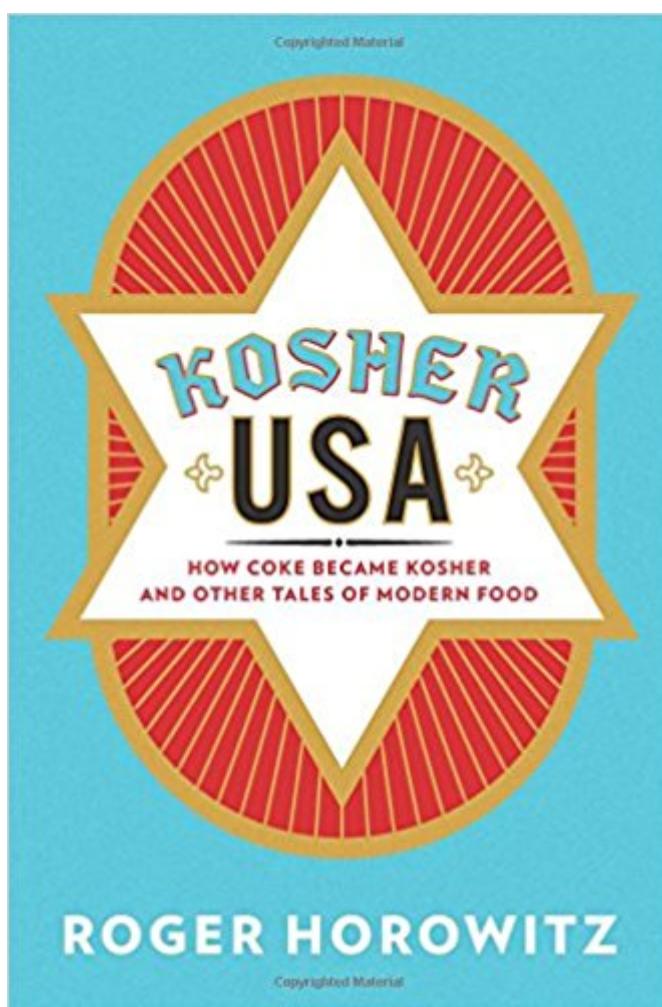


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# **Kosher USA: How Coke Became Kosher And Other Tales Of Modern Food (Arts And Traditions Of The Table: Perspectives On Culinary History)**





## Synopsis

Kosher USA follows the fascinating journey of kosher food through the modern industrial food system. It recounts how iconic products such as Coca-Cola and Jell-O tried to become kosher; the contentious debates among rabbis over the incorporation of modern science into Jewish law; how Manischewitz wine became the first kosher product to win over non-Jewish consumers (principally African Americans); the techniques used by Orthodox rabbinical organizations to embed kosher requirements into food manufacturing; and the difficulties encountered by kosher meat and other kosher foods that fell outside the American culinary consensus. Kosher USA is filled with big personalities, rare archival finds, and surprising influences: the Atlanta rabbi Tobias Geffen, who made Coke kosher; the lay chemist and kosher-certification pioneer Abraham Goldstein; the kosher-meat magnate Harry Kassel; and the animal-rights advocate Temple Grandin, a strong supporter of shechita, or Jewish slaughtering practice. By exploring the complex encounter between ancient religious principles and modern industrial methods, Kosher USA adds a significant chapter to the story of Judaism's interaction with non-Jewish cultures and the history of modern Jewish American life as well as American foodways.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

You don't have to be Jewish to love Roger Horowitz's Kosher USA! It is three-stories in one: a family narrative within a history of kosher within the industrialization of the American food system. Well researched, insightful, and delightful--even for goyim. (Andrew Smith, editor in chief, Savoring

Gotham: A Food Lover's Companion to New York City) Roger Horowitz's *Kosher USA* is a window into the world of the Jewish dietary laws and the conflict between being American and being kosher. The fascinating narrative tells the story of sturgeon, Coca Cola and Jello, as well as the intricate process of koshering meat in the modern world with the pivotal role of Temple Grandin and the large meat processors. An informative read for those who know and those who know nothing about kosher food's place in the American food system. (Joan Nathan, author of *Jewish Cooking in America*) *Kosher USA* introduces us to a remarkable cast of characters: the rabbis, scientists, home cooks, food companies and activists who spent decades wrestling with the term "kosher" in a passionate effort to tame it. Based on a rich array of sources, written with warmth and insight, this is an exhilarating study of how an ancient religious scruple became a modern American empire.

