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Patout's Cajun Home Cooking



Synopsis

When Alex Patout opened the original Patout's restaurant in New Iberia, Louisiana, in 1979, he set out to show food lovers that there was more to Cajun than blackened redfish. Now the family operates busy restaurants in New Orleans and Los Angeles as well, and in Patout's Cajun Home Cooking, the first authentic guide to the most popular regional cuisine in the country, Patout takes his culinary mission another giant step further, divulging the dark, spicy secrets of Cajun food as it is prepared by the Cajuns themselves. Beginning with the basics -- roux from light to dark, techniques from smoking to smothering -- Patout initiates the home cook into a culinary style that has developed over the decades in bayou country kitchens. Dozens of exciting recipes introduce a savory repertoire of Cajun delicacies: appetizers both rustic and refined (Cheese Biscuits, Daube Glace, Cajun Pate); slow-simmered gumbos (Shrimp and Okra, Duck and Sausage, and more), soups, and stews (Red fish Courtbouillon, Shrimp and Crab Stew); hearty main dishes (from classic Jambalayas and Etouffees to such Patout specialties as Lady Fish, Shrimp Ms. Ann, Veal on the Teche, and Maw Maw's Cajun Chicken Stew); luscious side dishes (Maque Choux, Smothered Snap Beans, Cajun Hash Browns); homey and festive sweets (Old Dominion Pound Cake, Calas, Pralines, Gateau au Sirop); and preserves and pickles (Chow Chow, Hot Pepper Jelly) for the cook with canning fever. And Patout shows how to pull it all together, with menus for all occasions and a list of mail-order sources for fresh seafood and special ingredients. Adaptable, easy on the budget, and above all exciting, Patout's Cajun Home Cooking brings Cajun back to where it originated -- the home kitchen.

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Customer Reviews

By way of authenticating my perspective, I graduated from LSU Law school the same year this book was published. Unlike some reviewers who have written, I grew up with okra, as my Father, Lt. Col. Allie Howard Romaine, made a big garden with rows of okra along the Bayou Teche when we came home to New Iberia, from California, when it became clear he needed family around to handle his permanent total disability from WWII. My Mother, Lucile Spencer Romaine, was a Presbyterian, not a Cajun, even though she was born in Eunice, not far from Dad's home in Kaplan. Just returned from a few days with my wonderful relatives there in Vermillion Parish, who took me to one eating place after the other, brings me back with an intensity to the uniqueness of South Louisiana, its people and its food. Mr. Patout, an accounting graduate of the University at Lafayette, tells the story of his family, back to a land grant from France in 1828, through various ancestors to his father, a graduate of hotel and restaurant training, who ran a hotel restaurant at a hotel in downtown New Iberia, until "the intrusion of the..motel business..and interstate highway system ..made it impossible for such hotels to survive." Patout picked up the cooking grail as he describes it in his wonderful introduction as 'Cajun' became the 'hot cuisine of the moment' in the early eighties. This part of the book is alone worth the price, (very cheap, as used) but his book has served me well, as I've realized North of Baton Rouge, if one wants 'Cajun cooking,' one really has to do it oneself, and, indeed, the very words usually drive me away, as they mean a dump of excess pepper on whatever. Patout's book is a great alternative to that, written for home cooks, and for people who really like to prize eating with some style and in the context of a culture. More use will be necessary to highlight the recipes I find most useful, but the failure to include coq au vin leads me to give only four stars. But then, I did it myself, and it was good. This is a book for the newcomer, and the long time champion of South Louisiana cooking. Howard M. Romaine Addendum The nine chapters of the book include Gumbos and Soups, Seafood, Poultry and Game, Meats, Vegetables and Side Dishes, Sweets, Pickles and Preserves, and Menus. Try some, it's a real adventure.

Great book for those of you interested in real Cajun cooking done very well. Alex Patout is from the Heart of Acadiana, so he knows what he's talking about. Definitely not for vegetarians.

I remember Alex's place in New Iberia from the early 80's. Great food, my wife and I lived in Lafayette and ate there once a week. We bought the book years ago, shortly after it was published. We still use it today. Try Shrimp Mrs. Ann. You can use fish instead of shrimp and it is still wonderful. The green beans in a roux is very good. There are a number of books on Cajun cooking,

this is one of the best.

This book was my first in the area of Cajun Cooking and inspired me to use my own creativity while preparing different foods. This book shows you the basics in Cajun Cooking.

This book is full of the BEST Cajun recipes on the planet. Its the best Cajun cookbook on the market.

My husband is Cajun, I'm from New York, so making gumbo, etoufee or chicken stew is daunting. The highest complement he can give is that it tastes like his grandma's -- and every recipe from this book hits that high water mark. The only change I make is to omit the okra from the gumbo. Try the Sweet Potato Casserole with Pecan Topping - it will become the staple at your Thanksgiving table.

I thought it looked a bit bland when we got it. There were not a lot of bright pretty pictures. However, every recipe I've tried has turned out great. The recipes are easy to follow. They do require some typical 'cajun' types food (Tasso for example) but mostly the recipes have on hand ingredients. Enjoy.

My passion has been cooking for over forty-years. Since I am a Cajun, most of my dishes are also, and no one did it better. Alex book has allowed me to create even better dishes with much less effort. He is the master.

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