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"Food nourishes the body, but our relationship with food extends far beyond our need for survival. We use food choices not only to express our personal tastes but also, and perhaps more importantly, to declare our affiliation with certain groups to the exclusion of others. Thanks to a newly global system of food production, however, coupled with rising concerns about the nutritional value of the foods we consume and the impact of our increasingly sedentary lifestyles, the modern foodscape has become remarkably difficult to navigate. A single food item may, for example, be labelled with health-related claims made by the manufacturer that do not dovetail with the information provided in the "Nutrition Facts" label. In the media sphere, the enormous amount of food-related advice provided by government agencies, assorted advocacy groups, diet books, and so on compete with efforts on the part of the food industry to sell their product and to respond to a consumer-driven desire for convenience. As a result, the topic of food has grown fraught, engendering sometimes acrimonious debates about what we should eat, and why. This volume is the latest to emerge from a series of workshops about the role of media in Canadian popular culture. By examining topics such as the values embedded in food advertising, the meaning of "organic" and "natural," the locavore movement, food tourism, dinner parties, food bank donations, the moral panic surrounding obesity, food crises, and fears about food safety, the contributors to this volume paint a rich, if at times disturbing, portrait of how food is represented, regulated, and consumed in Canada. We also hear from "food insiders"--bestselling cookbook author and food editor Elizabeth Baird, veteran restaurant reviewer and food writer John Gilchrist, executive chef and culinary tourism provider Eric Pateman--who provide valuable insights about the way that Canadians cook, eat, and experience food. The result is a thought-provoking look at food as a system of communication through which Canadians articulate cultural identity, personal values, and social class."--
