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Herbs & Spices: The Cook's Reference



Synopsis

Herbs & Spices is the essential cook's companion, now redesigned and updated with all new recipes. A classic reference, the best-selling Herbs & Spices is a trusted resource in the kitchen, with more than 200 unique herbs and spices from around the world showcased alongside gorgeous, full-color photography, flavor notes, and pairings. This new, updated edition includes the newest herbs, spices, and flavorings influencing global cuisine today, plus more than 180 recipes for main dishes, marinades, pastas, pickles, and sauces. Part spice cookbook, part kitchen encyclopedia, Herbs & Spices offers handy seasoning how-tos: How to identify and choose the best herbs, spices, and other flavorings. How to prepare and cook with them to ensure you are making the most of their flavors. How to make your own blends, spice rubs, sauces, and more — then customize them for your family's palate. Herbs & Spices is perfect for beginning cooks just setting up a kitchen, foodies exploring the deliciously exotic mash-ups of today's modern cooking, and experts looking for ways to experiment with new flavor combinations. This practical illustrated reference book gives you all the guidance you need to become a master of seasonings and to make tantalizing food from around the world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

'herbs & spices, the cook's reference' is the latest of eight different books on either herbs or spices by noted culinary editor and author, Jill Norman, one of the more influential disciples of the great English culinary writer, Elizabeth David, who contributed two books of her own to this subject. I chose this book to review since I had a backlog of herb and spice books to review, and I wanted to

start with one I could assume to be a standard against which all other books can be measured. The problem with starting with the standard is I'm assuming this role purely on the basis of the author's reputation in the field. I am happy to say that I find virtually nothing in this book to invalidate my holding it up as a standard against which other books on the subject may be judged. For starters, Ms. Norman convinces us at the outset that the difference between an herb and a spice is vague enough around the world to require that we treat the two together, thereby eliminating any chance of leaving something out because it was not thought to be a spice or an herb. Part of this ambiguity is her statement that in the United States, a dried herb is considered a spice. Since Ms. Norman is an expert on the subject, I must assume that there is a faction in America that believes this. She states this to make it clear that her basis for distinguishing herbs from spices is based on the current British thinking on the subject. But, since she is covering both, the issue is academic in this book. Much more interesting is Ms. Norman's separation of the various herbs and spices into a large number of categories based on flavor.

The book is organized to make using it a dream. It is divided into three sections Herbs, Spices and Recipes. The first two sections are organized identically; an introduction, categories/groupings of herbs or spices and a section on preparing herbs or spices. Herb groupings are Fresh and mild herbs, Sweet herbs Citrus or tart herbs, Licorice or anise herbs, Minty herbs, Oniony herbs, Bitter or astringent herbs, Pungent and spicy herbs. Spice groupings are Nutty spices, Sweet spices, Acidic and fruity spices, Citrus spices, Licorice or anise spices, Warm and earthy spices, Bitter or astringent spices, pungent spices. Each individual herb or spice has a page that includes pictures, history, notes on flavor use how it is harvested, culinary uses, other spices/herbs it combines with. The pictures and information combine to make this a top notch reference. Recipes section is divided into two main sub-sections Blending herbs and spices and Cooking with herbs and spices. There is also a bibliography, sources and an index. The Recipes for herb blends is shorter than expected but nice and represent other cultures. The spice blends are from around the globe and a longer more comprehensive list there are also recipes for sauces and marinades. Both herb and spice blend Recipes include suggestions and notes on how to use them and the best food pairings. Cooking with herbs and spices has a good range of Recipes and the author packs a lot into this small section; soups and light dishes, fish, meat (includes three chicken recipes), vegetables, pasta noodles & grains, desserts and drinks (including ice cream, Pineapple ginger cooler, Mojito).

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Cook with Seasonings and Spices: The Essential Recipe Collection and Guide to Cooking Delicious

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