



Wooden Boats

Michael Ruhlman

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There are fewer than 10,000 wooden boats in America but the circulation of *WoodenBoat* magazine exceeds 180,000. What is it about wooden boats that has captured the popular imagination? With the "lively blend of reportage [and] reflection" (*Los Angeles Times*) that made his *The Soul of a Chef* such a success, Michael Ruhlman sets off to Martha's Vineyard-the location of a renowned boatyard-to find out.

As refined as a Stradivarius and as ruggedly powerful as an ocean vessel, wooden boats and the art of crafting them nearly fell victim to the modern era. Yet as cheap plastic and fiberglass boats proliferated the seas, a handful of craftsmen persevered. Today, the makers of these handmade miracles of curves and wood are highly sought-after artisans and wooden boats have emerged as a magnificent metaphor for the "old and true" in our homogenized, throwaway culture. At the heart of *Wooden Boats* is *Rebecca*-a sixty-foot modern pleasure schooner being constructed, with centuries-old techniques, to outlast any other boat today. Ruhlman follows *Rebecca's* construction and profiles the vivid personalities at work in a boatyard filled with stories of the sea. His exciting chronicle will enthrall not just wooden boat owners but also craftspeople of every stripe, nature enthusiasts, and seafaring and landlocked fans of compelling nonfiction.

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