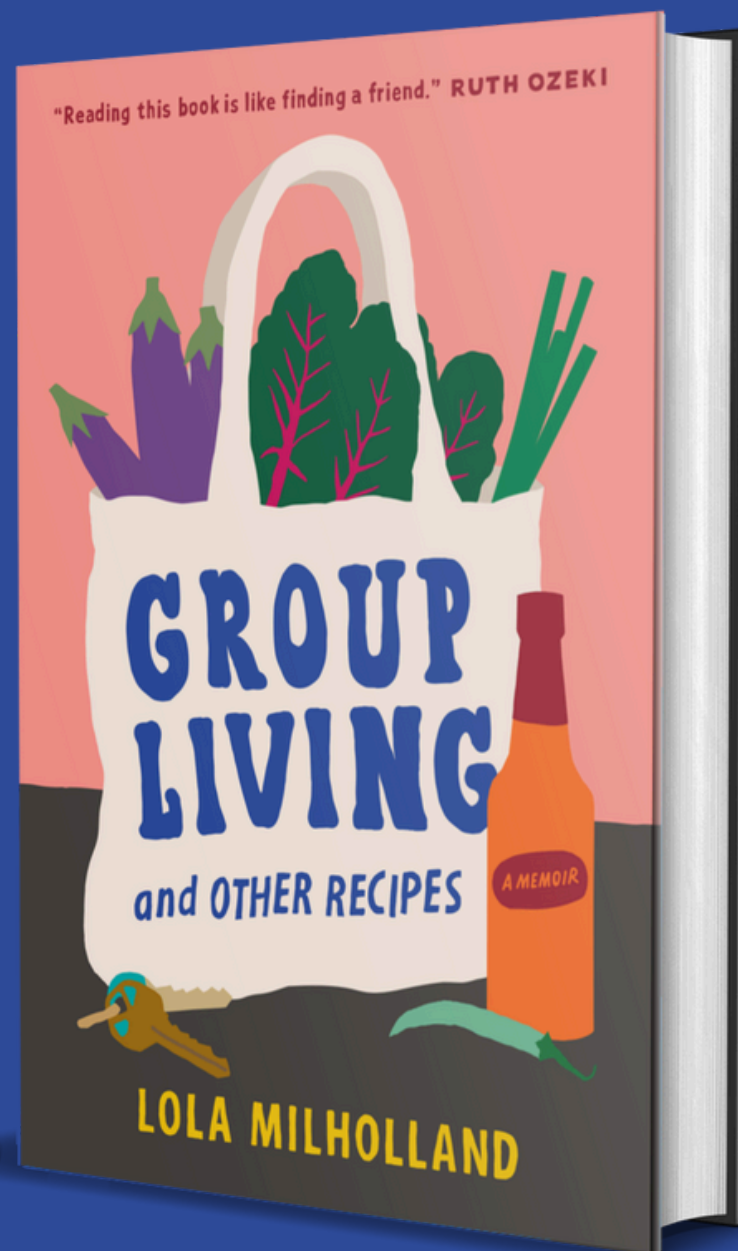


Book Club Kit

“Reading this book is like finding a friend. With intelligence and humor, Lola Milholland invites us to join her in a timely (and delicious!) interrogation of the ethics of food, housing, family, land, and self.”

—RUTH OZEKI



A LETTER FROM THE AUTHOR

Dear book club members,

Thank you so much for selecting *Group Living and Other Recipes*. Like you, I'm a book club member. About a decade ago, a friend and I formed a book club we call Little Nuts Big Nuts. With each meetup, we make a themed meal. For Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower*, we went survivalist—dried fruit and acorn-flour crackers. For Cormac McCarthy's *The Passenger*, my friend Gary made very involved muffulettas and we drank Sazeracs like we were transporting to New Orleans. I love how our conversations offer the chance to see the book through new eyes, challenge our first instincts, notice things we'd missed, and feel companionship and camaraderie inside of the work.

As book club members yourselves, you know the pleasures of dynamic conversations. Maybe you've also felt the sensation of friends becoming family. My hope is that *Group Living and Other Recipes* inspires you to have rich and provocative conversations. What are each of your experiences of group living? How do larger narratives in society shape your ideas about group living? How would you describe the community formed around your book club? Do you feel curious about expanding your ideas of home and family? Why, and in what ways?

