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The River Cottage Curing And Smoking Handbook



Synopsis

A thoroughly practical guide to curing and smoking meat, fish, cheese, and vegetables at home. River Cottage, a long-standing pioneer for high-quality sustainable food, is all about knowing the whole story behind what's put on the table. In true River Cottage form, this accessible, compact guide is bursting with essential information for sourcing, butchering, smoking, and curing the whole hog, cow, chicken, fish, and vegetable. Steven Lamb, a respected charcuterie authority, breaks down the traditional methods of curing and smoking to their most simple procedures, with abundant visual resources and 50 recipes. With some salt, pepper, and sugar from the pantry, it's easy to turn good-quality produce into fantastic, exciting food. This thorough, timely handbook begins with a detailed breakdown of tools (from sharp knives to sausage stuffers, for the gadget-loving cook) and an explanation of the preservation process, including a section on which cuts are best for various methods of curing and smoking. Lamb then dives into each method--from dry-curing to fermentation, brining to smoking--in a straightforward, comprehensive manner. And for each technique, there are many delicious recipes, including chorizo Scotch eggs, hot smoked mackerel, prosciutto, and dry-cured bacon.

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Customer Reviews

This is the book I've needed all along. If you are a homesteader raising your own quality meat, poultry, fish, or cheese this is the book you've been waiting for. If you have a local source for healthy meat, you're a hunter or fisher, or you love to play in the kitchen with unusual techniques

youâ€™ll love this book. If you prefer Hamburger Helperâ„¢ and Shake â€˜nâ€™ Bakeâ„¢ you might feel a bit overwhelmed with the recipes, but hey, everyone has to start somewhere. One of the drawbacks of cultured meat is that it is always pork based. Take a walk through the sausage and deli meat section of your local organic food store and read the labels. I did that last Friday at Choices Market in Kelowna. The first ingredient of every package I picked up â€” Pork. Now for those of you that raise pigs and love pork, thatâ€™s all fine. This book has lots of pork recipes. But my family doesnâ€™t eat pork. Never has, except for a brief bacon fixation when my middle son was 15 till he left home. Once he left, so did the bacon. So when I see those amazing Pinterest recipes of asparagus wrapped in bacon, I pin them anyway, knowing Iâ€™d never be able to actually make them. Isnâ€™t that what Pinterest is for? Well, with this book by Stephen Lamb, thatâ€™s about to change. You can now make bacon at home. Lamb reveals the secret to making bacon at home in just 10 days, using pork, (yes, but why would you have to use pork?). Once you know the step by step process, you can use the knowledge to substitute other meats, like lamb, goat, bear, or even beef. Beef bacon? Well, they sell turkey bacon here. See pages 138 to 143 for the well-illustrated beginner recipe that uses pork belly. There are recipes here for Canadian back bacon, too, using pork loin.

The River Cottage Curing and Smoking Handbook by Steven Lamb is perfect for those wanting to get a better understanding of how to preserve meat at home without expensive equipment. The introduction by Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall gives us a look at the history of curing and smoking as well as traditional cured foods. I really enjoyed the "science behind curing" section, this helped me to get a better understanding of the "why" and "how" of the curing technique and how the main ingredients interact to flavor and preserve. There is also mention of botulism (a bacteria that becomes deadly by the toxins they emit) and how important of a role nitrites and nitrates play in preventing this by means of the curing process. The author did a good job of keeping it simple, pretty much everything in the book can be done without expensive equipment. There is of course, things that will make the job easier like a meat grinder and sausage stuffer but you don't have to go out and buy them just to use the recipes in the book. The ingredients chapter gives us a look at meat, fat, herbs, spices, and casings. I enjoyed the pig diagram that listed the cut of pork, the product it makes, the method of curing to achieve it, and the page number for the recipe. For example, the picnic shoulder can be made into either salami, chorizo, or cotechino by fermentation or air drying and can be found on pages 167, 171, 175, respectively. The chapter on methods is the most informative since you can take that knowledge and span it across many different foods. Dry curing,

fermentation, brining, and smoking are all mentioned in quite in depth. Lastly, the recipes are pretty amazing.

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