For author and Ohlone professor emeritus Cynthia Lee Katona, a cocktail isn’t just a cocktail – each drink is linked to one of her most memorable experiences.

Katona’s book “The Cocktail Chronicles” is a memoir, including recipes to the drinks that accompanied some of the most interesting events in her life, from childhood to the present. It’s also a travelogue, as Katona takes us on a journey around the world, from Lisbon to Shanghai, along the way.

“The stories are poignant, funny, amazing, unique, sweet, and bittersweet, much like the concoctions that were a part of every memory described,” Ohlone Professor Christine Bolt wrote about the book.

Katona graduated from California State University, Hayward, with a master’s degree in English literature. She was one of the original Ohlone faculty members, hired in 1975.

Over the years, she taught English, journalism, photography, women’s studies, desktop publishing and international education. She retired in 2009.

“If you write concretely and honestly about your own experiences, they will have some resonance and universal appeal for readers,” Katona said. “I have always felt that you should not teach a subject which you cannot do at a professional level yourself.”

For more than 40 years, Katona has been a travel photographer, capturing inspirational images from around the world in both 35mm transparency and digital format. She has traveled to Greece, Costa Rica, The Yucatan, England, Indonesia, India, Egypt and China, as well as throughout the United States. Her work includes cities, nature, people and events.

Katona also has published 10 books of haiku and photography. She is currently working on “Graffiti: The Audacious Alphabet” and a sequel to “The Cocktail Chronicles” titled “Clothes Chronicles.”

The lesson she hopes readers will take from her work is “that if you write concretely and honestly about your own experiences, they will have some resonance and universal appeal for readers.”

Katona’s work is available through PhotoMerchant.com and Amazon.com.