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Recipes From My Home Kitchen: Asian And American Comfort Food From The Winner Of MasterChef Season 3 On FOX(TM)



Synopsis

In her kitchen, Christine Ha possesses a rare ingredient that most professionally-trained chefs never learn to use: the ability to cook by sense. After tragically losing her sight in her twenties, this remarkable home cook, who specializes in the mouthwatering, wildly popular Vietnamese comfort foods of her childhood, as well as beloved American standards that she came to love growing up in Texas, re-learned how to cook. Using her heightened senses, she turns out dishes that are remarkably delicious, accessible, luscious, and crave-worthy. Millions of viewers tuned in to watch Christine sweep the thrilling Season 3 finale, and here they can find more of her deftly crafted recipes. They'll discover food that speaks to the best of both the Vietnamese diaspora and American classics, personable tips on how to re-create delicious professional recipes in a home kitchen, and an inspirational personal narrative bolstered by Ha's background as a gifted writer. Recipes from My Home Kitchen will braid together Christine's story with her food for a result that is one of the most compelling culinary tales of her generation.

Book Information

Hardcover: 224 pages

Publisher: Rodale Books; 45708th edition (May 14, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1623360943

ISBN-13: 978-1623360948

Product Dimensions: 7.6 x 0.7 x 239.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.5 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 297 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #92,658 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #13 in Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Asian Cooking > Vietnamese #442 in Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Regional & International > U.S. Regional

Customer Reviews

Q&A for Recipes from My Home Kitchen. Graham Elliot, MasterChef judge, chef and restaurateur interviews Christine Ha, author of Recipes from My Home Kitchen. Graham Elliot: When you first auditioned for MasterChef did you ever imagine you we'd be talking about your very own cookbook a year later? Christine Ha: Definitely not. I mean, it was my dream, yes. Out of the trophy/title, monetary winnings, and the cookbook deal, the cookbook was the prize I wanted the most. It only made sense--I am a writer, and by nature, writers want to share themselves with the world through

their stories. What better way to marry the two loves of my life--food and word--than with my very own cookbook? But to compete against more than 30,000 home cooks across America? I don't like to get my hopes up, so I tried not to give it much thought. Well, I realize now that nothing is impossible if you set your mind to it and play it smart. GE: Gordon Ramsay, Joe Bastianich and I were always blown away by your ability to present beautiful, edible creations. How are you able to produce such visually stunning dishes without your sense of sight? CH: Ah, that seems to be the million dollar question. Well, I've always had an elephant's memory, and this was only perpetuated with my vision loss. Now that I can't depend on my eyes to see what's laid out on the counter, I have to memorize where I put the basil, the knife, the sauté pan full of hot oil. This memory of how foods look--shape, their color, their texture--is what aids me when I plate a dish. I think having to feel your food forces you to become more connected with it; that's the belief of those cultures that eat their meals with their hands--touching your food with your fingers increases awareness. I also believe the fact that I can't see the small imperfections on a plate--say, the microgreens not being set exactly 2.5 inches apart--makes for a more organic and, in my opinion, aesthetically more pleasing plate. GE: Which aspects of your cooking style do you think will be most popular with the average American home cook? CH: Oh, Graham, I'm smart, but I'm not psychic! Is there really such a thing as an "average American home cook"? Americans are hardly average at all. Like I said, our country is just so diverse. Plus home cooks are becoming quite sophisticated these days--just look at the range of talent you see on each season of "MasterChef." I will say, however, that with demographics moving more and more towards dual income households, and even in the case of stay-at-home parents who are busy taking care of the kids and the house, people have less time and energy to cook dinner every night. For these reasons, I think many home cooks would appreciate recipes that are flavorful but not fussy. Actually, those are the exact parameters I have in my own kitchen when I cook a weeknight dinner. And for the weekends when there's a little more time for leisure projects, I enjoy more elaborate experiments like pulled pork sandwiches or my mama's eggrolls. Both types of recipes, from the easy to the intricate, can be found right here in this very cookbook. GE: How has your approach to cooking changed over the years? How has it evolved since you won MasterChef? CH: Like many who first start out cooking, I was very methodical. I learned by following recipes to the T--I used to think the world would end if I accidentally added one teaspoon of salt when the recipe called for three-fourths. But after cooking a dozen meals or so, I started understanding basic cooking methods and techniques. Then after another dozen meals, I began grasping flavor profiles. As with any art, once you know and understand the rules, you can break them and get away with it. Once I got to that point, I ventured

