

WE MIGHT SLICE THEM into a salad, savor them in a sauce, wonder at their power to intoxicate or poison, marvel at their multifarious presence in the forest—but few of us realize that mushrooms, humbly thriving on decay, are crucial to life on Earth. In this book a distinguished molecular biologist reveals the power of these curious organisms—not quite animal, not quite plant—to enchant and instruct, to nourish and make way for all sorts of superior forms of nature. From the biology of our favorite fungi to tales of the truffle hunt, Schaechter brings contagious enthusiasm to the story of mushrooms.

"Elio Schaechter's *In the Company of Mushrooms* is a delight from start to finish, a truly splendid account of an obsession. It's everything about mushrooms: their extraordinary biology, history, appearance, flavors, folklore, cuisine, gathering, and more. A passionate work, admits Schaechter. Laced with stories and arcane knowledge . . . this is a dream of a book."

—*New Scientist*

"An entertaining account of the arcane world of hunting and identifying wild mushrooms."

—MARGARET E. GUTHRIE, *New York Times Book Review*

"[A] funny and fascinating book."

—*Nature*

ELIO SCHAECHTER is Distinguished Professor of Molecular Biology and Microbiology, Emeritus, Tufts University School of Medicine. He is the coauthor of *Mechanisms of Microbial Disease* and *Physiology of the Bacterial Cell*.

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