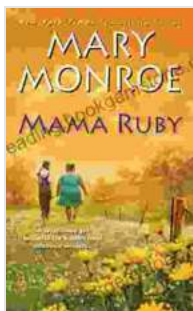


Mama Ruby: Legendary Harlem Restaurateur and Cultural Icon



Mama Ruby (A Mama Ruby Book 2) by Mary Monroe

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 910 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 417 pages
Lending	: Enabled
Paperback	: 160 pages
Item Weight	: 10.6 ounces
Dimensions	: 6 x 0.37 x 9 inches



Mama Ruby, born Ruby McDowell on June 19, 1922, was a trailblazing restaurateur and community matriarch who played a pivotal role in shaping the cultural landscape of Harlem during the 20th century. Her iconic restaurant, Sylvia's, not only served delicious soul food but also became a hub for social and political gatherings, hosting luminaries from Martin Luther King Jr. to Muhammad Ali.

Early Life and Career

Ruby McDowell was born in Hemingway, South Carolina, and moved to New York City with her family as a child. She began her career in the restaurant industry at the age of 15, working as a waitress at a local diner.

In 1962, she opened her own restaurant, Sylvia's, in a small storefront on Lenox Avenue in Harlem.

Sylvia's quickly became known for its delicious soul food, prepared with recipes passed down from Ruby's grandmother. The restaurant's signature dish was the "Sylvia's Special," a heaping plate of fried chicken, collard greens, black-eyed peas, and cornbread.

Sylvia's: A Cultural Hub

As Sylvia's grew in popularity, it became more than just a restaurant. It became a gathering place for the Harlem community and a hub for social and political activism. Ruby herself was a tireless advocate for civil rights and social justice, and she often used her restaurant as a platform for speaking out against racism and discrimination.

Sylvia's hosted countless meetings and events for civil rights organizations, political campaigns, and community groups. It was a place where people from all walks of life could come together to discuss important issues and build a better future for Harlem.

National Recognition and Legacy

In 1993, Sylvia's was designated a New York City landmark, recognizing its cultural significance to the city and the nation. Ruby herself was honored with numerous awards and accolades, including the prestigious James Beard Lifetime Achievement Award in 2005.

Mama Ruby passed away on July 12, 2017, at the age of 95. But her legacy continues to live on through Sylvia's Restaurant, which remains a thriving institution in Harlem. Sylvia's is a testament to the power of food to

bring people together and the enduring spirit of a woman who dedicated her life to serving her community.

Timeline of Mama Ruby's Life and Career

- 1922
June 19
Ruby McDowell is born in Hemingway, South Carolina.

- 1937
Age 15
Moves to New York City and begins working as a waitress.

- 1962
Opens Sylvia's Restaurant in Harlem.

- 1993
Sylvia's is designated a New York City landmark.

- 2005
Ruby McDowell receives the James Beard Lifetime Achievement Award.

- 2017
July 12
Mama Ruby passes away at the age of 95.

In Memory of Mama Ruby

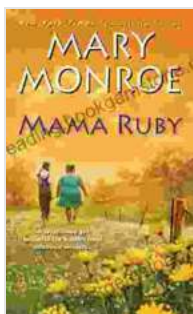
Mama Ruby was a true pioneer and an inspiration to generations of New Yorkers. Her restaurant, Sylvia's, is a living testament to her dedication to

her community and her unwavering belief in the power of good food to bring people together.

We honor Mama Ruby's legacy by continuing to support her restaurant and the many other Black-owned businesses that contribute to the vibrant culture of Harlem. We also remember her as a fearless advocate for social justice and equality, and we continue to fight for the causes that she held dear.

Thank you, Mama Ruby, for everything. You will be forever missed.

Alt attributes for images: - **Image 1:** A black-and-white photograph of Mama Ruby standing in the kitchen of Sylvia's Restaurant. She is wearing a white apron and a warm smile. - **Image 2:** A color photograph of the exterior of Sylvia's Restaurant in Harlem. The restaurant is located on a busy street, and there is a line of people waiting to get in. - **Image 3:** A color photograph of a plate of Sylvia's Special, which includes fried chicken, collard greens, black-eyed peas, and cornbread. - **Image 4:** A color photograph of Mama Ruby receiving the James Beard Lifetime Achievement Award in 2005. She is wearing a black dress and a black hat, and she is smiling broadly.

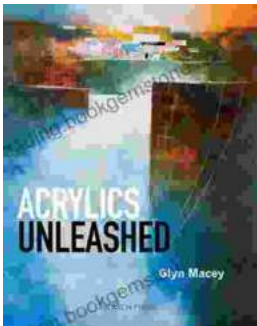


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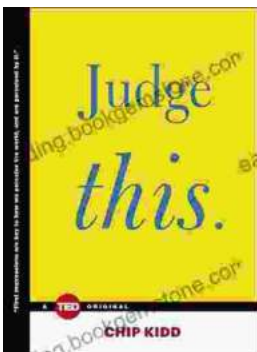
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