

Hungry For Words

An Intensive Weekend on Food Writing

November 5th-7th 2010 * Captain Whidbey Inn



Led by Kathleen Flinn

Best-selling author, *The Sharper Your Knife, the Less You Cry*

Chair, Food Writers, Editors & Publishers section of
the International Association of Culinary Professionals ([IACP](#))

Forget sex, food sells. In this weekend workshop, learn about the different genres and issues in modern-day food writing from developing ideas for print or blog posts to assembling non-fiction book proposals to the complexities of recipe writing. Writing exercises will be incorporated into the weekend, each designed to teach a particular skill to awaken and challenge yourself as a writer. Participants will leave the weekend armed with a greater understanding of the history and rigors of food writing, plenty of handouts and if still hungry, a deep of further reading.

For the first time, the weekend will be held as a relaxed retreat at the historic [Captain Whidbey Inn](#) located in Coupeville, Whidbey Island, perched on the edge of beautiful Penn Cove.

This class is designed for armchair restaurant reviewers, bloggers, aspiring food writers or even seasoned culinary professionals who want to take a moment to step back and reconsider the way they approach their craft. Advance reading assignments will be emailed to all participants, and we'll discuss the reading both during class and also in post-dinner conversations over coffee or wine at the Inn's wood-paneled tavern.

You'll have access to a temporary library of more than 200 food writing books that span the history of food writing, from an original 1906 collection of Le Cordon Bleu to scores of contemporary food books in all genres. Note: The outline below is a guideline; the exact agenda is subject to change.

Cost is \$345 per person, not including lodging

The fee includes most meals, plenty of wine, plus a hefty workbook.

Guests of the Inn will receive a 15% discount on room rental
To keep an intimate feel, the retreat **is limited to 15 participants**
The weekend kicks off at 4 p.m. Friday and closes at 4 p.m. Sunday..

info@kathleenflinn.com

Friday

Welcome, introductions and first writing exercise (4 p.m. to 5 p.m.)

Food Writing in Perspective

Let's start with a historical overview of food writing and introduction to well-known food writers, including MFK Fisher, James Beard, Elizabeth David, Julia Child, AA Gill, Ruth Reichl and others and what makes their writing endure. (5 p.m. to 7 p.m., with a 15-minute break)

Buffet dinner, The Ice House

The Shifting Landscape

After dinner, we'll continue discussion about the various forms that food writing can take - cookbooks, memoir, blogs, newspaper and magazine articles plus a discussion of assigned reading. The evening will end looking at the world of food writing beyond traditional, print cookbooks – and how the market continues to change in the face of digital and self-publishing. (7:30 to 9:15 p.m.)

Saturday

Morning writing exercises (9 a.m. to 9:45.)

The Curious Complexities of Recipe Writing

We'll look at the recipe from every angle, from development to standards to recipes to writing them to copyright and more. Over our meal, we'll break into the original, raw files from *Sharper Your Knife* to show how some recipes evolved as a case study. (10 a.m. to noon)

Lunch, The Ice House

Lower Tech: Ideas, Pitches and Book Proposals

We'll discuss the elements of book proposals, traditional networking and query letters, and delve into strategies for developing and defining creative story/book ideas, and what it takes to break into writing for publications or pitching a book or to expand your existing writing career even further. (12:45 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.)

Afternoon writing exercises (3:30 to 4:15 p.m.)

Higher Tech: Blogs, The Big Sites and Social Media,

We'll discuss the art and challenges of food blogs, taking apart a couple as case studies. We'll also touch on social media, major food sites and how to utilize both for promotion or traffic. (4:30 to 6:45 p.m., with late-afternoon wine and appetizers)

Dinner at the Ship of Fools (7:30 p.m.)

Post dinner discussion in the tavern (optional)

Sunday

Morning writing exercises (9:00 to 9:45 a.m.)

I Know What You Ate For Dinner Last Summer

We'll cover the basics of reviewing process, not only in the context of restaurant criticism but also in the context of describing meals in blog posts, travel stories and beyond. We'll look at a smattering of reviews from the U.S. and the United Kingdom (where restaurant reviewing is a blood sport), and talk about what makes a review or meal description effective, and discuss ethics and murky economics surrounding the subject. (10 a.m. to noon)

Lunch in Coupeville - Bring some money for lunch along with pen and paper for taking notes for reviews. We will arrange carpools into town. Guests departing Sunday should checkout before lunch. (Noon to 2 p.m.)

Afternoon writing exercise (2 p.m. to 3 p.m.)

Conclusion & Final Q&A

We'll talk about practical information about the world of food writers, including what conferences are worth attending and organizations are worth joining. We'll end the afternoon with a final discussion session on anything covered over the weekend. The retreat officially ends at 4 p.m., but those interested in staying at welcome to join me in the tavern for continued conversation.

To register: Contact info@kathleenflinn.com

Previous attendees comments:

"Kathleen is a naturally gifted teacher, remarkably generous in her knowledge about writing, especially food writing. I found the class an inspiration. I flew from New York to take this class and was not disappointed." – Constance W., New York

"I loved the stacks of food writing books! Kathleen's passion is infectious, and her depth of knowledge on this subject is impressive. I learned an extraordinary amount in two days. I'm so glad that I took this class. It was a great weekend." – Nancy, Bellevue, Wa. (Note: She recently sold a book on her experience cycling and eating through France.)

This is the best writing class that I've ever taken. Kathleen is a generous, warm and funny guide through the world of food writing, and a wonderful and inspiring teacher. She shared an enormous wealth of information over the weekend. I left completely exhilarated by the experience. The folder she has developed to go with the class – filled with stories, writing examples, tips, how-to, examples and a wealth of reading and writing exercises -- is a goldmine. – Andrea, Chicago,

I learned more in one weekend than it would have taken me years to figure out on my own. If you're even *thinking* of taking this class with her at all, I say "just do it!" You will not regret it. A year later, and I still think about things she told us in class and refer to her teaching materials. – Shannon, Sacramento, Calif.