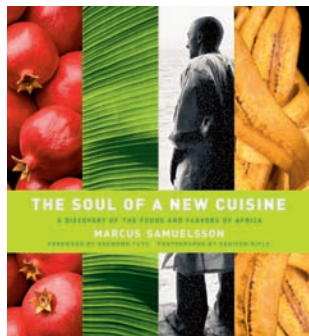


From the kitchens of *DiningOut*

A dedicated, hungry look at some hot new cookbooks



The Soul of a New Cuisine: A Discovery of the Foods and Flavors of Africa

by Marcus Samuelsson
Wiley Publishers, 2006

Marcus Samuelsson, an Ethiopian orphan turned Swedish national, has received almost universal praise for his inventive interpretations of classic Scandinavian cuisine. So, it may be surprising that this cookbook focuses

not on the food served at his Manhattan restaurant, Aquavit, but on the various regional styles and flavors of the continent of his birth. Though African recipes are unfamiliar to many of us, the recipes in this book are easy to follow. I prepared Vegetable Tagine, a dish based on the cooking found in Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. It's a savory stew usually cooked in earthenware pots called "tagines," though my version was prepared using a regular pasta pot and frying pan. While the ingredients used in this recipe are fairly common, it's the spices that make them stand out—blends and rubs like *berbere*, a blend of chili peppers and spices that Samuelsson calls a "building block" of Ethiopian cuisine, and *boharat*, a blend used in North Africa that incorporates pepper, ginger and cinnamon with dried rose petals. Much more than just a cookbook, *The Soul of a New Cuisine* offers a warm, homey description and beautiful portrait of African people. No wonder it's a James Beard Foundation award-winner.

—Cara Hopkins

Fantastico! Little Italian Plates and Antipasti from Rick Tramonto's Kitchen

By Rick Tramonto with Mary Goodbody
Broadway, 2007

Four-star chef and owner of five Chicago-area restaurants, Rick Tramonto presents the fine art of small-plate Italian dining. His cookbook is divided into nine sections, from Assaggio (Starters) through Crudo (Raw, salted, and marinated) and Panini such as Grilled Asparagus, Tallegio, and Prosciutto, all the way to Antipasti and Cheese desserts like Gorgonzola Dolce with Roasted Pears and Spiced Walnuts. Tramonto adapts traditional Italian ingredients and preparation to American tastes and habits, so there's a blend of Old and New World. Raised in a large New York Italian family, his cooking has its roots in the Sunday feast, and the recipes come with his fascinating morsels of personal and cultural associations.



Weber's Real Grilling

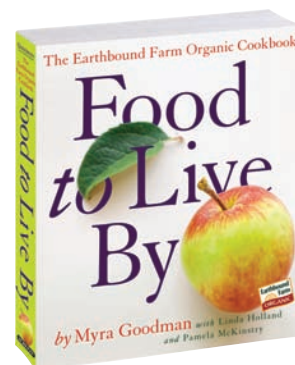
By Jamie Purviance
Sunset Publishing Corporation, 2005

Master Griller Jamie Purviance offers up a user-friendly guide to grilling, which he reminds us is "about much more than food and fire"—it brings people together to relax and express themselves through cooking. This heavyweight barbecue bible boasts over 200 original recipes, each with a lush color photo. The recipes call for commonly found ingredients, so busy people can get down to business in the backyard without much fuss, and it's written in a clear, easy-to-follow style. Keep it simple with Chicago-style hot dogs, or go all out with marinated sea scallops and roasted tomatillo salsa, perfect for a hot summer night.

Food to Live By: The Earthbound Farm Organic Cookbook

By Myra Goodman with Linda Holland
and Pamela McKinstry
Workman Publishing Company, 2006

In 1984, native New Yorkers Myra and Drew Goodman traded in their concrete backyards for the pioneer life out West, rising with the sun and working the land until dark. It all started with a roadside stand selling home-grown raspberries—now they're farming 40,000 acres with a bounty of more than 100 products. The book is filled with shopping tips, while the raspberry-to-riches story of Earthbound unfolds scrapbook style. Salad passion is clear with nearly 50 pages of leafy green ideas, such as the California Waldorf, dressed up with spinach, curry, and yogurt. All of the offerings aim for terrific taste, optimum health, and environmentally-friendly farming.



Workin' More Kitchen Sessions with Charlie Trotter

By Charlie Trotter and Sari Zernich
Ten Speed Press, 2004

Inspired by the jam sessions of Parker and Coltrane, Trotter urges readers to see the similarities between music and food, asserting that "the cook or musician who grasps the fundamentals is free to let go of conventions." The jazzy organization here is by ingredient rather than course, bouncing from fennel to tomatoes to cheese. Readers are advised to improvise on such delights as Artichokes Stuffed Three Ways or to substitute mushrooms as a "fun alternative" to lamb. Wine notes follow each entrée, and the cookbook includes tips on filling the pantry with stocks and oils, plus a glossary of techniques from the self-proclaimed Miles Davis of cuisine, Mr. Trotter himself.

—Candace Kearns Read