DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How did Erin's relationship with Maine influence her life, her relationships, and her cooking?

2. Erin's time working in her father's diner taught her a lot about cooking, running a kitchen, and interacting with customers. How do you think she applied what she learned when she opened her own restaurant?

3. Learning the recipe for meatloaf with her father was a pivotal moment for Erin. Do you have a beloved family recipe that's been passed down from generation to generation? Are there specific foods or meals that you associate with someone in your life or that transport you to a time and place?

4. When Erin left college after becoming pregnant, she started her own business selling baked goods. How do you think this sense of entrepreneurship played into the rest of her life?

5. If you were familiar with the Lost Kitchen's reputation for being a "magical" place before picking up this book, were you surprised to see the elements of abuse, addiction, and depression in this memoir? How does learning about Erin's life make you appreciate what she's accomplished even more?

6. Over the course of the book, Erin had to look within herself for inspiration and motivation in some very difficult circumstances. What or who else helped inspire and motivate her? What did you learn from her story about the possibility of inventing yourself anew?

7. Erin's mother also reinvents herself over the course of Erin's story. How did Erin's experiences ultimately change her mother's life?

8. Which scenes involving food stood out most to you and why? Does the food in that scene show comfort? Creativity? Love? Are there any dishes from the book that you would like to try?

9. Where in the book do you see Erin as trapped and where do you see her start to find freedom? If you imagine Erin's life beyond the last page, what do you think freedom means for her now?

10. Will you be sending a postcard to the Lost Kitchen to try for a reservation?