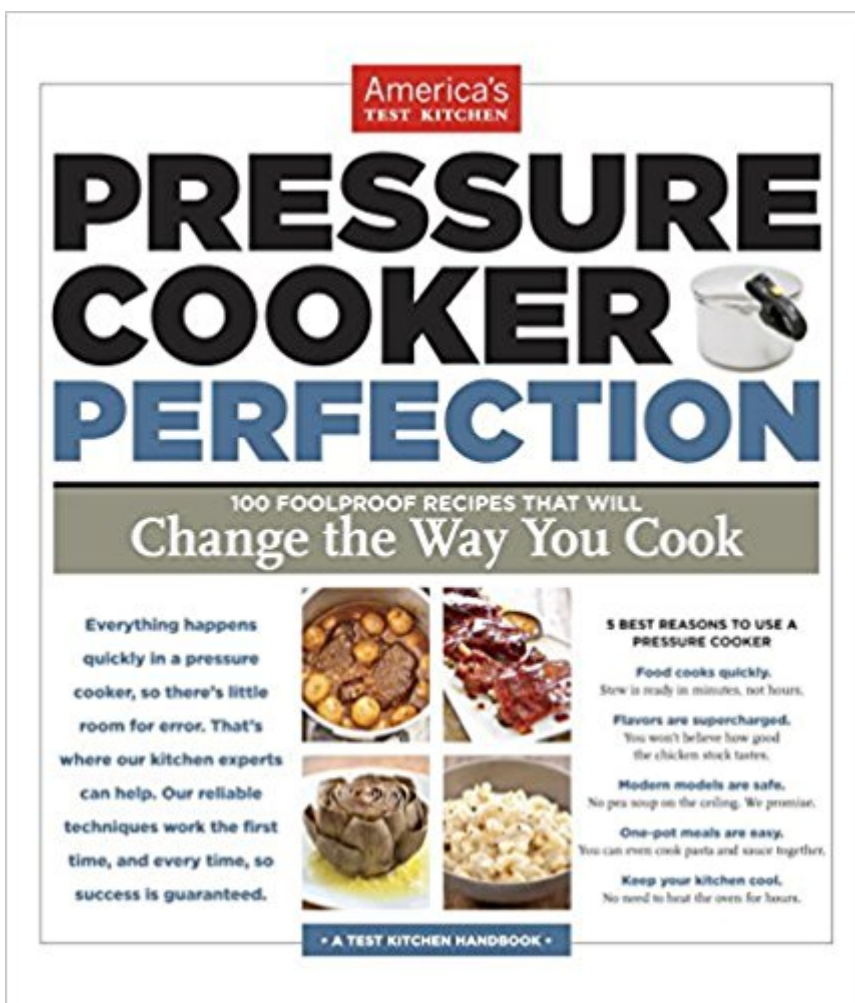


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Pressure Cooker Perfection: 100 Foolproof Recipes That Will Change The Way You Cook



Synopsis

100 foolproof pressure-cooker recipes that will change the way you cook. In *Pressure Cooker Perfection*, the first volume in our new test kitchen handbook series, the editors at America's Test Kitchen demystify an appliance that to many home cooks remains intimidating -- but shouldn't. Modern pressure cookers are safer, quieter, more reliable, and more user-friendly than old-fashioned jiggle-top models. And they can prepare a wide range of foods -- everything from barbecue to risotto -- in record time. Cooking under pressure results in better-tasting dishes because every drop of flavor is trapped in the sealed pot. This fact, combined with the shorter cooking time, means that your dishes will be supercharged with flavor. And cooking under pressure is versatile. While they're ideal for roasts and stews, pressure cookers can also turn out perfectly tender beans, grains, and legumes in short order. If ever there was a cooking method that could benefit from the obsessive trial and error that our test kitchen is known for, this is it. When cooking time is compressed, every minute matters, and when flavors are amplified, even a small change becomes significant. We ran hundreds of tests in fifteen pressure cookers to find out what works and what doesn't, and we deliver the foolproof, guaranteed-successful recipes in *Pressure Cooker Perfection*. With this foolproof guide to cooking under pressure, every home cook will be guaranteed success.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

America's Test Kitchen is well-known for its top-rated television shows with more than 4 million weekly public television viewers, bestselling cookbooks, magazines, websites, and cooking school.

The highly reputable and recognizable brands of America's Test Kitchen, Cook's Illustrated, and Cook's Country are the work of over 60 passionate chefs based in Boston, Massachusetts, who put ingredients, cookware, equipment, and recipes through objective, rigorous testing to identify the very best. Discover, learn, and expand your cooking repertoire with Julia Collin Davison, Bridget Lancaster, Jack Bishop, Dan Souza, Lisa McManus, Tucker Shaw, Bryan Roof, and our fabulous team of test cooks!

