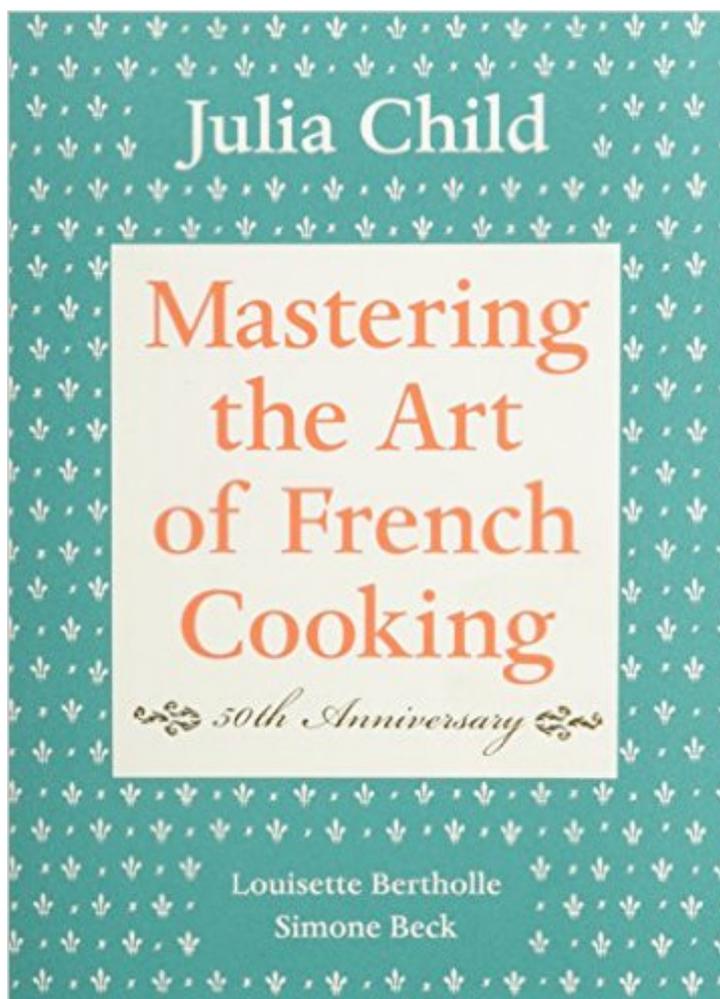


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Mastering The Art Of French Cooking, Vol. 1



Synopsis

This is the classic cookbook, in its entirety— all 524 recipes. “Anyone can cook in the French manner anywhere,” wrote Mesdames Beck, Bertholle, and Child, “with the right instruction.” And here is the book that, for more than forty years, has been teaching Americans how. Mastering the Art of French Cooking is for both seasoned cooks and beginners who love good food and long to reproduce at home the savory delights of the classic cuisine, from the historic Gallic masterpieces to the seemingly artless perfection of a dish of spring-green peas. This beautiful book, with more than 100 instructive illustrations, is revolutionary in its approach because: it leads the cook infallibly from the buying and handling of raw ingredients, through each essential step of a recipe, to the final creation of a delicate confection; it breaks down the classic cuisine into a logical sequence of themes and variations rather than presenting an endless and diffuse catalogue of recipes; the focus is on key recipes that form the backbone of French cookery and lend themselves to an infinite number of elaborations— bound to increase anyone’s culinary repertoire; it adapts classical techniques, wherever possible, to modern American conveniences; it shows Americans how to buy products, from any supermarket in the United States, that reproduce the exact taste and texture of the French ingredients, for example, equivalent meat cuts, the right beans for a cassoulet, or the appropriate fish and seafood for a bouillabaisse; it offers suggestions for just the right accompaniment to each dish, including proper wines. Since there has never been a book as instructive and as workable as Mastering the Art of French Cooking, the techniques learned here can be applied to recipes in all other French cookbooks, making them infinitely more usable. In compiling the secrets of famous cordons bleus, the authors have produced a magnificent volume that is sure to find the place of honor in every kitchen in America. Bon appétit!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

My mom was insistent that we kids learn to cook, and when Julia Child came on public television in the 60's, the whole family was glued to the set. We watched with fascination as she did things with food we Americans didn't know you could do. Mom bought this cookbook then, and I still have it, cover hanging by threads and covered in all kinds of saucy stains. It's still going strong, getting more stains every time I give a dinner party. We learned how to make omelets, roasts, soups like Vichysoisse (surprisingly simple potato and leek soup), and how to cook the bumper crop of garden green beans in a new and very delectable manner. I still think that this may be one of the best cookbooks for vegetables that I have on my shelf. I prize it for the meat section, especially a veal ragout that is possibly one of the most luxurious company dishes for a dinner party. It can be made ahead, and in fact, improves if you do. There are a lot of delicious desserts, some complicated (like Creme Bavaroise) and some cakes such as Reine de Saba (Queen of Sheba), a darkly moist and modest looking little chocolate cake. This is easy to make, but so rich and delicious it should be banned by the AMA. What's not in here is French Bread. That's in Volume II. Just in case you were looking for that recipe, fyi. We made French-style green beans and the Reine de Saba cake one memorable Thanksgiving when we were very young, and even the kids (seven cousins, five of which were BOYS) sat politely glued to the table for the ENTIRE meal instead of getting up and running around halfway through the feast. The food was THAT good.

Rarely are we able to say with certainty that a book is at the top of its subject in regard and quality. This book, 'Mastering the Art of French Cooking' by Julia Child, Louisette Bertholle, and Simone Beck is certainly in that most unique position among cookbooks written in English and published in the United States. With Julia Child's celebrity arising from her long series of TV cooking shows on PBS, it may be easy to forget how Ms. Child rose to a position with the authority that gave her the cachet to do these shows in the first place. This book is the foundation of that cachet and the basis of Ms. Child's influence with an entire generation of amateur and professional chefs. It may also be easy to forget that this book has three authors and not just one. The three began as instructors in a school of French cooking, 'Les Ecole des Trois Gourmandes' operating in Paris in the 1950's. And, it was from their experience with this school that led them to write this book. To be fair, Julia Child originated a majority of the culinary content and contributed almost all of the grunt work with her editors and publisher to get the book published. The influence of this book cannot be

underestimated. It has been written that the style of recipe writing even influenced James Beard, the leading American culinary authority at the time, to change his style of writing in a major cookbook on which he was working when '...French Cooking' was published. Many major American celebrity experts in culinary matters have cited Child and this book as a major influence. Not the least of these is Martha Stewart and Ina Garten. It is interesting that these first to come to mind are not professional chefs, but caterers and teachers of the household cook.

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