(Laura Shapiro, author of *Perfection Salad: Women and Cooking at the Turn of the Century*) Set in the context of Jewish ascendancy into the middle class, *Kosher U.S.A.* traces the way in which changes in modes of production and the lure of consumption battered, challenged, and sustained an ancient Jewish practice. Horowitz tells a very readable story about the convergence of technology, science, religion, animal-rights activism, and ordinary Jewish consumers. There is no other book like it. (Hasia Diner, director, Goldstein-Goren Center for American Jewish History, New York University) A thoughtful look at the convergence of faith, ethnicity, and the business of food.

(Kirkus Reviews) An informative and endlessly fascinating account of how Jewish law, modern food production, government regulation, business acumen, and religious politics have shaped the American kosher food industry. Roger Horowitz understands that arcane arguments over glycerin, rennet and gelatin, and improbable tales concerning Coke, Kedem, Rubashkin and Manischewitz form part of a larger and more important story. You don't have to be Jewish to appreciate his accomplishment! (Jonathan D. Sarna, Author of *American Judaism: A History*) Engrossing...

Horowitz provides a fascinating window into a rarefied world. (Publisher's Weekly) I have... fun reading Horowitz's book.... Halfway through Horowitz's book, I get nostalgic. (Globe and Mail) In a work that is equal parts history, memoir, and cultural analysis, Horowitz traces the dramatic rise of kosher food products, specifically how they made their way into American food culture and were later popularized in the mass market of consumer products. (Library Journal (starred review)) The ever-changing and expanding kosher world makes this book quite timely and significant, as it traces the overlap interaction of religion and science. (Roberta Scher The Jewish Georgian) *Kosher USA* is the single best book that I have ever read on the American kosher industry. It will entertain and educate both general readers and serious scholars. (H-Judaic) Fascinating. (Western States Jewish History) As good food often does, Horowitz's book leaves the reader deeply

satisfied— but hoping for a few more morsels. (American Historical Review) The history of the kosher food industry is thus quite skillfully told by Horowitz. (American Jewish History)

Roger Horowitz is a food historian and director of the Center for the History of Business, Technology, and Society at the Hagley Museum and Library. He is the author of *Negro and White, Unite and Fight: A Social History of Industrial Unionism in Meatpacking, 1930–1990* (1997) and *Putting Meat on the American Table: Taste, Technology, Transformation* (2005).

As someone with a decided interest in food and a certain fondness for my similar familial roots, this was a great read. Horowitz blends his own family's experiences and excellent history into a great narrative about the history of American industrialized food. Even though the narrative slowed in places, I cannot recommend this highly enough to anyone with an interest in Jewish history, kashrus, or modern food production.

Interesting book about the development of kosher food and wine in the USA. Well-written; I learned much from it and cited it in my articles about Kosher Wine about Kosher wine. This readable book covers the whole range of Kosher in US with many little-known details. Well researched, and explained in terms all can understand. Many sources cited. Well worth reading.

This is a fascinating study of the inter-relations between Kosher certification and industrial food production in the U.S. It is interesting in itself, but also indirectly poses some most interesting questions about how the same issues Halal certification, about which there has been a big controversy in Australia. I recommended that the Halal food certifiers here purchase the book!

The in depth discussion on the religious aspects of kosher is an education in itself. The economic and political issues described in this book connect the secular and the non-secular realities of Jewish life. Horowitz has blended his research with his life experience in writing Kosher USA. Both Jews and non-Jews will find reading this book to be an enlightening and enjoyable experience.

The author explains key kashrut issues of the 20th century American Jewish community. As a baby-boomer I remembered discussions over the topics he covers. He explains and summarizes history and scientific matters really well.

Some great "behind-the-scene" tales.....

I'm not sure what I expected from this book; I am very glad I read it. I found the research and insights in Kosher meat to be particularly fascinating. Horowitz really captured the non-Jewish view on Kosher labeling - the only trusted mark on many products for years. Horowitz is a great storyteller, so relax and enjoy.

Great!

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