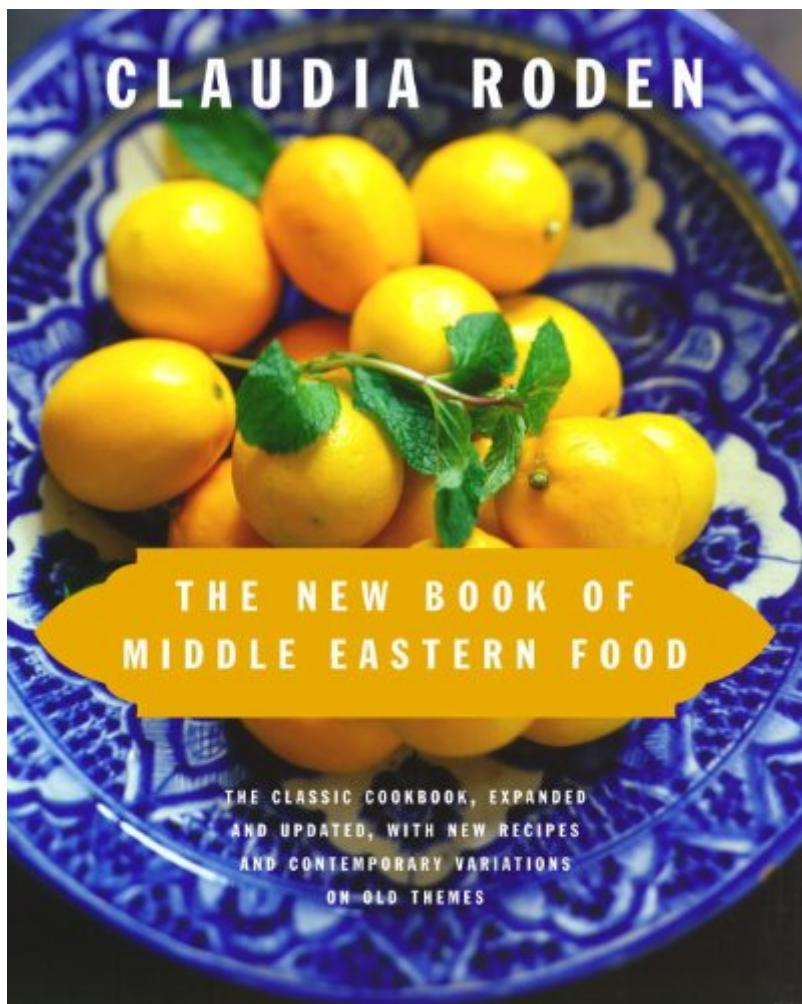


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The New Book Of Middle Eastern Food



Synopsis

In this updated and greatly enlarged edition of her Book of Middle Eastern Food, Claudia Roden re-creates a classic. The book was originally published here in 1972 and was hailed by James Beard as "a landmark in the field of cookery"; this new version represents the accumulation of the author's thirty years of further extensive travel throughout the ever-changing landscape of the Middle East, gathering recipes and stories. Now Ms. Roden gives us more than 800 recipes, including the aromatic variations that accent a dish and define the country of origin: fried garlic and cumin and coriander from Egypt, cinnamon and allspice from Turkey, sumac and tamarind from Syria and Lebanon, pomegranate syrup from Iran, preserved lemon and harissa from North Africa. She has worked out simpler approaches to traditional dishes, using healthier ingredients and time-saving methods without ever sacrificing any of the extraordinary flavor, freshness, and texture that distinguish the cooking of this part of the world. Throughout these pages she draws on all four of the region's major cooking styles: the refined haute cuisine of Iran, based on rice exquisitely prepared and embellished with a range of meats, vegetables, fruits, and nuts; Arab cooking from Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan--at its finest today, and a good source for vegetable and bulgur wheat dishes; the legendary Turkish cuisine, with its kebabs, wheat and rice dishes, yogurt salads, savory pies, and syrupy pastries; North African cooking, particularly the splendid fare of Morocco, with its heady mix of hot and sweet, orchestrated to perfection in its couscous dishes and tagines. From the tantalizing mezze--those succulent bites of filled fillo crescents and cigars, chopped salads, and stuffed morsels, as well as tahina, chickpeas, and eggplant in their many guises--to the skewered meats and savory stews and hearty grain and vegetable dishes, here is a rich array of the cooking that Americans embrace today. No longer considered exotic--all the essential ingredients are now available in supermarkets, and the more rare can be obtained through mail order sources (readily available on the Internet)--the foods of the Middle East are a boon to the home cook looking for healthy, inexpensive, flavorful, and wonderfully satisfying dishes, both for everyday eating and for special occasions. From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

Claudia Roden is one of the three great ladies of Mediterranean food writing, joining Elizabeth David and Paula Wolfert to make this cuisine one of the best reported centers of food interest in the English speaking world. The three connect in this book by Ms. David's being the avowed inspiration for Roden's work and by Claudia Roden's citing Paula Wolfert's excellent book on couscous and referring to one of her other major works in the bibliography. It is also worth noting another literary connection in that the Alfred A. Knopf editor for this book is the acclaimed Judith Jones, the editor for Julia Child's landmark first books on French cuisine. While all of that makes this a noteworthy book with 'good connections', it is not what makes the book worth buying. As the title suggests, this book is a new and greatly revised edition of a volume first published in 1968. In this edition, much academic material, i.e. recipes derived from translations of old historical documents has been replaced and augmented by newer material from the Middle East. Ms. Roden clearly states that this is not a work of scholarship, but one should not take from that the feeling that these recipes are not the real thing. I am certain that like Ms. Wolfert, they are genuinely Middle Eastern recipes, made useable by the modern American or English cook. The meaning of 'Middle Eastern' in the title may not be exactly what a geographer or historian may mean by 'Middle Eastern' or roughly from Turkey to Egypt to Iran. Ms. Roden means primarily the region covered by the greatest advance of the Muslim rule and influence in the European Middle ages. Her four principle regions of concentration are: The earliest and 'the most exquisite and refined' is that of Persia, now Iran.

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