I bought this book specifically for the recipes; simple, everyday food made with fresh ingredients. Despite the many negative reviews about the book from ePC owners (and ATK's bias) to the contrary, I bought it specifically for an electric PC (Instant Pot) and have found this to be an excellent cookbook. To be sure, the timing given is for stovetop PCs, but with the proper timing adjustments, the recipes turn out very well. I'd like to say a few things about ATK's dislike of ePCs (a big part of why the best of them are "Recommended With Reservations"). In the full review of them found in the magazine and on the website, they go into great detail. It mostly comes down to 2 things. First, it seems that all ePCs (including my Instant Pot) automatically switch over to "Keep Warm" when cooking is completed. This seems to completely befuddle them. But really, is turning your electric unit off when the timer sounds any different than turning your stove off when your own timer goes off at the end of stovetop cooker's pressure time? I think it's exactly the same, as both require getting up and turning off the pot when the beep sounds (Note - the Instant Pot 7-in-1 switches to 'keep warm', but the heating element is turned OFF until pressure releases, then turns back on in warming mode). 2nd, they dislike the nonstick cooking pots. Fair enough, but their last review didn't include any of the models that ship with stainless pots (very nice ones, too, with thick bases, like the one on my IP) and completely ignores the optional stainless pot available for some of the others. And yes, those models (Instant Pot among them) were available well before their latest ePC review was written. Ok, rant over, back to the book. The beginning of the book covers the basics of operation and advantages (along with reviews) of pressure cookers. Especially helpful are the tips and food guides found on pages 4-23. As a relatively new PC owner, I find myself referring to them often, even when cooking from another source. Experienced PC cooks will just skip right past them, but they're very nice for beginners and anyone, really, who's cooking something new. The chapters are well organized and include nice entries like Fast and Easy Suppers as well as Fancy Dinners and Large Roasts. I appreciate that anything that's not normally a main dish is all in one chapter, Sides. Desserts are a notable omission, but they redeem themselves with One-Pot Pasta and Pasta Sauces and Indoor Barbecue. The recipes predictably make use of fresh

ingredients and ATK's signature streamlined methods, like finely chopping the vegetables for Bolognese sauce in a food processor, then doing the same with the pancetta and mortadella. This not only speeds up prep time, it allows the ingredients to cook down faster while still releasing all their flavor compounds to the sauce. Total time? 90 minutes. Not shabby. The sole exception to the "fresh" rule seems to be the condensed French onion soup used in Weeknight Pot Roast and Potatoes. It works, though, and got my pot roast on the table in 70 minutes, start to finish (note - I prefer to use Lipton Onion Soup and a cup of water, we like the flavor better). ATK helpfully gives total time involved, and highlights time under pressure in big type, a nice touch. Some nice detailed variations are included in many of the recipes, like Garden Tomato Sauce with variations for Puttanesca, Arrabbiata and Tomato, Vodka & Cream Sauce. In the 3 weeks I've owned the book, I've sampled recipes from 3 chapters; the aforementioned Weeknight Pot Roast and Potatoes from Big Roasts and Fancy Meals, Pulled Pork from Indoor Barbecue and Barbecued Beans from Sides. All were very good. To the pork I added about 1/4 cup of my barbecue sauce (tossed after shredding) and to the Barbecued Beans I added about 2 Tbls more catsup to amp up the tomato flavor a notch. Both were the kind of easy fixes that I commonly make with new recipes, slight alterations to suit our tastes. The book has lots of white space on the pages, which makes it so easy to jot down alterations, and also allows me to easily note the timing for my Instant Pot, which often varies from the listed time. Pages are glossy white, with ingredient lists and major steps in bold type. Why doesn't every cookbook do this? Also included with every recipe is a detailed explanation (with thumbnail photos) of the techniques used and a few troubleshooting tips. Again, experienced PC cooks may find this unnecessary, but with the new resurgence in pressure cooking, many of us will find these quite valuable. It's not a big book, with only 100 recipes, but when I compare it to The Great Big Pressure Cooker Book, it shines. That book has 500 recipes, every one of which lists ingredients in brick-red ink, which all runs together on its busy pages. Further, the index is very poorly organized, with some recipes appearing under their main and secondary ingredient and on their own, by title, and others only found once under their main ingredient. Most damning of all, the timing for electric cookers given with every recipe I sampled is woefully off. Risotto takes 6 minutes in my Instant Pot, GBPCB's author thinks it takes 10. ATK lists it at 6 minutes, spot on. Note that for short-cooking foods, ePC timing is the same as for stovetop models. Of the 3 pressure cookbooks I own, this is my favorite. It is well organized, easy to read and cook from and the recipes use simple, commonly available, fresh ingredients.

If you're using an electric pressure cooker, you should probably steer clear of this cookbook. For

instance, several recipes call for adding flour prior to pressure cooking. If you add flour prior to cooking under pressure with an electric pressure cooker, you will probably never get to pressure as the flour will settle on the bottom of the pot, burn, and keep the liquid from boiling properly and thus coming to pressure. Additionally, the suggestions for altering recipes for electric pressure cookers are generally off. As an example, why set a separate timer rather than using the cooker's timer? The timer on my electric cooker starts as soon as the pot comes to pressure so there's no need to start a separate timer at that time as the book suggests. For context, I've been cooking with modern pressure cookers for nearly twenty years. I've done so with two stovetop cookers--Kuhn Rikon and Fissler--and now recently with an Instant Pot, an electric model. Also, I've subscribed to *Cook's Illustrated* since the 1990s and I'm generally a fan of their work--including *America's Test Kitchen*. Nonetheless, this cookbook is a failure. There are many better pressure cooker books out there. See, for example, *Hip Pressure Cooking* and those by Lorna Sass. Edit: After I wrote the above, I wondered if I'd missed something about this book as *Cook's Illustrated* and *America's Test Kitchen* have been such great resources for me. To my surprise, I found that I'd missed how truly flawed the book is! Via a web search that included the book's title and then added the word errors, I read multiple reviews that clearly and precisely laid out the major flaws--timings too long and too short, too much water when cooking beans, the thickener error I noted above, and the list goes on. Bottom line, all pressure cooker owners--whether stovetop or electric--should avoid this book. It simply fails on too many levels.

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