

Gail Thomas: *A Cook's Guide to Australia's Gourmet Resources*: Hyland House Publishing (23 Bray Street, South Yarra, Melbourne 3141), 1989: 200 pp, colour photographs, drawings, list of 'Places to Visit' (including suppliers), index, AUS\$34.95.

This complements the same author's *A Gourmet Harvest*, which dealt with plant foods. Now she turns to animal foods, with chapters on Aquaculture, Heliculture, Game, Poultry, Variety Meats, Cheeses, etc.

The blurb says: 'Impress guests at your next dinner party as you serve Goose Neck Sausage followed by Jellyfish with Turnips or Hare with Chocolate Sauce and finishing with Blue Cheese Ice-cream.' This, and the 'gourmet' theme (it is still an all right word in Australia) made a bad start so far as I was concerned. But there is plenty of interesting information: the introduction of the American bison, to be reared for the table, by a farmer in Victoria; the discovery by Australians of water-buffalo meat; the reason why kangaroo meat is not widely available for human consumption; the farming of ostriches; etc.

The chapter on cheeses gives a good survey of what are now being made in Australia. Throughout the book there is emphasis on small producers of innovative products. Those who want to impress guests at dinner parties will find recipes suited to their pathetic purpose; but most people will value the book for its other, informative, function.

A.E.D.

Lourdes March and Alicia Ríos: *El Libro del Aceite y la Aceituna*: Alianza, Madrid, 1989: 458 pp, drawings by Lupe Ríos, extensive bibliography, index to recipes, paperback, [price].

How is it that Spanish publishers find it feasible to produce (generally speaking) more substantial and serious books on (in this instance) the olive and olive oil than English-language publishers? The impression created by this admirable work is that it has been written to its natural length, not cut down to fit a publishing formula, and that the authors have been allowed, indeed encouraged, to tell us all they want to convey – which is a lot. Almost half the book is taken up by historical, botanical, sociological and other such material, with apt quotations and illustrations. The remainder provides a cornucopia of recipes, from many countries.

Highly recommended. I just wish that room had been found for a picture of Alicia Ríos in the olive tree costume which she wore when addressing a group of ethnologists in Norway a few years back – it would serve as a symptom of this co-author's wide-ranging interest (costume, architecture, literature, philosophy) which lend off beat and welcome overtones to whatever she writes.

A.E.D.