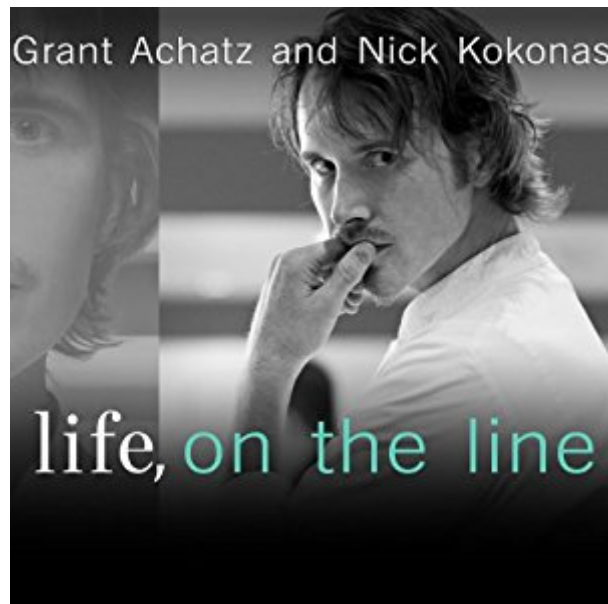


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# Life, On The Line: A Chef's Story Of Chasing Greatness, Facing Death, And Redefining The Way We Eat



## Synopsis

In 2007, chef Grant Achatz seemingly had it made. He had been named one of the best new chefs in America by Food & Wine in 2002, received the James Beard Foundation Rising Star Chef of the Year Award in 2003, and in 2005 he and Nick Kokonas opened the conceptually radical restaurant Alinea, which was named Best Restaurant in America by Gourmet magazine. Then, positioned firmly in the world's culinary spotlight, Achatz was diagnosed with stage IV squamous cell carcinoma - tongue cancer. The prognosis was grim, and doctors agreed that the only course of action was to remove the cancerous tissue, which included his entire tongue. Desperate to preserve his quality of life, Grant undertook an alternative treatment of aggressive chemotherapy and radiation. But the choice came at a cost. Skin peeled from the inside of Grant's mouth and throat, he rapidly lost weight, and most alarmingly, he lost his sense of taste. Tapping into the discipline, passion, and focus of being a chef, Grant rarely missed a day of work. He trained his chefs to mimic his palate and learned how to cook with his other senses. As Kokonas was able to attest, the food was never better. Five months later, Grant was declared cancer-free, and just a few months following, he received the James Beard Foundation Outstanding Chef in America Award. Life, on the Line tells the story of a culinary trailblazer's love affair with cooking, but it is also a book about survival, about nurturing creativity, and about profound friendship. Already much-anticipated by followers of progressive cuisine, Grant and Nick's gripping narrative is filled with stories from the world's most renowned kitchens - the French Laundry, Charlie Trotter's, el Bulli - and sure to expand the audience that made Alinea the number-one selling restaurant cookbook in America last year.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

From one point of view it's tempting to think of Grant Achatz as someone who has been very lucky. But on reflection it's quite clear that luck has had relatively little to do with his successes. Here's a guy who knew what he wanted to do and put forth the drive, ambition, skill, and pure unending WORK needed to achieve his goals. His story is very well written and makes a very enjoyable read. I teared up a bit several times, from both the lows and the highs. The events in this book could describe a very successful and complete life if they applied to anyone else, but Chef Achatz comes out at the end only in his mid-30s, with a foundation that will let him achieve whatever he can imagine in the future. While some people may indeed burn out twice as fast by "burning the candle at both ends", Grant Achatz is proof that if you work twice as hard, you may simply achieve twice as much. Cook's memoirs are a dime-a-dozen these days, but this is a book that transcends the genre and will be enjoyed by everyone. An easy five stars. This review is based on the Kindle edition, and from also looking at the physical book in person there are hardly any illustrations in the book so you're not missing anything if you choose to go the Kindle route. Another reviewer commented about the confusing switch back and forth between the points of view of Grant and his business partner Nick once they meet and start working on the building of Alinea. Pretty much if you see a break in the text then the POV is switching, but you have to read a paragraph or three before you're really sure who is speaking. It would have been much smoother if they had simply inserted the name of whoever was picking up the story each time there was a shift.

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