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Cooking Under Pressure



Synopsis

Remember how wonderful home cooking tasted when you were a kid? Remember the comforting aromas that filled your house, the delicious soups and stews that warmed your childhood winters? They can all be yours again. From the elegant to the ethnic to the traditional, this collection of recipes -- developed for a whole new generation of pressure cookers and mindful of the healthier way we eat today -- is comfort food at its fastest and best. Today's totally safe pressure cookers -- sleeker, speedier, more user-friendly than the microwave oven -- turn out foods in one-third the time of conventional methods without sacrificing moisture, flavor, or aroma. Even inexpensive cuts of meat become tender and succulent; soups, stews, and sauces taste as if they've been simmering for hours; pot roast melts in the mouth; rice, beans, and grains, which used to take hours, are ready in minutes. Lorna Sass introduces us to an eclectic array of dishes that can be prepared on a whim: Imagine a classic ossobuco in only 18 minutes, chicken gumbo in an astounding 9, superb risotto in just 6 minutes without stirring -- even chocolate cheesecake and Grand Marnier bread pudding are done to perfection in record time. These are dishes that are right in tune with the eat-healthy eat-right life-style of the 1990s: The shorter cooking times allow foods to retain their nutritional content, and the pressure cooker is ideal for preparing grains and beans, so low in cholesterol and high in fiber. Also included in the book are charts and tables that take the guesswork out of cooking foods under pressure. Treat yourself to this wonderful world of satisfying flavors: Take the pressure out of cooking and put the taste and nutrition back in.

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Customer Reviews

I bought my first pressure cooker in the seventies in college. For years, I used it mainly to cook beans, due to its speed. I bought this book when it was first issued and have referred to it countless times, since. Pressure cookers today are indeed different than the earlier models (including my old Mirro). With my old cooker, even though I never had an accident, I had to stay close at hand to monitor the pressure regular rattling, etc. Pressure cooking with a modern cooker is so much easier! My latest purchase, earlier this year, was an electric, programmable cooker from Salton that's as easy to use as my rice cooker or Crock Pot. It's true that some of the recipes in this book use ingredients that are not freely available in non-urban areas of the country. No problem: just adapt to what you want to cook! I read a review by a prior person who lamented that they must be a 'meat and potatoes' person. Fine: do your meat and potatoes here! I find that baked potatoes are much more delicious done in the cooker than in the microwave. The time required is rather a split between nuking and conventional baking. Pressure cooking can do wonders on tough meat the same way that a Crock Pot can. Just be sure and brown your meat first! However, I still use my cooker more for beans than anything. Sass gives a full and careful explanation of bean and legume cooking here, as safety must be considered. Since this book came out several other cookbooks have been released on pressure cooking. I've bought some, and the best alternative to this book is the one published by Presto, the maker of the original pressure cooker. It's an excellent reference also, and also recommended.

get this book. I had heard that pressure cookers were the microwave ovens of the 50's. Then after several people blew them up by overloading them they lost favor. I borrowed one from a friend and bought this book. After making chilli in 20 minutes, and lentil soup in 10. I was a convert. I now own 2 cookers, one really large one (16qt) for making spaghetti sauce and stew, and one medium large one (8qt) for soups. The one thing the book doesn't really cover, is that once the top is on, there is no stirring, (duh!) So if you leave it on high heat, it can burn the thick sauce recipes. So I always heat the mixture until just to simmering, lock the lid on and then cut the heat to medium. It takes a minute or two longer for the pressure to come up but I rarely burn soup any more. Also, if you haven't bought a pot, get a big one, when you fill a pressure cooker, you only fill it 1/2 way. So a 8qt pot, is really good for 4qts of soup. If you have time shop estate sales. That's where I got mine. The pots last a long time, and many who cooked in the 50's will have one that is just fine. (You can get new seals from the presto company.)

Pressure cooking is, unfortunately, very misunderstood. This book should go a long way towards changing that. It presents an excellent range of recipes, well organized and written, and every one of which we've tried has been fabulous. Because of the speed and flavor, we've been pressure cooker fans for three years, and this book opened our eyes to new possibilities. Ms. Sass's taste in spiciness tends to be a little milder than ours, but once you see where she's coming from, it's very easy to adjust. We'll try the vegetarian version of the book, too

I cannot praise this book too highly. As a long-time cook, but novice pressure cook, I found Ms. Sass's recipes simple to follow, and always as promised. Delicious doesn't begin to describe her Mushroom Barley Soup, which she correctly bills as the same comfort food that is served at Ratner's Restaurant. I grew up in NYC, and ate often at that landmark, and my family has patiently tolerated my frequent references to how scrumptious that particular soup was--well--I just produced it, courtesy of Lorna Sass, in my own pressure cooker (Kuhn-Rikon, also divine to use). The risotto with leeks, mushrooms and olives is also noteworthy, but I am confident that all these recipes are. This book, as well as *The Pressured Cook*, also by Sass, are all anyone needs to produce exceptionally satisfying dishes made with wholesome ingredients, and ready quickly. The portions are generous, and the introductions to each recipe are accurate, informative and inspiring. If more stars were available, I would award them.

As a newcomer to pressure cooking, I needed some where to start, and someone to give me the basics of pressure cooking. I went to my local book store, and the sales person suggested this book over a dozen others on the subject. It is not only an easy read, but is full of more information than you will ever need. The recipes are great and written so that anyone can start cooking right away, and turn out a great meal in minutes. This will always be number one on my cook book list. Thank you for helping me on my way to better and healthier cooking.

We've tried nearly every meatless recipe in this book and, with the single exception of "peanut butter-carrot soup" (yes, you read that right!), they've been exceptionally good. One of the best things is how quickly all can be prepared. You can go from deciding to cook a bean dish for dinner to eating that same bean dish in well under an hour. No more overnight pre-soaks! The recipes are all easy to prepare and are really delicious. I'm getting copies for my mom and sister for Christmas! (Psst -- don't tell 'em!)

I bought this book in 1997 to learn about pressure cooking. Now I use it to adapt my Latina recipes to fast pressure cooking. I've made Ropa Vieja (Flank Steak) (25 minutes under pressure), Black Bean Soup (35 minutes under pressure), Coconut Bread Pudding (15 minutes under pressure), and Flan (an amazing 15 minutes under pressure). Though these recipes are not in Ms. Sass' book, you can easily adapt your favorite recipes by following her guidelines and expertise. A must-have book for all busy cooks.

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