off and came up with my own recipes. Perhaps the most valuable lesson I learned during my time on "MasterChef" is to trust my gut. Food can be very subjective. I can't stand dill or cooked salmon. But hey, if your favorite dish in the world is your grandma's baked salmon with dill weed, I can't argue that. I do think, however, that one should be able to back up their penchant for dill and baked salmon. "I love baked salmon and dill weed because it's good," to me, is not a valid argument. "I love baked salmon and dill weed because I think they complement each other in XYZ ways" is an argument I can respect even if I don't agree. Having said this, however, I wouldn't want everyone in the world to dislike dill and cooked salmon, because then where would their places be in our lives? I had a creamy dill sauce over a crêpe recently, and I thought it was incredibly delicious. And salmon sashimi is on my short list of favorite foods. I trust chefs who are confident in their opinions and can back them up. Diversity is what makes this world great; we should celebrate our differences. GE: With the veritable treasure trove of recipes you now possess, which one do you feel best represents you and your life's journey? CH: I'd have to go with the oatmeal chocolate chip cookie. It starts out an inedible mass, but after you put some heat under it, it becomes delectably sweet--that's been my journey in life. It's by no means fancy, but it will always put a smile on your face--that's me. Sinfully scrumptious.

Christine Ha is the winner of Season Three of MasterChef. Legally blind, she wants her skill to inspire others with disabilities that anything is possible. She lives in Houston, where she is completing an MFA in creative writing at The University of Houston.

Christine Ha really makes this cookbook easy to follow. First Chicken Curry recipe I tried....I don't think I've tasted a better version even in NYC Vietnamese restaurant. She added Italian dishes I haven't tried yet, but...I highly recommend. It's nice to cook from a book author that you actually saw win Masterchef. Unique! She is a class act. Glad to support her and taste my way through her kitchen!

watched the show, and glad she won, so had to support. such a inspirational story. I've cooked several things, many excellent things. 4 stars because I didn't enjoy a few items.

Many, many thanks to Christine Ha. I love to cook and she is now one of the chefs that are the reason why. Her love of food and the heart and soul she not only puts into it but in describing the ingredients and thought behind the dish could make a anorexic person what to cook. I do not

purchase cook books but I do take recipe/recipe ideas from various cooking shows/websites. I bought this book with no hesitation for my iPad. The words preceding her recipes are as beautifully delicious as I know many of the dishes will be. I should note although I make all of my dishes from scratch - chips, sauces, ice cream - if I'm eating it I made everything. But - I DO NOT like most foods. This is why I love chef's like Christine. How many ways can you eat chicken? I had to get into cooking different recipes or eat fried chicken the rest of my life. Now if asked the question about cooking chicken, the answer is infinity and beyond. I take my food to work and am always asked for some - the smells envelope the entire office. It's chicken over rice. But....inspired by Lydia's Italy (Thank you Joe for your Mom) after browning the chicken, I added some cherry peppers (as I don't like unpeeled red peppers) then added mushrooms, seasoning with salt/pepper thyme, a little chicken stock. Do you see why I love Chef Christine Ha? Her dishes are just that simple with easily found ingredients. She can easily be on the steps in time with greats such as Julia Childs. I can't say it enough. Thank you Christine, Gordon, Joe, Graham and Master Chef. I'll keep watching as I'm sure more great chefs are to follow.

I bought this cookbook for my wife, who loved Christine's cooking and personality on Master Chef. The Recipes from My Home Kitchen offers a little more than your average cookbook. It gives insight in Christine Ha's personal life and views. As some of the other reviewers have stated, the book has some basic recipes in it. However, I find that these recipes, while traditional and something most any home cook knows how to create, have a slight change to it based on Christine's cooking. I don't think this takes away from her ability as a chef as some others have suggested. It's Christine's cookbook, not a cookbook-for-things-you-haven't-seen-before. There are some very delicious recipes located in this book. I would definitely recommend it to anyone who has interest in Master Chef (she has some of the dishes she prepared in MC in the book) or Christine Ha.

Christine Ha is amazing and one of my chef favorites... I followed her through the whole season of MasterChef and called her win when I first saw her come out to greet chef Ramsay, Joe, and Graham! Her recipes are amazing and I haven't tried all of them yet but let me tell you I am, not a huge fan of fish or seafood at all, and I am willing to eat her recipes!! got an amazing deal on a new copy of this cookbook and would ABSOLUTELY recommend it! If you do not know much about Christine Ha, she is blind, and competed on a show called MasterChef and won the whole thing! She won! And besides being an AMAZING cook, she is a huge inspiration for everyone!

I have been a fan of Christine since her very 1st appearance on MasterChef and was so excited for her when she won. When she reappeared as a guest on the current season I was reminded that I still did not have her cookbook so I immediately ordered it! I just finished reading through it and I am so excited to try her recipes and absolutely love her stories through out the book! :)

Overall, this isn't a bad cookbook. I've gotten some good recipes from it. I guess I expected more from the Asian side than the American side. The majority of the American stuff I already knew how to make. I also found it to be somewhat simple compared to all the extravagant dishes I watched her prepare on MasterChef.

I have waited to get this book for years. I promised myself that I would get this book when I had a kitchen to cook in, and now that I have gotten that far this book filled all of my expectations. Along with heartwarming and a couple of sad stories from Mrs. Ha, we find American and Asian recipes for you to try in your home. So far every one has turned out great for me.

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