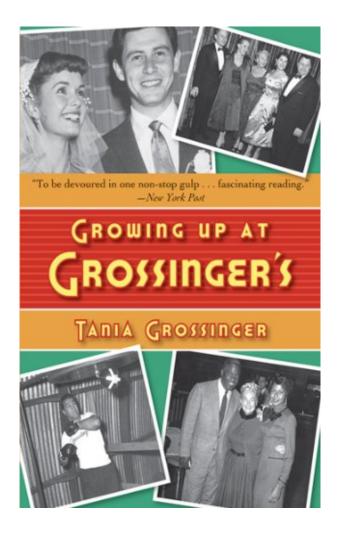
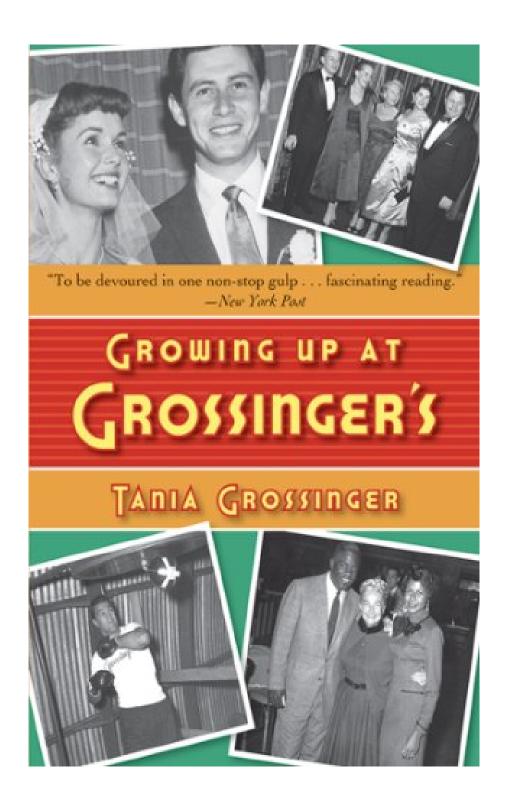
GROWING UP AT GROSSINGER'S BY TANIA GROSSINGER



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Review

"A delightful look at how America, especially Jewish America, enjoyed itself before the airplane took us in different directions." -- Publishers Weekly

"I loved every minute of it!" -- Sally Jesse Raphael

"Tania Grossinger's childhood was the stuff of modern fairytales. Like a version of Kay Thomson's Plaza Hotel-dwelling Eloise by way of 'Dirty Dancing.'" -- Jewish Daily Forward

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About the Author

Tania Grossinger has worked as a publicist, travel writer, and author (The Book of Gadgets, the novel Weekend) for many years. She lives in New York, New York.

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"To be devoured in one non-stop gulp...fascinating reading."—The New York Post From 1919 to 1986, Grossinger's Catskill Resort Hotel provided a summer retreat from the city heat for New York's Jews, and entertained the great, the near-great, and the not so great, Jews and Gentiles alike. A melting pot of the Borscht Belt, sports, and show-biz worlds, loyal visitors included Red Buttons, Rocky Marciano, Eddie Fisher, and Jackie Robinson. Tania Grossinger grew up there. In her fascinating insider's account of life in the hospitality industry, she sheds light on how hotel children keep up with the frenetic pace of life, and how they come to grips with the outside world (which intrudes now and again), sex (happening in every room), and, occasionally, their intellectual interests. Growing Up at Grossinger's is both a wonderful coming-of-age story and a sentimental reading of a chapter of the Jewish experience in America that has now closed. 25 b/w photographs.

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Most helpful customer reviews

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating and Poignant By HeyJudy
Tania Grossinger is one hell of a writer.

She makes "the Catskills" come alive for New Yorkers too young to have experienced its lifestyle first-hand; this is especially true for those of us who had our curiosity whetted by long-repeated family stories of "the mountains."

Both of these phrases refer to a small mountain range within driving distance of New York City. From their heyday in the 1930s to the 1960s, these mountains were the home of dozens of hotels ranging from tiny to huge. As the decades rolled on, each hotel added swimming pools and tennis courts and live entertainment. The Catskills was the place where the children's dining room, the social director and the singles weekend were invented.

What the area was most famous for, however, was the food. Each hotel served in massive, unlimited quantities. The menu information shared in the book, by modern standards, is shocking in its excess.

None of those hotels was more important than Grossinger's.

In GROWING UP AT GROSSINGER'S, Tania Grossinger describes what it was like to grow up as a hotel brat: To do one's homework in a cocktail lounge, to watch the romantic interludes of the guests with titillation and a surprising degree of sophistication, to have to be nice to the guests regardless of any other reality.

Since Grossinger's also was the hotel which started the trend for performances by famous entertainers, Tania routinely met the big names of the times. Jackie Robinson was her morale booster and she watched the ill-fated courtship of Eddie Fisher and Debbie Reynolds from up close.

There is a certain pathos to this report, since Tania was, quite literally, the poor relation of the Grossinger family. The owners saw to it that her mother -- the widow of a Grossinger cousin -- and she were sheltered and fed but, other than that, they spared them little thought or kindness.

The 2008 copyright reflects a re-issue of a title from the 1970s. This makes for a bit of confusion, since there are apparently current references to places (including the hotel) no longer there and people long dead. The hotels all have disappeared, victims of the ease of jet travel coupled with a certain amount of boredom on the part of the guests with the same old vacation, time after time.

GROWING UP AT GROSSINGER'S is a fascinating and touching memoir.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Good reading

By Henry C. Markwart

Having spent some time in The Catskills, I can relate . I also had the great pleasure of meeting Ms Grossing at The White Horse Tavern in New York City.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Good enough book

By P. Miller

This book is pretty good as a read. It is very personal about a girl who grows up at her relative's Catskills hotel. The owner is a terrible person, and this young girl kind of grows up on her own amid celebrities and waiters. It disappoints if you want more about the place and time, and less about her coming of age excapades, but overall it is worth reading. There are some better books about the Catskills on Amazon, however.

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