the meals and beverages that were offered from culinary trained chefs to roadhouse slingers. As usual, some of the most compelling aspects for me personally was discovering food options that are no longer mainstream. A couple of examples: Having to look up the term "Shirred Eggs", which made regular appearances during the early part of the twentieth-century. And "Tongue Sandwich", a common working person's lunch and breakfast item of the period which is, in my opinion, self explanatory as to its current exclusion from menus today. My only criticism would be that, while I absolutely loved the massive full-color images, there was something to be said about the lack of editorial content. Simply: There just wasn't enough of it. Primarily due to the fact that space for the written word was gobbled up by the application of three different languages for each comment, wiping out the

potential for additional insight. Unfortunate, as I would've loved more background - both factual and anecdotal - for many of the menus on display.

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