

When a maritime author and a marine biologist write a cookbook...

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Learning about the ocean is certainly not limited to schools. Visiting an aquarium, browsing on the internet, television, newspapers and books can have a large share in the informal or free-choice learning.

Cookbooks are very popular on the book market at the moment. Especially foodies and cooks – professional as well as amateur chefs – are very eager to read and learn more about the product's origin.

A seafood cookbook with bits and bites of ocean knowledge and marine science results in between the recipes can offer science communicators with a great opportunity to make ocean science understandable for a different kind of public. It may enhance the knowledge on species that don't belong to the charismatic megafauna such as dolphins and whales.

In Belgium the brown shrimp *Crangon crangon* is considered a delicacy: a regional product with a rich history and tradition. But the brown shrimp is also the research subject of many marine scientists: ecologists, fisheries biologists, food technologists, fishing technicians, etymologists, historians and archeologists.

In the commercial publication "Garnalen" – a cookbook annex information book – the maritime journalist Katrien Vervaele takes the public on a tour through today's and former Belgian shrimp fishing and processing. The marine biologist Nancy Fockedey punctuates the stories and interviews with fascinating historic anecdotes and scientific tidbits.

In addition, famous national and less famous international shrimp recipes are presented in between the chapters. The book is illustrated with professional food photography. Additional scientific information, data and visuals are provided through the website www.vliz.be/wiki/garnalen.

For all of us who eat shrimps regularly, this book opens up a whole new world and provides us with a thorough scientific and cultural understanding. The book is a compromise on what a scientist thinks people should know about shrimp and what a journalist considers an interesting story to tell. The difficult but interesting co-operation between the journalist and the scientist was to translate the scientific background in a language people can understand and read easily, without lapsing into scientific jargon, nor oversimplifying the content - an exercise in balance.

Technical information

Katrien Vervaele & Nancy Fockedey. Garnalen - Verhalen en recepten van vroeger en nu.
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