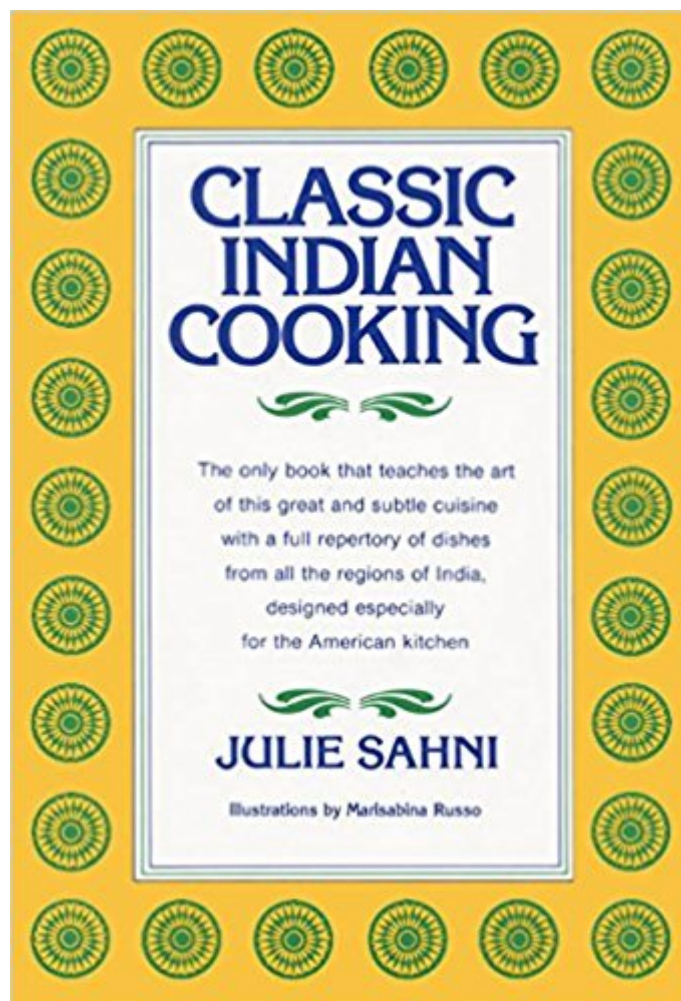


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Classic Indian Cooking



Synopsis

This extraordinary cookbook, *Classic Indian Cooking*, amounts to a complete course in Indian cuisine. Elucidated by over 100 line drawings, it systematically introduces the properties of all the basic spices and special ingredients of Indian food, then explains the techniques employed in using them, always with the help of comparisons to familiar Western methods. It is immediately obvious that Indian food is rich and varied, yet not difficult to prepare. The cooking principles are basic and wellknown. The utensils needed are few and simple. As Julie Sahni says, "If you know how to fry, there are few tricks to Indian food." Every recipe has been especially designed for the American kitchen -- practically all the ingredients can be found in any American supermarket and there are scores of time-saving shortcuts with the food processor and handy directions for ahead-of-time preparation. Following a lively and absorbing introduction to the history of India's classic Moghul cuisine, Julie guides the cook through the individual components that make up an Indian meal. She begins with delicious appetizers like Crab Malabar and Hyderabad lime soup; continues through main courses, both nonvegetarian and vegetarian (this book is a treasure trove for the non-meat eater); goes on to all the side dishes and traditional accompaniments, from spinach raita and lentils with garlic butter to saffron pilaf and whole wheat flaky bread; and ends with the glorious desserts, like Ras Malai, sweetmeats, and beverages. Clear, illustrated, step-by-step instructions accompany the cook through every stage, even for making the many wondrous Indian breads, both by hand and with the food processor. And at the end of each recipe are balanced serving suggestions for every kind of meal. Among the many special features are ideas for appropriate wines, a useful spice chart, a complete glossary (which might also come in handy when ordering in Indian restaurants), and a mailorder shopping guide that will make Indian spices accessible anywhere. Most important, Julie Sahni imparts the secrets to mastering the art of Indian cooking. Even the beginner will quickly learn to move within the classic tradition and improvise with sureness and ease. Julie Sahni has written a masterpiece of culinary instruction, as readable as it is usable, a joy to cook from, a fascination to read.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Julie Sahni is director of Julie Sahni's Indian Cooking School, established in 1973.

