

# The Sushi Economy: Globalization and the Making of a Modern Delicacy

*Sasha Issenberg*

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"Eminently readable...anecdote-rich and quirky."—*The Wall Street Journal*

"...the evolution of sushi, from fermented goo to fresh global delicacy."—*The New York Times*

## THE SUSHI ECONOMY



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**Sasha Issenberg : The Sushi Economy: Globalization and the Making of a Modern Delicacy** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Sushi Economy: Globalization and the Making of a Modern Delicacy:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Review of The Sushi EconomyBy David J. KosmiderWhether yoursquo;re an avid sushi lover, or just intrigued by this globally loved dish, The Sushi Economy: Globalization and the Making of a Modern Delicacy by Sasha Issenberg will satiate all your curiosity as far as this Japanese dish is

concerned; this sushi biography is thoroughly researched, well articulated and makes an interesting read. Sushi was, at one point, just a local Japanese street food and the tuna fish that is most commonly used for making it, was sold at scrap value. However, currently, this fish is one of the most expensive ones in the market while sushi has found its way to the best Michelin star restaurants, scattered all over the world. The book traces the sushi's journey from humble beginnings to becoming one of the most luxurious dishes on the menu in the 21st Century. Being an experienced and a credible journalist, Issenberg, has brought the same curiosity and an interesting writing style to this book. The vivid and detailed narration takes into account every aspect of the sushi business—right from the catching and transportation of fish to serving that sushi on the plate! Readers will be able to vividly imagine the Tsukiji fish market and the religious arrangement of the dish on the plate. It's all out there for the reader to imagine, smell and taste. The book vividly discusses the Tsukiji fish market that covers 57 acres in the capital city of Japan and trade worth \$6 billion are annually carried out over here. Along with that, it beautifully narrates how the sushi has changed over the years—from taking birth in the 19th century to being revamped when Japanese planes came back with North Atlantic Bluefin Tuna instead of flying back empty. Meant for the foodie, the economist and the hungry reader as well, this book is nothing less than a delight to read. What sets this book apart from most of the other sushi guides is that it is not just a bland narrative on the development of sushi into a globally loved dish, but also takes into account the tiny details like kitchen scenes in the restaurants as well as how it has taken advantage of globalization to enjoy the enviable position that it has today. A bonus is that this book also discusses the economics of sushi deeper than many others out there on the bookshelves. This review was originally written for 27Press.com. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A really good read By VIVEK SHIVDASAN This book explores sushi from all angles. But primarily it educates us of the economic and global aspects of sushi. Tuna which is the primary raw material turns out to be quite an interesting fish. If you are a chef or foodie looking at sushi from a culinary point of view then this book might disappoint. If you are a businessman, economist, trader or someone interested in the consequences of globalisation and international trade then this is the book for you. The world of sushi spans the globe but is more concentrated in developed nations with cooler temperatures. Eating sushi in developing nations would both be very expensive and risky. Personally being an Indian I found the taste of sushi to be nauseating. Yet as a waiter in Sydney, Australia I found sushi to be very popular with the sophisticated set. No Eastern suburbs cocktail party was complete without sushi being served. This book has been well researched and I found it to be a very interesting read. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Made me hungry! By rhorho Well researched and just an enjoyable read. I read it before I had a trip to Japan just for something cultural and fun, and I found it interesting the whole way through—particularly about how that one guy at JAL was the main driver behind the design of the crates, airline logistics, and pricing to work for the fatty tuna product in terms of international shipping, allowing it to be transported from all across the world to reach the Tsukiji fish market in record time (though that just be the MBA side of me showing itself). You will find yourself wanting to hit up a sushi joint or two before you are done with the piece. Awesome book!

The highly acclaimed exploration of sushi's surprising history, global business, and international allure One generation ago, sushi's narrow reach ensured that sports fishermen who caught tuna in most of parts of the world sold the meat for pennies as cat food. Today, the fatty cuts of tuna known as toro are among the planet's most coveted luxury foods, worth hundreds of dollars a pound and capable of losing value more quickly than any other product on earth. So how did one of the world's most popular foods go from being practically unknown in the United States to being served in towns all across America, and in such a short span of time? A riveting combination of culinary biography, behind-the-scenes restaurant detail, and a unique exploration of globalization's dynamics, the book traces sushi's journey from Japanese street snack to global delicacy. After traversing the pages of the Sushi Economy, you'll never see the food on your plate—or the world around you—the same way again.

.com This debut from a promising young investigative reporter at Philadelphia magazine depicts gleeful, gluttonous globalization in all its glory. Visit Tokyo's world-famous Tsukiji fish market, experience the weird world of tuna-tossing in Southern Australia, and relive the birth of modern sushi in Prince Edward Island. Fans of Japanese cuisine and popular economics alike will find much to love in this delectable nonfiction adventure. --Jason Kirk From Publishers Weekly Starred . In this intriguing first book, Philadelphia-based journalist Issenberg roams the globe in search of sushi and takes the reader on a cultural, historical and economic journey through the raw-fish trade that reads less like economics and more like an entertaining culinary travelogue. In the years since the end of WWII, the practical protein-and-rice delicacy once unknown outside Japan has become so commonplace that the elements of its trade affect a far-flung global network of fanatics, chefs, tuna ranchers and pirates. While the West reached out for things Japanese, from management techniques to Walkmans, the growth of the market for quality fish, especially maguro, the bluefin tuna beloved by sushi eaters everywhere, paralleled Japan's rise from postwar ruin to 1980s economic powerhouse and into its burst-bubble present. Issenberg follows every possible strand in this worldwide web

of history, economics and cuisinemdash;an approach that keeps the book lively with colorful places and characters, from the Tokyo fish market to the boats of North Atlantic fishermen, from tuna ranches off the coast of Australia to the sushi bars in Austin, Tex. He weaves the history of the art and cuisine of sushi throughout, and his smart, lively voice makes the most arcane information fascinating. (May) Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From Bookmarks MagazineSasha Issenberg, an investigative reporter at Philadelphia magazine, gained national notoriety a few years ago when he fact-checked David Brooks's article in the Atlantic Monthly, "One Nation, Slightly Divisible." He found plenty of errors and generalizations. With *The Sushi Economy*, he impressed critics with his thoughtful and well-written account of how sushi became the world's favorite luxury cuisine. Filled with interesting detail, the book also contains surprising facts and anecdotes that critics were quick to quote. The New York Times felt the narrative sometimes dragged, with one passage that describes a fish being transferred from boat to dock feeling "longer than the flight to Japan." Other critics thought Issenberg strained too much on occasion, for example by comparing sushi chefs with samurai. Despite these minor criticisms, reviewers overall recommended this book as a fascinating view of the global economy. Copyright copy; 2004 Phillips Nelson Media, Inc.