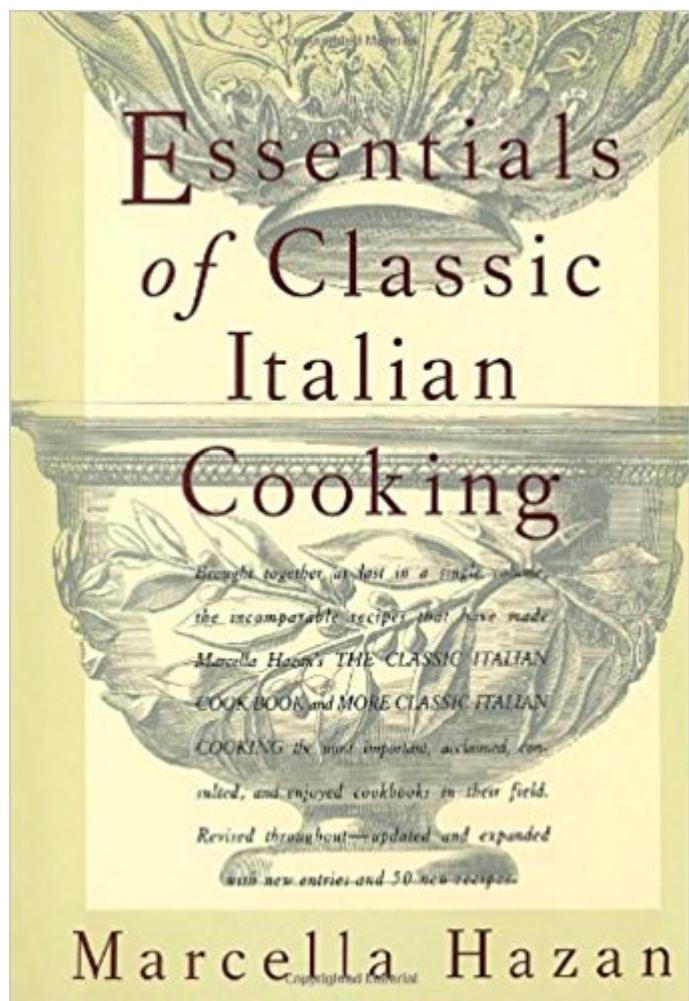


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Essentials Of Classic Italian Cooking



Synopsis

Almost twenty years ago, with the publication of The Classic Italian Cook Book, followed by More Classic Italian Cooking, Marcella Hazan introduced Americans to a whole new world of Italian food. As Roy Andries de Groot wrote, "Marcella's book is the most authentic guide to Italian food ever written in the U.S. Where other authors failed, Marcella has brilliantly succeeded in capturing (and conveying to the reader on every page) the feel, the aromatic scent, the subtle nuances of fresh country flavors and, above all, the easy uncomplication of Italian food prepared in the Italian style." Now a new generation is ready to master the art of Italian cooking, and their bible will be Essentials of Classic Italian Cooking, "this new volume that combines the two books, updates and expanded throughout. Designed as a basic manual for cooks on every level" "from beginners to accomplished professionals" "it offers both an accessible and comprehensive guide to techniques and ingredients and a collection of the most delicious recipes from the Italian repertoire."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

'Essentials of Classic Italian Cooking' is Marcella Hazan's fourth book, composed of an edited and updated amalgam of her first two books, both of which were on 'classic Italian cooking'. As with all of Ms. Hazan's books except for her latest, 'Marcella Says', my main regret is that I have not read them sooner. All, especially this volume, are every bit as good as the blurbs may lead you to believe. Some reviewers have compared this book to 'The Joy of Cooking'. It is much more accurate to compare it to Julia Child's seminal 'Mastering the Art of French Cooking' on several counts. First, like Child's book, Hazan's book is devoted exclusively to the techniques, ingredients, and recipes of

a single major national cuisine. Second, unlike 'The Joy of Cooking', it does not cover absolutely every kitchen technique and issue such as hygiene, nutrition, preserving, and obscure game meats. Third, the book is published and edited by the same people, Knopf and senior editor Judith Jones. This common publishing team means the two books have a very similar look. Both are illustrated by line drawings and both benefit from Knopf's traditional skill in designing the typeface and layout of books in general for easy reading. Fourth, Ms. Hazan arrived at cooking in almost exactly the same manner as Julia Child, in that they found themselves married to men who like to eat well, and they did not know how to cook at the time. The 64-dollar question of course is whether this book is equal in quality to Child's book.

Essentials gets the most use of any cookbook in my kitchen, second only to Joy of Cooking. I absolutely love it. I started cooking from it as a fairly new cook - every recipe is easy with very good instructions. Essentials is a real Italian cookbook so you will not find Italian-American recipes loaded with cheese and tons of sauce (not that those aren't good). The book is over 600 pages and crammed full of recipes from all of Italy's regions (no food pictures). Virtually every recipe has notes for ahead-of-time prep and all the pasta sauce recipes list a recommended pasta. My husband loves Marcella Hazan b/c she doesn't try to be fancy. If a dried pasta is best with a sauce she will recommend it. If canned broth can be used, she will make a note of it. There is a great chapter in the back of the book called "At Table". She discusses how Italians eat (how the courses work) and has a large variety of suggested menus. My favorite cookbook reviews list the recipes people have made from it. It gives me ideas of dishes to try and a better idea of what the cookbook will be like. Since I have made over 30 recipes from this book I can't list them all, but here are some of our favorites: Minestrone alla Romagnola - the best, thickest vegetable soup I have ever had and unlike any minestrone I have had at a restaurant. Tomato Sauce with Porcini Mushrooms; Smothered Onion Sauce; Scallop Sauce with Olive Oil, Garlic and Hot Pepper; and Gorgonzola Sauce are all incredible on pasta. Don't forget the Pesto! Her recipe is the best. On to risotto's.... the Parmesan Cheese; Porcini Mushroom; and Sausage risotto's are great. The Baked Crespelle with Spinach, Prosciutto and Parmesan is a yummy Sunday night dinner.

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