KNISH

In Search of the Jewish Soul Food

“Shaped with skill and nuance... seasoned with sharp humor and deep affection, not just for the pastry but for all the people whose lives it has touched. An accomplished piece of research shared in a delightfully readable way.”
—Kirkus Reviews

“Truly riveting,... a compelling, well-researched biography of these iconic Jewish pastries.”
—Joan Nathan, author of Quiches, Kugels, and Couscous: My Search for Jewish Cooking in France

“A Proustian personal memoir with, no less, even hints of James Joyce. The knish has never been put to better use. I loved it.
—Arthur Schwartz, author of Arthur Schwartzs’s Jewish Home Cooking: Yiddish Recipes Revisited

THE ONE AND ONLY ABSOLUTELY DEFINITIVE BIOGRAPHY OF THE KNISH

After the disappearance of her beloved knish shop, Laura Silver, a journalist and native New Yorker, goes in search of the roots of the humble pastry and her own family, which turn out to be more intertwined than she expected. KNISH: In Search of the Jewish Soul Food (Brandeis University Press Hardcover; on sale May 6, 2014; $24.99) is the chronicle of a seven-year, three-continent quest.

The iconic potato pie leads the author from Mrs. Stahl’s bakery in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn, to an Italian pasta maker in New Jersey—and on to a hunt across three continents for the pastry that shaped her identity. Starting in New York, she tracks down heirs to several knish dynasties and discovers that her own family has roots in a Polish town named Knyszyn.

LAURA SILVER, world’s leading knish expert
With good humor and a hunger for history, Silver mines knish lore for stories of entrepreneurship, survival, and major deliciousness. Along the way, she meets Minnesota seniors who make knishes for weekly fundraisers, foodies determined to revive the legacy of Mrs. Stahl, and even the granddaughters of the legendary knish maker, who share their joie de vivre—and their family recipe.

In a series of funny, moving, and touching episodes, Silver takes us on a knish-eye tour of worlds past and present, thus laying the foundation for a global knish renaissance.

Saturday Night Live, the Daily Show with John Stuart and the Associated Press each spotlighted potato pie during the knish crisis of 2013, following a fire at Gabila’s Long Island factory. Al Jazeera’s America Tonight featured Laura Silver as the pre-eminent expert on the subject. KNISH details the pastry’s four hundred years of culinary and cultural history and showcases the edible pie as a long-standing conduit for coexistence and conversation. Silver has developed a timeline of knish history and is ready to share regional knish stories, from Manhattan to Minnesota, and from Montreal to San Francisco’s Mission District.

**Stuffed with Humor, History and Deliciousness**

This fun rundown of the delicious pastry is filled with illustrations and anecdotes, including:

- Quips by Joan Rivers, Sarah Silverman, Jerry Stiller and Larry David
- Backstories of knisheries: Yonah Shimmel’s, Gabila’s, Shatzkin’s and Hirsch’s
- Correspondence between knish baker Gussie Schwebel and Eleanor Roosevelt
- “Where to Find a Good Knish” a list of eighteen places across the U.S.
- Historic photos of the real Mrs. Stahl
- A recipe for Mrs. Stahl’s potato knishes as made by her granddaughters.
- References to the pastry in rap music, comedy and Twitter
- The Legend of the Knish, from Knyszyn, Poland, published in English for the first time

To schedule an interview or to discuss an original piece with Laura Silver directly, please contact: Barbara Briggs, (603) 448-1533, ext. 233, barbara.briggs@dartmouth.edu

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Laura Silver, the world’s leading knish expert, is an award-winning journalist whose writing on food and culture has appeared in the *New York Times* and the *Forward* and on NPR. Laura has been a writer in residence at the Millay Colony, the Banff Centre, and the New York Public Library.

**ABOUT THE BOOK**

**KNISH In Search of the Jewish Soul Food** by Laura Silver

Brandeis University Press Hardcover, HBI Series on Jewish Women

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Visit KNISH on the web at [www.knish.me](http://www.knish.me).
More Advance Praise for KNISH

A lovingly researched book that elevates the knish, arguably the humblest of Jewish foods, into a weighty symbol of history, identity, and family. Knishes haven’t met anything this good for them since the invention of mustard.
—David Sax, author of Save the Deli: In Search of Perfect Pastrami, Crusty Rye, and the Heart of Jewish Delicatessen

“For 70 years, Mrs. Stahl’s bakery in Brighton Beach served an delicious array of knishes to Jewish and gentile devotees. The bakery’s closing in 2005 filled one enthusiast, Laura Silver, with Proustian remembrances of knishes past. These nostalgic memories launched her on a global quest to pay homage to the knish. She has collected stories about her voyage in her deliciously appetizing book, KNISH: In Search of the Jewish Soul Food. The reader is left with only one question: Where the nearest knish shop?
—Andrew F. Smith, author, New York City: A Food Biography

"Laura Silver has elevated the common knish to its rightful place in the pantheon of Jewish soul foods along side bagels and lox, pickles, and pastrami. She reminds us with equal parts passion and humor that the knish is much more than simple street food. It represents a whole culture worthy of admiration, preservation, and enjoyment."
—Mark Russ Federman, author, Russ & Daughters: Reflections and Recipes From The House That Herring Built

“If you need to know anything about the knish, this is your book.”
—The Forward

“Silver, author and knish expert, writes the definitive biography of the knish. This is one fun book to read; highly recommend it!”
—Jewish Herald-Voice (Houston, Texas)