I bought this as a gift for my husband, since he loves to cook. We tried checking it out at the library first, just to see what the recipes were like, but, alas, our small library did not have it. So I purchased it for him anyway as a surprise, based on the outstanding reviews. Wow. Delicious stuff in here! My husband has been impressed with the format and comprehensiveness of the recipes; he loves how there are sides listed after each main course. And, so far, we have been really impressed with the taste of every meal that has come from this book. Like other reviewers have said, the recipes are not simple or for beginners, necessarily, but, overall, this is a great cookbook if you want to make authentic and delicious Indian food!

This book is a great intro for those with no experience with Indian cooking (food, techniques, ingredients). Ms. Sahni does a thorough job laying out an Indian pantry, kitchen equipment, spice prep, simple food techniques such as preparing ghee or making paneer (with illustrations!) as well as my favorite, her instruction on bread-making (again, with the all-important illustrations!) I also enjoy the nice intro she gives to each chapter and recipe, giving the history and/or region of the recipe/technique. She includes helpful tips on what freezes well vs doesn't, what improves with keeping etc. which I truly appreciate. The book also contains a very nice glossary that not only describes items, but gives you a phonetic Indian pronunciation (also nice to have before you go blind into the Indian grocery) Having said that, the cookbook itself has some pretty basic recipes, not very extensive, not all that exciting. Buy this book if you're looking for: A decent intro into Indian cooking techniques, bread-making, or if you benefit from simple illustrations (like me) of techniques, and you're only expecting simple recipes. Don't buy this book if you're looking for: A large index of recipes, a large variety of different tastes/techniques, creative recipes. They're just not here. Try

1000 Indian recipes by Neelam Batra. Bottom line: This was my go-to book 8 years ago, now I rarely use it, but certainly wouldn't part with it!

I adore this book. It is both fundamental and complete. The first ~ 100 pages is a description of the techniques and ingredients needed for the Indian cuisine. The next 400 pages are well selected recipes, with little overlap. They are all unique and special in their own way, not just variations of each other. This is probably not a book for those looking for simple recipes (a fine thing also, but not what I wanted) without needing to know any background. Sahni seems to be challenging us to take it to the next level - for example, I even started making my own coconut milk and grinding my own spice blends. But this is what I wanted, the complete and classic methods. When I started cooking Indian a few months ago, I took about a dozen books out of the local library. Some of them I copied a few recipes. But this one, and Madhur Jaffrey's "Indian Cooking" were purchased. I couldn't copy whole books!

The book is very interesting, love to learn recipes from another exotic part of the world...It is my personal way to celebrate diversity, to learn new things...To eat can be boring if we eat the same things all the time, so to investigate and to discover food like Indian Cooking is delicious and it makes me connect with my appetite to savour food cook in a fresh way...

This is still the best Indian cookbook if you can only have one. More, detailed, authentic and wider in scope than even Madhur Jaffrey's classic India cuisine works for English speaking cooks. Massive and massively important book.

Love this book so much. I read it like a novel at bedtime. Sahni's recipes may seem daunting to one initiated in Indian cuisine, but they are so thorough and so clear that after a few recipes, one feels very confident and immersed in the aromas, techniques, and histories of each dish.

Read a recipe from Classic Indian Cooking in the New York Times. Made it, and it was fantastic! Decided to purchase the book, and it is loaded with outstanding recipes, as well as a nice discussion of Indian cooking and ingredients.

Though I've eaten a lot of Indian food in restaurants, I'd never cooked Indian food before I bought this book. Nor am I an especially enthusiastic cook. I found Ms. Sahni's book informative (but not

overwhelming) and very easy to follow. I've now tried five or six of the recipes and also made usli ghee and paneer--all came out perfectly. The most amazing thing to me was that when Ms. Sahni says, "Let this cook for 15 minutes, then it will start to spatter a little...", that's exactly what happens, practically to the second. From one novice to many others who may be reading this, be sure you get all your spices and other ingredients measured and ready to go before you start cooking, because often things go in quick sequence. In the ingredient lists, I've also drawn brackets around the spices and other ingredients that go in at the same time so I can measure the group into one bowl and also have a quick reference for the stages of cooking without having to reread the narrative in the steps. The only thing that has tripped me--and this is slight--is that when hot water is required during cooking, it's stated in the steps but not in the ingredient list. I'm now in the habit of writing it in the ingredient list so I'll know I'll need it ahead of time. I have a couple of other Indian cookbooks that are also very good, but I keep going back to this one. Great book!!

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