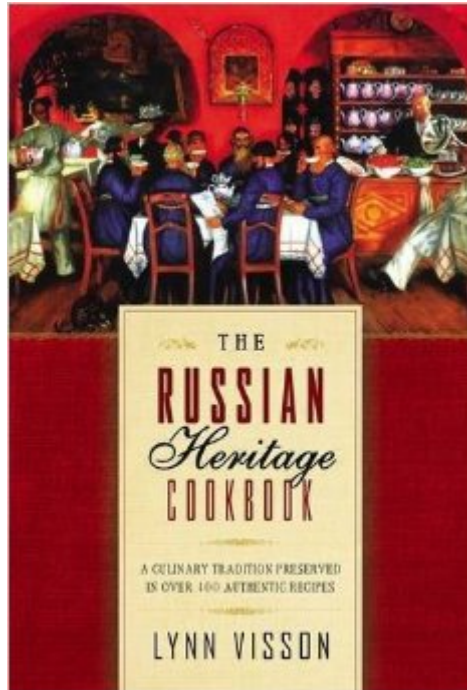


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The Russian Heritage Cookbook: A Culinary Heritage Preserved In 360 Authentic Recipes



Synopsis

Based on favourite family recipes and passed down through generations, this cookbook represents the restoration of a culinary heritage. The author brings together recipes for classics such as beef stroganoff and borscht, along with hundreds of others.

Book Information

Hardcover: 336 pages

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Best Sellers Rank: #608,378 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #40 inÂ Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Regional & International > European > Russian

Customer Reviews

I love this cookbook -- I actually own an earlier edition, which is well worn by now. The recipes were gathered from Russian emigres while the cold war was still raging. Back then, this book was something of a revelation: written proof that Russian food is a lot more than Borscht and the "Bleenies and caviar" that were served daily at the (now gone) Russian Tea Room in NYC. (For Russians, Blini are a seasonal treat!) The only drawback to this book, in my experience, is that one or two of the recipes seem to be a bit vague or off the mark regarding specified quantities. Maybe it's me, but I always find myself with too much filling for the allotted amount of dough in some of the pirozhki recipes. Fortunately, the dough is easy enough to make more of, and you can't make too many pirozhki (once you're on a roll!); they freeze and re-heat beautifully. (Try the Nabokova recipes - the cabbage filled pirozhki are especially delicious!) This problem may be a result of the book being - essentially - a collection of recipes from various sources, and perhaps this new edition has tested the recipes anew and solved this infrequent problem. Other than finding myself with too much cabbage filling, my results have been consistently good and extremely tasty! In addition to the great zakuski section, and the classic dishes (try 'Pozharski Kotlety'), I highly recommend the sweets! The Trifunovich Napoleon is divine, the flourless, vodka-infused Apricot cake is fabulous, and the Paskha and Kisel' desserts are uniquely Russian and quite delicious. Other Russian

cookbooks I have seen offer more cultural commentary, though this book has some of that, too. Some are also broader in scope, covering more cultures and cuisines that were encompassed by the Soviet Union (i.e.

I have seen several cookbooks covering eastern European cuisines that are nothing more than collections of relatively simple recipes, where the primary objective is number of recipes and the secondary objective is a reasonable faithfulness to their sources. These books give no insights into the wellsprings of these cuisines and typically give only the simplest versions of classic recipes. This book does not fit this description. It is a rich evocation of 19th century Russian cuisine and its influences, and those things it has influenced. While the current edition is being published in 2004, this is the second edition of a book the author states was originally published 20 years ago, although the copyright page does not state the date of the first edition. The only reason for this I can see is that this is the first edition to be published in the United States. I bring this up for three reasons. First, if a book survives to a second edition, it means the first edition was well received and worthy of an update. Second, this means this worthy book was probably improved in the reissue. Third, and most interesting, is the fact that the two editions straddle the fall of the USSR, and the author has several interesting observations on this fact. The author's introduction and the discussion of Russian cuisine in the USSR is an interesting take on Paula Wolfert's contention that one of the requirements for a sustenance of a great cuisine is an aristocracy which can support a class of creative chefs. This was certainly true of Czarist Russia, and it was certainly not true of Russia in the USSR. In spite of how immediate these events are to us, it is still surprising to read that even up to the very end of the Soviet regime, access to fresh or gourmet foods was difficult even in Moscow and St.

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