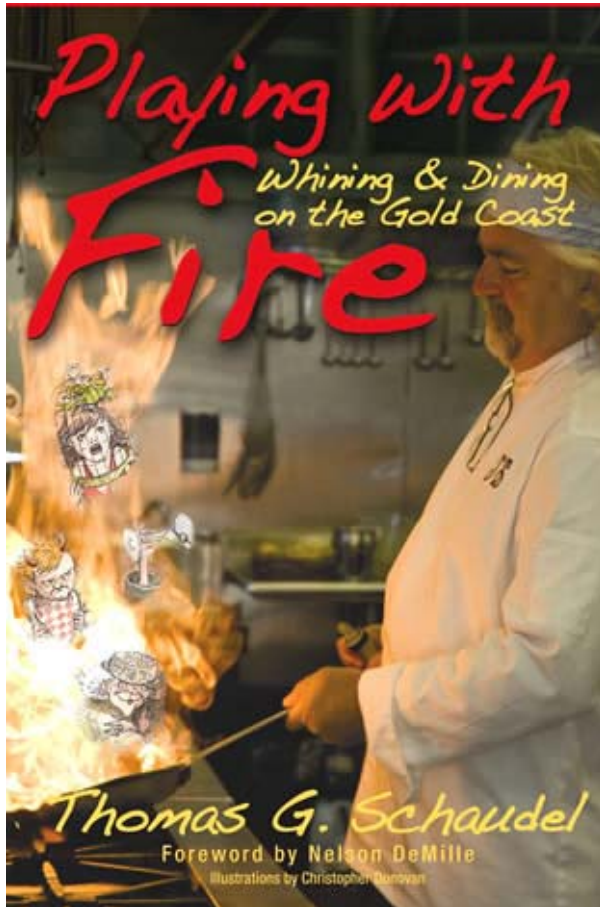


FEATURED AUTHOR

**Thomas G. Schaudel, author of
*Playing With Fire:
Whining & Dining on the Gold Coast***



About the Book

Playing With Fire: Whining & Dining on the Gold Coast is a voyeur's peek into the crazy world of the restaurant culture. Filled with vignettes of difficult customers, stressed-out cooks, harried wait staff, and the truly disturbed, this book takes an affectionate romp through Tom Schaudel's restaurants to introduce you to the most memorable cast of characters he's experienced in his forty years in the business. You'll meet a ninety-year-old woman who happens to be a serial "bird-flipper," a woman trying to drag a twenty-foot Christmas tree out the front door undetected, an elderly gentleman walking out with an 8.5" x 15" metal clipboard menu holder stuffed down his pants, and a woman who got drunk, passed out, got revived, and aced an intervention, all in under twenty minutes. An absolute must read for "foodies," these stories and the many others will provide pure entertainment and lots of laughs for a long, long time to come.

About the Author

Born in Queens, NY and raised on Long Island, Tom Schaudel began his career as a dishwasher at the age of fifteen, and continued to cook in various restaurants throughout high school. That fall, he enrolled in the Culinary Institute of America, graduating in 1973, and after six years of working insane hours, in numerous restaurants, under various chefs, Tom landed his first head position in 1979.

Four years later, with the help of two friends, he opened his first restaurant, *Panama Hatties*. Tom has been the driving force behind numerous restaurants on Long Island, such as *107 Forest Ave*, *Lemongrass*, *Downtown Grille and Wine Bar*, *Tease*, *Starfish*, *PassionFish*, *Spring Close House*, *Thom Thom*, and *Maxwell's*. His current lineup includes *CoolFish*, *The Jedediah Hawkins Inn*, *Gabrielle's*, and a *Mano*.

Excerpt

Playing With Fire is a little like Anthony Bourdain's *Kitchen Confidential*, but actually better. Why? Because the kitchen is only half as interesting as the dining room. And you can't make this stuff up.

Have you ever had an eighty-seven-year-old lady give you the finger, or have someone shove a potato up your ass? Or have you, on occasion, misplaced your dentures between your appetizer and your main course? Don't for one second try to tell me that you have never accused a waitress of stealing your lobster's claws, been stuck on a toilet seat for an hour and a half, walked out of a ladies room with a birdcage on your head, or asked for a discounted dinner check because your waiter had the audacity to have a heart attack near your table.

This may be the first book that ever sliced, diced, and filleted the customers.

Testimonials

"Tom Schaudel is a better writer than most writers. He's also funnier as he demonstrates in this collection of articles in which he chronicles some of the goofier, more bizarre customers, encounters, and situations he's experienced in his Long Island restaurants."

—Richard J. Schoelm
retired *New York Times* food critic,
restaurant consultant

*"It hardly seems fair that Tom can write as well as he cooks. The characters in these stories would drive most chefs out of the kitchen and into a straight jacket. It doesn't matter if they are piggies, fuss pots, wine snob-wannabes, cheapskates, martini-swilling grannies, Botoxed babes, parsley-phobes, or the under- and over- medicated, he treats them all with humor, wit, and, miraculously, empathy. Those in the restaurant business can laugh along with him. The rest of us will laugh at ourselves. *Playing With Fire* shows that sometimes the pen can be mightier than the skillet."*

—Laura Donnelly
food writer/*East Hampton Star*