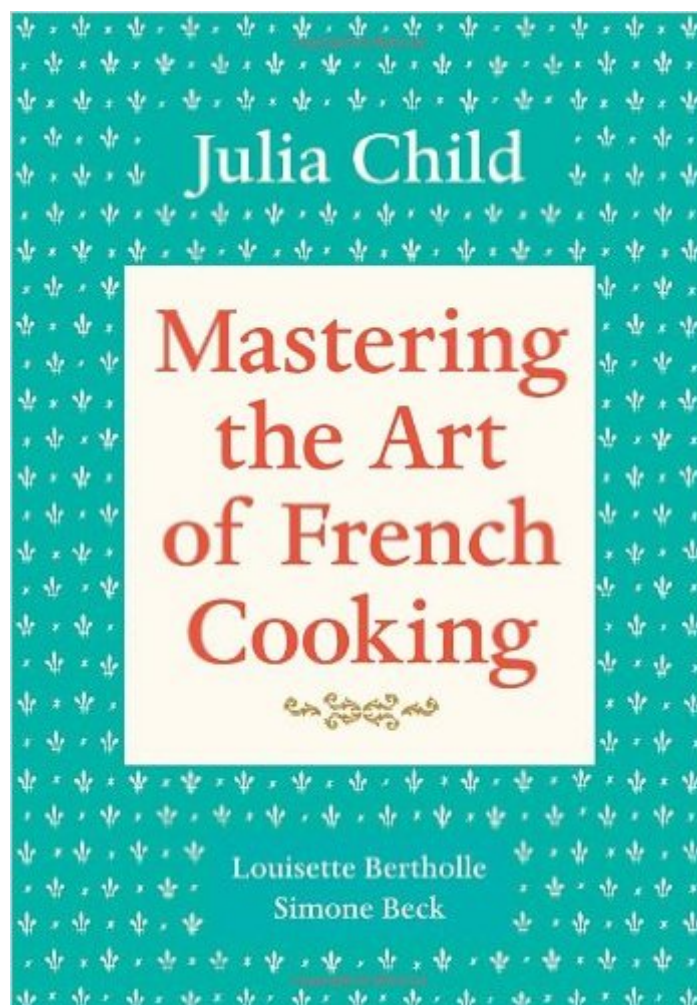


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Mastering The Art Of French Cooking, Volume 1



Synopsis

The only cookbook that explains how to create authentic French dishes in American kitchens with American foods. Teaches the key techniques of French cooking, permitting many variations on a theme. Over 100 instructive drawings.

Book Information

Paperback: 716 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (1,163 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Rarely are we able to say with certainty that a book is at the top of its subject in regard and quality. This book, the continuation of 'Mastering the Art of French Cooking' by Julia Child and Simone Beck is certainly in that most unique position among cookbooks written in English and published in the United States. This volume is truly a simple extension of the material in the original work, which was recently published in a 40th anniversary edition by its publisher, Alfred E. Knopf and its principle author, Julia Child. As told in Ms. Child's autobiography, the original manuscript brought to Judith Jones at Knopf ran to over a thousand printed pages. About two fifths of that material was put to the side and most of it appears in this second volume. All this means is that you are unlikely to really have a full coverage of the subject of French Cooking as intended by the authors unless you have both volumes. The first chapter has a clear sign that this volume rounds out the work in that it gives soups a much more thorough coverage than the first volume. Most importantly, it includes recipes for that quintessential French dish, bouillabaisse. To complement this subject is coverage of seafood such as a tour of the anatomy of a lobster that would put seafood specialist cookbooks to shame. The biggest single addition to the subject in this book is its coverage of baking and pastry. Here is one place where the book may be seen to diverge from its focus of the French housewife's cooking practice. As the book states clearly in the first chapter, practically no baking is done at

home, since there is a Boulangerie on every street corner.

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 Bavaoise) 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.

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