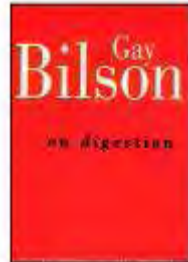




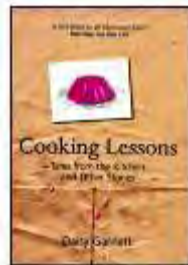
## A LITTLE FLIGHT READING

FROM the clever new series Little Books on Big Themes comes ***On Digestion*** by Gay Bilson (MUP, \$19.95). These pocket-sized publications are extended essays on topics that inspire the authors (Don Watson *On Indignation*, for example, and Barrie Kosky *On Ecstasy*)

and pioneering restaurateur and cook Bilson is a fine and obvious choice for the category of food. She raises issues about celebrity chefs, ponders the peculiar beauty of pomegranates and makes connections between molecular gastronomy and Chinese cuisine. It's an enjoyably rambling read, like a conversational monologue, from an erudite Australian who has run top restaurants, knows her culinary stuff backwards and now has time to grow food and to think about it in depth and at leisure. Out on October 6, packaged in strawberry pink.



DAISY Garnett's ***Cooking Lessons: Tales From the Kitchen and Other Stories*** (Hardie Grant, \$29.95) is an utterly charming read. She's a US-based British journalist who, after a childhood of housekeeper-prepared meals that all tasted like cauliflower cheese, learns how to cook on a boat. "The first time I roasted a chicken was in a small oven that swung on its hinges in the narrow galley kitchen of a sailboat, somewhere off the coast of



Florida," she writes. It's all plain sailing from there, though, as Garnett decides cooking is "not trigonometry" after all and "there is nothing secret about it". Garnett develops the sailboat narrative, shares the recipes she eventually conquers (by day 17 she's baking gingerbread), and the book eventually segues into a return to her parents' home in Somerset and on to fast New York living (and passionate cooking and eating). With pastel watercolours by Carmen Carreira and a sensible cover price, this book would make a perfect Christmas gift for a favourite foodie. And it's not too early to think about festive buying (and making fruit cakes and plum puds).

FROM Valentine Warner, the Brit chef with the mussed-up hair and Mills & Boon name, comes ***What to Eat Now*** (Mitchell Beazley, \$49.99), a solid compendium of recipes tied to his BBC show of the same name. Warner is a champion of freshly harvested produce and has the cheeky-chappy charm of Jamie Oliver, so it's easy to understand his popularity. But for Australian readers, the value of the book is diminished by its emphasis on the bounty of northern seasons and the inclusion of Brit oddities such as coronation partridge sandwich and mackerel in oats with watercress.



Susan Kurosawa