

BUILDING A REAL SPRING BOOT SERVICE ON AWS



Beyond the Tutorial: Building a Real Spring Boot Service on AWS

Jitin Kayyala

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Who this book is for

You've done a Spring Boot tutorial or two. You can read Java without flinching at lambdas. You know what HTTP is. You've maybe deployed a small thing somewhere – Heroku, Vercel, a \$5 VPS – but you've never been the one responsible for “the backend” at a company.

If that's you, this book will close a gap that I think is criminally under-served by the existing material online. There are a million “build a REST API in Spring Boot” videos. There are very few “now make it look like something a grown engineering team would be okay with on call for” walkthroughs.

If you're already a senior backend engineer, parts of this will be familiar. But I'd encourage you to skim Chapter 4 (the monorepo structure) and Chapter 10 (the deployment chapter) anyway – those are the parts that I find most teams get subtly wrong, and it's worth comparing notes.

What this book is *not*

It's not a Java tutorial. If `Optional<T>` and `record` are new vocabulary, you'll struggle.

It's not an AWS certification prep book. We use a small slice of AWS services and we use them in a sensible, production-shaped way. If you want a survey of every AWS product, that's a different book and a different author.

It's not opinionated about your IDE, your operating system, or your shell. I use IntelliJ on a Mac. The instructions assume a Unix-y command line. Adapt to your setup.

How to read this book

Read it linearly the first time. The chapters build on each other – Chapter 6 assumes you've done Chapter 5, Chapter 10 assumes everything before it. That said, I've tried to make each chapter end at a sensible stopping point, so you can put the book down for a week and pick it up again without losing your place.

The code lives in a Git repository if you want to have a look at it. [Github link](#)

Type the code. Don't copy-paste. I know it's slower. The slowness is the point.

A note on opinions

Software has fashions, and this book has them too. I'll prefer Gradle over Maven, Kotlin DSL over Groovy, JWT over sessions, Postgres over MySQL, and Terraform over CDK. Where I'm making a choice that another reasonable person would make differently, I'll try to flag it. But I'm not going to spend the whole book hedging – life's too short, and reading “you could also...” after every paragraph is exhausting.

If your team uses Maven, that's fine. If your team likes CDK, that's fine. The shape of the project would be the same. The point is the shape, not the tools.

Acknowledgments

To everyone who ever code-reviewed my pull requests with patience, and to everyone who ever shipped my mistakes to production without (much) complaint: thank you. You taught me what tutorials couldn't.

Let's build something real.

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Step two: settings.gradle.kts

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Step three: the version catalog

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Step four: the root build.gradle.kts

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Step five: a platform-lib module

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Step seven: the actual service

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Step nine: try the build

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A note on the gradle.properties

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Adding what we need

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The security configuration

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Postgres locally

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Adding the persistence dependencies

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The first migration

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Configuring Flyway and the datasource

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JPA entities

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The domain event

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The publisher abstraction

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Configuration: which publisher do we use?

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Publishing the event

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The consumer

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Configuration

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Building the image

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docker-compose for the full local stack

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Image size: where the bytes go

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What we're building, architecturally

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Correlation IDs and MDC

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Health checks: liveness vs readiness

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Graceful shutdown

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What about distributed tracing?

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Where we are

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Chapter 12: Hardening and Next Steps

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Part 1: Hardening checklist

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Rate limiting

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Request size limits

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CORS

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Refresh tokens

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Password reset

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Account logout

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Stronger password validation

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Database connection pool tuning

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Backups and disaster recovery

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Dependency scanning

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Audit logging

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Multi-environment deploys

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Part 2: Feature ideas and what to build next

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Streak notifications via SQS

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Statistics endpoint with caching

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Refresh tokens (revisited)

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OAuth login

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Frontend

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Migrate one service to Kafka

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Add a second service that owns a domain

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Tracing with OpenTelemetry

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Career thoughts

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Read other people's code

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Build the thing you wish existed

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Operating is the half of the job nobody teaches

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Trade-offs over rules

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Write things down

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The thing about seniority

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A final word

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Afterword

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Things I changed my mind about while writing

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Thanks

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