

# ADVANCE PRAISE FOR *ARAB/AMERICAN*

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“Once again Gary Nabhan captures the essence of the bond between land and peoples of the desert. In this procession of connected essays, he weaves a rich tapestry of cultural flavors, scents, and sounds – always with eloquence and often seasoned with wry humor and personal intimacy.”

– William W. Dunmire

“An invitation to Gary Nabhan’s latest expedition in search of the oasis foods, plants, animals, and kin that bind us all and link the Mexican American Southwest to Arabia, these desert essays are his most profoundly personal yet, nomadic reflections on the nature and culture of the arid lands of his life. Like a bursting pomegranate, anecdotes of history and science explode from every chapter. With humor and grace, Nabhan captures the urgent longing to belong to a new place, not as nostalgia but as mission and challenge; the most powerful planetary survival tool for a new century.”

– Enrique R. Lamadrid

“Full of erudition and fabulous detail, this book provides a sumptuous mosaic of personal and cultural history. A delicious read!”

– Diana Abu-Jaber

“In this detailed mix of history and culinary lore, Gary Nabhan walks through deserts making connections between his ancestor’s footsteps in the old and new worlds. Just as his family did for him, he shows us how to “look at, walk across, and taste the world” by taking the desert’s details (camels and words and cacti and rose water) and allowing them to link us together across this shared planet. Gary Nabhan’s unique perspective offers up much needed hope for our tortured globe.”

– Laila Halaby, author of *Once in a Promised Land: A Novel*

“As the all pervasive “Clash of Civilizations” view of the world is pressed upon ordinary North Americans by the popular media, Nabhan provides valuable and historically accurate evidence to the contrary. Muslim and Arab civilizations, far from being in perpetual clash with the “West,” have contributed to our culture in such basic ways as food and language. Islam and the West are not two solitudes but are made up of complex societies and ecologically diverse regions. Instead of being at odds with each other, these civilizations have been deeply connected through sophisticated relationships that extend to fundamental aspects such as seed varieties, movement of peoples, and the use of language. Nabhan effectively punctures the one dimensional “either you are with us or against us” mentality with a compelling narrative that generates understanding and mutual respect.”

– Karim-Aly Kassam

“An accomplished storyteller, only Dr. Gary P. Nabhan can bring together the deserts of his ancestors in the Middle East and those of the Southwest where he has spent most of his adult life, and weave them into a tapestry so rich that the reader can see the similarities instead of the differences. Not only is the language of his ancestors alive in the Sonoran desert, but also the foods and agricultural traditions.

– Estevan Arellano

“In this virtuosic tour of foods, places, language, and history Gary Nabhan documents the heritage shared by the deserts of the American Southwest and the Arabian world. His quest, which is personal and moral as well as geographic, shows us that the common ground of these two great lands is vast on multiple levels and that today the thirst for peace, no less than aridity, defines it. Nabhan sows unity where others see division, and I come away feeling both awed and grateful.”

– William deBuys