Might I suggest having your meeting over a themed meal à la the Little Nuts Big Nuts? I've included recipes for just that reason! And if you'd like a guest (me) to stream in virtually when you meet, please don't hesitate to reach out to hello@spiegelandgrau.com!

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lola Milholland". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lola Milholland

LOLA'S OYAKODON (CHICKEN AND EGG ON RICE)

The name oyakodon means “mother-child bowl”—a whimsical, slightly cannibalistic name that I adore. This dish entails chicken and egg over rice. I treat our household to oyakodon when I’m low on energy but big on heart, as it comes together quickly. The eggs become velvety and the onions remind me of the addictive onions in gyudon (beef bowls), which are so flavorful and tender. I love how the sauce filters down to flavor the rice. The hot rice will finish cooking the eggs, so don’t be afraid to leave them a little loose.

When I want to cook a vegetarian meal, I swap the chicken for a combo of fresh shiitake and tofu and replace the broth with water and a ribbon of kombu. This, too, is delicious!

Although much of *Group Living and Other Recipes* is about chosen family, I also focus a lot on my relationship with my mom. How do you think my relationship with her informs the choices I make to live communally? How did your mom perceive the boundaries of family? How did that inform your own perceptions?

Ingredients

- 2/3 cup dashi or chicken broth
- 1/3 cup soy sauce or tamari
- 1/3 cup sake
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 pound boneless skinless chicken thighs, cut into bite-size pieces
- 2 large onions, cut into thin slices
- 5 eggs

OPTIONAL TOPPINGS

- 3 scallions, minced
- 2 sheets nori, cut with scissors into fine threads, or ao-nori (powdered seaweed)
- Chili oil to taste

Directions

Makes 4 to 6 servings

In a large saucepan over medium heat, combine the dashi or chicken broth, soy sauce or tamari, sake, and sugar. Bring to a simmer. Add the chicken and onion. Simmer until the chicken is fully cooked and the onions are limp, about 6 minutes. Whisk the eggs until frothy. Pour the egg mixture into the pan, carefully distributing it around the chicken and onion. Do not stir. Cover with a lid. Allow the egg to cook until the edges bubble—about 3 minutes. Now, stir a single time in a circular motion. Have bowls ready with rice because you want to be careful not to overcook the egg. Once it’s just set and still velvety, ladle the mixture over rice and top with optional scallions and nori. Let everyone add their own chili oil to taste.

LOLA'S MELON-LIME SHERBET

I included a recipe for cantaloupe seed horchata in the book, so this is a nice companion recipe using the melon itself. Like frozen bananas, frozen melons (especially cantaloupes) become astonishingly creamy when blended. This four-ingredient sherbet is my go-to summer dessert when I want something refreshing and beyond easy. Fancy it up with some crumbled cookies or toasted coconut flakes or a sprig of mint on top if you'd like, but I usually just let it speak for itself.

Ingredients

- Approximately 3 cups frozen melon pieces (cantaloupe is best!)*
- Juice from 1 lime
- 1/2 cup sweetened condensed milk
- Pinch of salt



Directions

Makes 6 servings

- Process the melon, lime juice, sweetened condensed milk, and pinch of salt in a food processor until creamy and smooth. If you need a splash of liquid to get the melon to blend, add a little extra lime juice, a splash of dairy or non-dairy milk, or—dare I say it—tequila! Taste and add more lime juice or sweetened condensed milk to adjust the tartness or sweetness.
- Serve right away, while it's soft and a little melty like soft serve, or freeze for 1 to 2 hours. (Much longer and it will become too hard.) Enjoy!
- *To freeze melon, peel the skin and discard. Scoop out the seeds and save them for cantaloupe seed horchata (see recipe in the book). Cut the ripe flesh into small cubes and set them on a baking sheet covered in plastic wrap, tin foil, or a clean plastic bag. Place in the freezer. Once the melon is frozen solid, transfer to a ziplock and store in the freezer until ready to use.

GROUP LIVING PLAYLIST

“Groove to the Beat”

by Keith & Ken

“Zadie Bobo”

by Ernest Djédjé

“Somebody’s in Love”

by Sun Ra & The Cosmic Rays

“Zungguzungguguzungguzeng”

by Yellowman

“Heywete (Instrumental)”

by Tèshomè Meteku (instrumental)

“I’m So Proud”

by Pat Kelly

“Let’s Live”

by Aaron Neville

“Enola Gay”

by Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark

“Do I Have to Come Right Out and Say It?”

by Buffalo Springfield

“This I Know (Demo)”

by The Kinks

“Sparrow Command”

by Dragging an Ox Through Water

“You Don’t Know What’s Going On”

by Exuma

“Mother’s Love”

by Emahoy Tsege Mariam Gebru



Listen on Spotify by scanning the code to the right with your mobile device.



