

Eating Together: Food, Space, and Identity in Malaysia and Singapore (Rowman & Littlefield Studies in Food and Gastronomy)

Jean Duruz, Gaik Cheng Khoo



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Accepting the challenge of rethinking connections of food, space and identity within everyday spaces of "public" eating in Malaysia and Singapore, the authors enter street stalls, hawker centers, markets, cafes, restaurants, "food streets," and "ethnic" neighborhoods to offer a broader picture of the meaning of eating in public places. The book creates a strong sense of the ways different people live, eat, work, and relax together, and traces negotiations and accommodations in these dynamics. The motif of *rojak* (Malay, meaning "mixture"), together with Ien Ang's evocative "together-in-difference," enables the analysis to move beyond the immediacy of street eating with its moments of exchange and remembering. Ultimately, the book traces the political tensions of "different" people living together, and the search for home and identity in a world on the move. Each of the chapters designates a different space for exploring these cultures of "mixedness" and their contradictions—whether these involve "old" and "new" forms of sociality, struggles over meanings of place, or frissons of pleasure and risk in eating "differently." Simply put, *Eating Together* is about understanding complex forms of multiculturalism in Malaysia and Singapore through the mind, tongue, nose, and eyes.

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