



The New Book of Middle Eastern Food: The Classic Cookbook, Expanded and Updated, with New Recipes and Contemporary Variations on Old Themes

By Claudia Roden

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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.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Claudia Roden has updated and expanded her popular 1968 cookbook for a more savvy and knowledgeable audience. While still filled with old favorites, the third edition acknowledges food processors and other handy kitchen tools, as well as this generation's preference for lower-fat recipes. Not that every recipe is changed; many are not, but Roden does attempt not to rely too much on butter and oils.

Begin your meal with *mezze*, derived from the Arabic *t'mazza*, meaning "to savor in little bites." Try *Cevisli Biber* (Roasted Pepper and Walnut Paste) spread on warm pita bread. Serve with *Salata Horiatiiki* (Greek Country Salad) and then move on to a main dish of Roast Fish with Lemon and Honeyed Onions or Lamb Tagine with Artichokes and Fava Beans. The cookbook wouldn't be complete without sections on rice, couscous, and bulgur--try *Addis Polow* (Rice with Lentils and Dates) or *Kesksou Bidaoui bel Khodra* (Beber Couscous with Seven Vegetables). Finish with a traditional dessert like *Orass bi Loz* (Almond Balls).

Mixed in with the recipes are Roden's personal experiences as a cook and recipe archivist, and Middle Eastern tales that illustrate the history of a particular recipe or food group. "It was once believed olive oil could cure any illness except the one by which a person was fated to die," Roden writes. "People still believe in its beneficial qualities and sometimes drink it neat when they feel anemic or tired." She also includes a detailed introduction to the terrain, history, politics, and society of the Middle East so her readers can more fully understand why the cuisine has evolved the way it has. "Cooking in the Middle East is deeply traditional and nonintellectual," she says, "an inherited art." It's our good fortune to inherit such a rich tradition. --*Dana Van Nest*

From Publishers Weekly

When Roden published *The Book of Middle Eastern Food* in 1972, the cuisines of Morocco, Turkey, Greece, Egypt and their neighbors were mysteries in this country. Today, their fresh flavors are better known, and much loved, and Roden has expanded and updated her classic to meet modern needs. The new version includes more than 800 recipes, as well as folk tales, tips, anecdotes and just about all the information anyone needs to reproduce foods from that part of the world. Miraculously, Roden manages to be this thorough while never sacrificing her personal tone--this is a book that is both encyclopedic and intimate. Much of Middle Eastern food is light tasting and vegetable-based, and the recipes reflect these qualities without neglecting more complex and unusual preparations. A chapter on appetizers and salads includes a Moroccan Lettuce and Orange Salad, Tabbouleh, Lemony Chicken Jelly and even a Brain Salad. While Roden is no stickler for starting from scratch, she always provides plenty of options for those who wish to do so. In a section on yogurt--a key ingredient in many recipes, such as Tagliatelle with Yogurt and Fried Onions, and Chickpeas with Yogurt and Soaked Bread--she gives both guidelines for buying yogurt and instructions for making your own. A sub-section on Persian sauces for rice is outstanding, as is another on stuffed eggplants. Desserts include Egyptian "Bread-and-Butter" Pudding and Arab Pancakes with various fillings. Roden won a James Beard award for *The Book of Jewish Food* in 1997. She will certainly be in the running once more with this impressive work. 24 pages of color photos. (Oct.)

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From [Booklist](#)

East of Greece lies the home of one of the world's great culinary traditions, that of the Middle East. Claudia

Roden has updated her classic work, first published in 1972, and presents *The New Book of Middle Eastern Food*. She has used this occasion to add variations to classic recipes and to update readers about newly available foods, such as the increasing variety of eggplants found in contemporary markets. Libraries will want this new edition for the wealth of reference information on Middle Eastern cooking the volume holds.

Mark Knoblauch

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jimmy Robertson:

Why don't make it to become your habit? Right now, try to ready your time to do the important action, like looking for your favorite book and reading a e-book. Beside you can solve your long lasting problem; you can add your knowledge by the e-book entitled *The New Book of Middle Eastern Food: The Classic Cookbook, Expanded and Updated, with New Recipes and Contemporary Variations on Old Themes*. Try to face the book *The New Book of Middle Eastern Food: The Classic Cookbook, Expanded and Updated, with New Recipes and Contemporary Variations on Old Themes* as your friend. It means that it can to become your friend when you sense alone and beside that course make you smarter than in the past. Yeah, it is very fortunated for you. The book makes you much more confidence because you can know almost everything by the book. So , let us make new experience and also knowledge with this book.

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