



## Chillies: A Global History (Edible)

*Heather Arndt Anderson*

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Despite their fearsome reputation and eye-watering nature, chillies have helped to shape the culinary identities of innumerable world cuisines. They are one of the world's most widespread spices, with hundreds of varieties from the mild pimiento pepper to the incendiary 'Carolina Reaper', which has been measured at more than 2,000,000 Scoville Heat Units. Loathed and loved in equal measure, the chilli has inspired new national dishes and become a key ingredient in favourite recipes across the globe.

Chillies: A Global History tells the story of the spicy nightshade's remarkable rise to prominence. The chilli was cultivated and venerated by the ancient people of Mesoamerica for millennia, before intrepid Spanish explorers returned from America five hundred years ago and introduced their bevy of solanaceous discoveries to Europe. Worldwide adoption of the spice soon followed. Heather Arndt Anderson traces this incredible journey, along the way uncovering important spiritual and cultural links between chillies and humans, from their use as a stimulating aphrodisiac, to the eccentricity of chilli-eating competitions, and the recent discovery that chilli heat shows promise as a treatment for neuropathic pain, prostate cancer and leukaemia. She also makes a compelling link between the history of global trade and global conflict and the spread of spicy cuisine worldwide.

Peppered with lively anecdotes, humorous stories and details of chilli taxonomy and ecology, *Chillies: A Global History* shows how this odd little berry changed the way the world eats, and the way it hurts and heals itself. If you like your food with a kick, this entertaining history will certainly spice up your bookshelf.

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