



Bless This Food: Ancient and Contemporary Graces from Around the World

Adrian Butash

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Grace before meals is the prayer said most often in homes around the world, an act of worship common to every known society. The universal experience of sharing food fundamentally connects people to one another, to nature, and to the infinite. Expressing thanks for food represents a wonderful tradition that acknowledges bounty and our daily sustenance as gifts from the divine.

Bless This Food presents 160 timeless mealtime blessings in an easy-to-use format. The eloquent prayers and poems have been carefully selected from the world's major religions, ancient traditions, and the work of great poets and thinkers, with sources ranging from Shakespeare to Starhawk, Tecumseh to the Tamil tradition, the North American plains to Pakistan. Each grace is introduced with cultural context and details about its history and evolution. Also included are two prayers in American Sign Language and the short prayer "bless this food" in nineteen languages. The result is a unique kind of soul food — and a recipe for gratitude at any mealtime gathering.

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