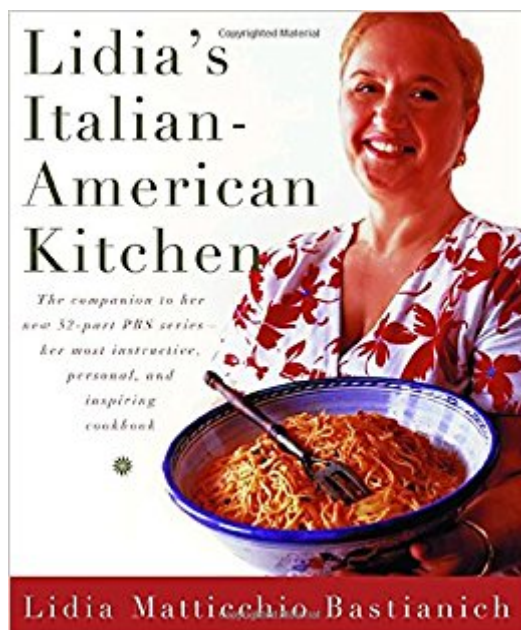


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Lidia's Italian-American Kitchen



Synopsis

Lidia Bastianich, loved by millions of Americans for her simple, delectable Italian cooking, gives us her most instructive and personal cookbook yet. Focusing on the Italian-American kitchen—•the cooking she encountered when she first came to America as a young adolescent—•Lidia pays homage to this “cuisine of adaptation born of necessity.” But she transforms it subtly with her light, discriminating touch, using the authentic ingredients, not accessible to the early immigrants, which are all so readily available today. The aromatic flavors of fine Italian olive oil, imported Parmigiano-Reggiano and Gorgonzola dolce latte, fresh basil, oregano, and rosemary, sun-sweetened San Marzano tomatoes, prosciutto, and pancetta permeate the dishes she makes in her Italian-American kitchen today. And they will transform for you this time-honored cuisine, as you cook with Lidia, learning from her the many secret, sensuous touches that make her food superlative. You’ll find recipes for Scampi alla Buonavita (the garlicky shrimp that became so popular when Lidia served the dish at her first restaurant, Buonavita), Clams Casino (with roasted peppers and good American bacon), Caesar Salad (shaved Parmigiano makes the difference), baked cannelloni (with roasted pork and mortadella), and lasagna (blanketed in her special Italian-American Meat Sauce). But just as Lidia introduced new Italian regional dishes to her appreciative clientele in Queens in the seventies, so she dazzles us now with pasta dishes such as Bucatini with Chanterelles, Spring Peas, and Prosciutto, and Long Fusilli with Mussels, Saffron, and Zucchini. And she is a master at teaching us how to make our own ravioli, featherlight gnocchi, and genuine Neapolitan pizza. Laced with stories about her experiences in America and her discoveries as a cook, this enchanting book is both a pleasure to read and a joy to cook from.

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Customer Reviews

"Italian-American food--what cuisine is it?" asks Lidia Matticchio Bastianich in Lidia's Italian-American Cooking, a cookbook based on her eponymous PBS TV series. The author of two previous works, *La Cucina di Lidia* and *Lidia's Italian Table*, and co-owner of three acclaimed Manhattan restaurants, Bastianich is ideally suited to explore all Italian fare. "Americans fell in love with Italian cooking first," she says, thus enshrining a cuisine born of immigrant adaptation. In celebration of that affection, the book offers over 150 recipes for a wide range of dishes--traditional favorites like Baked Stuffed Shells and Lobster Fra Diavolo as well as personal adaptations such as Scampi alla Buonavita and cannelloni made with roasted pork and mortadella. These easily done dishes benefit from Lidia's subtle polishing; fans of her foolproof palate and her direct yet relaxed approach to Italian cooking will welcome the book. In chapters that reflect the courses of a traditional Italian meal, from antipasti through soups, pasta and risottos, and dolci, Lidia presents a wealth of good everyday eating. In addition to exemplary renditions of Italian-American favorites, Lidia offers "new" Italian regional dishes, such as Long Fusilli with Saffron, Mussels, and Zucchini. Soups, a Lidia specialty, are enticingly represented with the likes of Potato, Swiss Chard, and Bread Soup. And of course there are splendid dolci--favorites like Ricotta Cheesecake, but also treats like San Martino Pear and Chocolate Tart. Throughout, Bastianich provides useful sidebars, such as one on scallopine, and fully illustrated technical instruction, detailing, for example, the best way to stuff a veal chop. With color photos of the mouthwatering dishes, tips, and other cooking insights, the book is a valuable guide to an oft-debased fare finally given its due. --Arthur Boehm

