



# Beaten, Seared, and Sauced: On Becoming a Chef at the Culinary Institute of America

By Jonathan Dixon

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## Beaten, Seared, and Sauced: On Becoming a Chef at the Culinary Institute of America By Jonathan Dixon

Millions of people fantasize about leaving their old lives behind, enrolling in cooking school, and training to become a chef. But for those who make the decision, the difference between the dream and reality can be gigantic—especially at the top cooking school in the country. For the first time in the Culinary Institute of America’s history, a book will give readers the firsthand experience of being a full-time student facing all of the challenges of the legendary course in its entirety.

On the eve of his thirty-eighth birthday and after shuffling through a series of unsatisfying jobs, Jonathan Dixon enrolled in the CIA (on a scholarship) to pursue his passion for cooking. In *Beaten, Seared, and Sauced* he tells hilarious and harrowing stories of life at the CIA as he and his classmates navigate the institution’s many rules and customs under the watchful and critical eyes of their instructors. Each part of the curriculum is covered, from knife skills and stock making to the high-pressure cooking tests and the daunting wine course (the undoing of many a student). Dixon also details his externship in the kitchen of Danny Meyer’s Tabla, giving readers a look into the inner workings of a celebrated New York City restaurant.

With the benefit of his age to give perspective to his experience, Dixon delivers a gripping day-to-day chronicle of his transformation from amateur to professional. From the daily tongue-lashings in class to learning the ropes—fast—at a top NYC kitchen, *Beaten, Seared, and Sauced* is a fascinating and intimate first-person view of one of America’s most famous culinary institutions and one of the world’s most coveted jobs.

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## **Beaten, Seared, and Sauced: On Becoming a Chef at the Culinary Institute of America** By Jonathan Dixon **Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #818156 in Books
- Published on: 2011-05-03
- Released on: 2011-05-03
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.54" h x 1.01" w x 6.44" l, 1.05 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 272 pages

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## Editorial Review

### Review

“How lucky for those of us who are fascinated by food and the people who make it that Jonathan Dixon chose to go to the CIA and to write about it. All about it. With wit and insight and a hefty dose of humor. You could probably learn just a smidgen more if you went to the CIA yourself, but it wouldn’t be nearly as much fun as sitting in your favorite chair, sipping your favorite drink, and reading Jonathan’s story.”

--Dorie Greenspan, author of *Around My French Table*

“Jonathan Dixon’s talents are such that I simultaneously envied and pitied him while reading his book. He brings the trials of joining the rigorous Culinary Institute of America to terrifying life. I enjoyed the journey so much that I never wanted him to graduate.”

--Joe Garden, features editor of *The Onion*

“If you think culinary school is just about slicing and dicing, think again. Jonathan Dixon’s compelling, deeply personal account of his trial by fire at the Culinary Institute of America lays bare the physicality, politics, and soul-searching that are part and parcel of a cook’s education. Third-degree burns, public humiliation, and a bubble-bursting externship at a beloved New York City restaurant are just a few highlights of this coming-of-age journey that the author—insanely? commendably?—embarked on when he was nearly forty. He’s a better man than I.”

--Andrew Friedman, author of *Knives at Dawn*

“There are certain experiences in our lives that we never forget and help define who we are and what we become. The CIA is one of those life-changing experiences. I never thought it could be put into words until I read these pages. Congratulations, Jonathan, for both surviving and your ability to share this with the world.”

--Johnny Iuzzini, James Beard Award winner and author of *Dessert FourPlay*

“With an original and refreshing voice, Dixon excels at capturing the mixed emotions of promises delivered and denied as he challenges convention and conquers the odds. VERDICT Rock star chefs have added to the allure of culinary education, and Dixon’s vivid and honest portrayal should provide a reality check for fans of TV cooking competitions. Shelve this next to Michael Ruhlman’s *The Making of a Chef* for a well-rounded collection.”

--Library Journal

“A companion of sorts to Michael Ruhlman’s more clinical *The Making of a Chef* (1997), Dixon’s candid course-by-course account charts his education as he gets whipped into shape by intimidating instructors (whose default temperaments seem to be near apoplectic) alongside classmates often half his age. ...[A]s a writer he has the steady-tempoed, clarified ability to make his pages-long descriptions of crafting a test menu rival the drama of anything you’ll see on a competition cooking show.”

--Booklist

“Beaten, Seared, and Sauced, Jonathan Dixon’s account of his chef-training at the CIA, is funny, gripping and immensely enjoyable. It reads like a picaresque novel.”

--The Wall Street Journal

### About the Author

JONATHAN DIXON—a former inspector of nurses' shoes, janitor in a coffin factory, messenger, nanny, newspaper book and music critic, staff writer at *Martha Stewart Living*, and creative writing instructor at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York—received his culinary degree from the Culinary Institute of America in 2010.

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#### **Peggy Dunn:**

The guide untitled Beaten, Seared, and Sauced: On Becoming a Chef at the Culinary Institute of America is the reserve that recommended to you to see. You can see the quality of the reserve content that will be shown to a person. The language that publisher use to explained their ideas are easily to understand. The writer was did a lot of exploration when write the book, and so the information that they share for you is absolutely accurate. You also could get the e-book of Beaten, Seared, and Sauced: On Becoming a Chef at the Culinary Institute of America from the publisher to make you far more enjoy free time.

#### **Brandon Gentry:**

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drift away through every dimension, wandering in every aspect that maybe unknown for but surely might be your mind friends. Imaging each word written in a e-book then become one web form conclusion and explanation which maybe you never get prior to. The Beaten, Seared, and Sauced: On Becoming a Chef at the Culinary Institute of America giving you a different experience more than blown away your mind but also giving you useful details for your better life on this era. So now let us present to you the relaxing pattern here is your body and mind are going to be pleased when you are finished reading through it, like winning an activity. Do you want to try this extraordinary wasting spare time activity?

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