BEHIND-THE-SCENES PHOTOS



Christopher Rabilwongse (roommate) in the Holman House.

My longtime roommate Chris washing dishes in our kitchen.

Photo by Shawn Linehan.



The author (front), Amy Peterson (matsutake forager, right), and Giselle Kennedy (left) on Mt. Hood in Oregon, circa 2011.

I took this selfie with Amy in the background on one of our early matsutake hunts together. You can faintly see my friend Giselle off to the left. Amy, as usual, wears bright orange clothes so we can spot her in the woods.

BEHIND-THE-SCENES PHOTOS



David Milholland (dad) in his apartment in northeast Portland, Oregon.

A very wet breakfast by my dad, featuring one of his signature omelets, an unusual vegetable medley, some buttered toast from the farmers market, and many of his homemade jams.



Theresa Marquez (mom) after canoeing the Kickapoo River in southwest Wisconsin.

A smoke break with my mom.



Zak Margolis (brother) with the author's host sister Nobuko Yamaguchi and a friend in Kyoto, Japan, in 2006.

My brother with Nobuko (center) and her friend, learning how to make matcha. Taken when he visited me in the spring of 2006, during the year I lived in Kyoto.

BEHIND-THE-SCENES PHOTOS



The Holman House in northeast Portland.

A view of the house's yard and side porch, where we eat our meals in warm weather. My parents planted this purple-and-white Sappho rhododendron when we first moved in. We grew up together.



Nancy Milholland (aunt) and Doug Milholland (uncle) at the Port Townsend Farmers Market in Washington State.

My aunt Nancy loves flowers. My uncle Doug always helps their daughter, my cousin Amanda, set up the farmers market, which she manages.

BEHIND-THE-SCENES PHOTOS



Inside the Kettle Lodge, home of the author's mom, in southwest Wisconsin.

The main floor of the Kettle Lodge. The building is twelve-sided, for the twelve houses of the zodiac. The windows face south, across a broad bowl.



The author with Tenzin Dudhul in the Holman House.

My dad took this portrait of Dudhul and me circa 1992, a few years after the monks lived with us. Dudhul was passing through town while touring with the Lollapalooza music show. Sadly, the only photos I have of us are blurry, but I think this conveys his warmth. In my memory, he gave me this cool vest.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1.** *Group Living and Other Recipes* tackles the benefits—and potential downsides—of communal living. Discuss the pros and cons. What would you enjoy the most? What would irk you?
- 2.** A recent study showed that loneliness is as bad for your health as smoking. How do you think group living arrangements help to combat loneliness? On the flip side, is it possible to feel like you don't have enough personal space?
- 3.** Lola tackles what group living looks like in different locations, including Kyoto, Japan, and Port Townsend, Washington. What are a few examples of group living styles you learned from the book? How do they differ, and what remains the same?
- 4.** Lola talks about the guests that passed through the Holman House at different times in her life. Was there one guest that stands out for you? Have you ever had a houseguest make a lasting impression?
- 5.** Discuss the difference between group living and just “living with a roommate.” What are the foundations of group living?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 6.** Lola discusses the joys and benefits of communal cooking and sharing meals together. How are meals handled in your household? Is there anything you wish you could change?
- 7.** Throughout the book, Lola includes some of her favorite recipes. Have you tried any? Is there a go-to recipe of your own that you would share with others? If so, how does eating that meal make you feel?
- 8.** Lola's relationships with her housemates ebb and flow as different environmental factors fluctuate (e.g., Covid, Lola's relationship with Corey). How are these changes in structure navigated? What challenges do they pose to group living?
- 9.** The Holman House really comes to life as a character in the book. Does your living space have a personality? How would you describe it, and how does it shape the way you interact with others in your space?
- 10.** Is group living something you would consider now or in the future? Was there a time in your life when you feel you would have benefited from group living?

LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH



Lola Milholland is a food-business owner and writer. A former editor for *Edible Portland* magazine, she currently lives in Portland, Oregon, and runs Umi Organic, a noodle company with a commitment to providing nutritious public school lunch. You can follow her on Instagram [@lolamilho](https://www.instagram.com/lolamilho).



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