Despite a misleading title (the book offers few stereotypical restaurant-style dishes), readers will be slightly charmed by the book's actual contents (mainly recipes for straight Italian classics) and its author that they'll quickly forget any disappointment. Bastianich (*La Cucina di Lidia*), owner of several restaurants, is simultaneously a beguiling storyteller and a no-nonsense guide. Alongside classics like Tri-Color Salad with Arugula and Radicchio and a more unusual Salad of Dandelion Greens with Almond Vinaigrette and Dried Ricotta, Bastianich provides sidebars on beans, capers and many other ingredients. She also waxes personal: a native of Istria, the region given to Yugoslavia after WWII, she emigrated in 1958 and opened her first restaurant in 1971 at age 24.

The stars here, though, are the recipes. Pasta dishes such as Cavatelli with Bread Crumbs, Pancetta, and Cauliflower, and Orecchiette with Braised Artichokes, make fine use of fresh vegetables. Recipes are divided into antipasto, soups, pasta and risotto, pizza, entrées, side dishes and desserts. Desserts include a San Martino Pear and Chocolate Tart and a rich Chocolate Soup from Udine. Bastianich includes restaurant-style Italian-American food such as Spaghetti and Meatballs, and Lobster fra Diavolo with Spaghettini, although she can't resist reducing the latter's sauce to more "Italian" proportions. Color and b&w photos. (Nov. 12)Forecasts: This companion to a PBS series has a built-in readership, not to mention Bastianich's following from her New York, Kansas City and Pittsburgh restaurants. Expect strong sales.Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

My wife's grandmother is Irish-Italian so I expect good food in the family. When we visit he makes a number of dishes that I thought were secret family recipes. Not so fast young man, come to find out they are from Lidia's book. I bought it and have only made one meal so far, but can't wait to make more

I disagree that the recipes are not easy. They are simple, easy and most are quick. I made the pizza dough, best by far. Just like my grandmas cooking. The pasta recipes are fantastic, very simple too. I love her added notes. Lydia makes cooking Italian fun. Some of the easiest recipes are the best tasting, but then that's what good food is all about. Well worth the money. Easy to read and understand directions. Since my grandmother passed our family lost a lot of her Italian dishes because she had them memorized and not written down. Lydia has given me those traditional Italian dishes again. What a treasure! Combine the book with her videos and you'll be cooking Italian as good as Lydia herself. I highly recommend this book for those who love Italian.

I found it had too many ingredients I never had, in the house ,,,,,,,,Very complicated recipesToo long and not simplified. Then again Italian cooking has a lot of spices and take a long time to cook..... I gave mine away to an Italian.....

I had this cookbook years ago and left it behind when I moved out of state; recently found it here and was so happy! This is one of my favorite Italian cook books and you can't go wrong with this one by Lidia. I have others of hers that are ok, but have to say that this one is my personal go-to. Great recipes, easy to follow directions and yummy results! Get this one, you won't be sorry!

This book has such amazing recipes! I would have given it 5 stars if it only had more pictures. The pictures are valuable to me for presentation of the dishes. I love all her books!

Yumm says it all!

great cook!

AA++

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