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The Tuscan Sun Cookbook: Recipes From Our Italian Kitchen



Synopsis

“Tuscan food tastes like itself. Ingredients are left to shine. . . . So, if on your visit, I hand you an apron, your work will be easy. We’ll start with primo ingredients, a little flurry of activity, perhaps a glass of Vino Nobile di Montepulciano, and soon we’ll be carrying platters out the door. We’ll have as much fun setting the table as we have in the kitchen. Four double doors along the front of the house open to the outside—so handy for serving at a long table under the stars (or for cooling a scorched pan on the stone wall). Italian Philosophy 101: *la casa aperta*, the open house.”¹ In all of Frances Mayes’ bestselling memoirs about Tuscany, food plays a starring role. This cuisine transports, comforts, entices, and speaks to the friendly, genuine, and improvisational spirit of Tuscan life. Both cooking and eating in Tuscany are natural pleasures. In her first-ever cookbook, Frances and her husband, Ed, share recipes that they have enjoyed over the years as honorary Tuscans: dishes prepared in a simple, traditional kitchen using robust, honest ingredients.

A toast to the experiences they’ve had over two decades at Bramasole, their home in Cortona, Italy, this cookbook evokes days spent roaming the countryside for chestnuts, green almonds, blackberries, and porcini; dinner parties stretching into the wee hours, and garden baskets tumbling over with bright red tomatoes.

Lose yourself in the transporting photography of the food, the people, and the place, as Frances’ lyrical introductions and headnotes put you by her side in the kitchen and raising a glass at the table. From Antipasti (starters) to Dolci (desserts), this cookbook is organized like a traditional Italian dinner.

The more than 150 tempting recipes include:

Fried Zucchini Flowers

Red Peppers Melted with Balsamic Vinegar

Potato Ravioli with Zucchini, Speck, and Pecorino

Risotto Primavera

Pizza with Caramelized Onions and Sausage

Cannellini Bean Soup with Pancetta

Little Veal Meatballs with Artichokes and Cherry Tomatoes

Chicken Under a Brick

Short Ribs, Tuscan-Style

Domenica’s Rosemary Potatoes

Folded Fruit Tart with Mascarpone

Strawberry Semifreddo

Steamed Chocolate Cake with Vanilla Sauce

Frances and Ed also share their tips on stocking your pantry, pairing wines with dishes, and choosing the best olive oil. Learn their time-tested methods for hand rolling pasta and techniques for coaxing the best out of seasonal ingredients with little effort.

Throw on another handful of pasta, pull up a chair, and languish in the rustic Italian way of life.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Featured Recipe: Giusi's Ragù Slow and easy--long-simmered ragù is the quintessential Tuscan soul food. There are as many ways with ragù as there are cooks. This is ours, learned originally from Giusi, who's made it a thousand times. By now, I think we have, too. On many Saturday mornings, Ed makes a huge pot of ragù --tripling, quadrupling the recipe--and another of tomato sauce. We consider these our natural resources. For lunch, while the pots are still on the stove, we spoon ragù over bruschetta, add some cheese, and run it under the broiler. By afternoon, we're ready to fill several glass containers of different sizes and freeze them. We're then free to pull one out during the workweek. Serve ragù in lasagne or over spaghetti and, as you eat, you know you're participating in a communal rite that's being enacted all over the Italian peninsula. Serves 10 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil 1 pound ground lean beef 1 pound ground pork 2 Italian sausages, casings removed 1 teaspoon

salt 1/2 teaspoon pepper 2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves or 1 teaspoon dried 1 to 2 cups red wine 1 cup soffritto (recipe below) 2 tablespoons tomato paste 16 to 20 tomatoes or 2 28-ounce cans whole tomatoes, juice included, chopped Pour the olive oil into a 4-quart heavy pot with a lid. Over medium-high heat, brown the meats, breaking up the sausage with a wooden spoon, about 10 minutes. Add the salt, pepper, thyme, and 1 cup of the red wine. After the wine has cooked into the meat, about 10 minutes, add the soffritto, and stir in the tomato paste and tomatoes. Bring the sauce to a boil, and then lower to a quiet simmer. Partially cover, and continue cooking for 3 hours, stirring now and then. Along the way, add the remaining cup of wine if you think the sauce is too dense. Soffritto Serves 10 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil 1 yellow onion, minced 1 carrot, minced 1 celery stalk, minced 1 handful of flat-leaf parsley, minced 1/2 teaspoon salt 1/2 teaspoon pepper Saute the ingredients in a small saucepan over medium-low heat until they begin to color and turn tender, 5 to 7 minutes.

I own over a thousand cookbooks, but I have never been so enthralled by a cookbook as I was when I saw and read *The Tuscan Sun Cookbook* by Frances and Edward Mayes. From the very first beautiful photograph of Frances spoon feeding Edward and the mesmerizing opening paragraph--"The Choreography of the Kitchen"--I knew this cookbook would immediately rank with my all-time favorites. The recipes lure me into my Los Angeles kitchen and soon I feel like I am cooking in Tuscany. Even if there were no recipes, I would love *The Tuscan Sun Cookbook* for the brilliant photographs of by Steven Rothfeld--they are simply the best I have ever seen in a cookbook. Period. So to lovers of photography and food and Italy and to the simplest and most wonderful pleasures of life, I most enthusiastically say "Get this book." --Nancy Silverton, founder of La Brea Bakery and co-owner of Pizzeria Mozza and Osteria Mozza restaurants in Los Angeles, Newport Beach, and Singapore. Frances and Edward Mayes generously invite us into their Tuscan world, to share in lavish, friend-filled feasts as we gather around the wood-fired bread oven. It's a book of joy and celebration, stories of the call of the owl, the invasion of wild boars, honest, earthy, and welcoming. We can taste their freshly-pressed olive oil, thrill in the flavor of the neighbor's lavender honey, want to run into the kitchen to prepare their long-simmered ragù, and plan to duplicate Edward's caper, anchovy, and mozzarella pizza. Steven Rothfeld's stunning photos make their world sing, come truly alive. --Patricia Wells, author of *Salad as a Meal* Frances and Ed Mayes haven't written some wistful expat's dream; they have done their homework about why Tuscan food is what it is, and what we need to know about it. In their writing, Tuscany doesn't seem a picture postcard (even

though the book is a beauty). Instead it comes off feeling much more like home. As for the dishes, they've captured the essential simplicity that is Tuscan cooking. Frances and Ed know what they're doing and it's a pleasure to read.  This is one of those books that makes you homesick, even if you never had a home like this. --Lynne Rossetto Kasper, host of national radio show The Splendid Table  from American Public Media

I am re-reading Under the Tuscan Sun that I got after a trip to Italy in 1999 and it's once again a wonderful book. I had forgotten there were recipes in it and was delighted to discover this cookbook. I just received it. It's GORGEOUS! I am making the Red Pepper Tart on page 59 for dinner tonight. There are beautiful photographs on almost every page. It's a beautiful book and if you enjoy cooking you will absolutely love it. If you don't enjoy cooking, I hope it will inspire you to give it a try. The recipes are simple and easy and the book is a delight to the eye and the appetite. The copy I got was autographed by both Frances and Ed, so a very nice bonus! I love it!

Great and mostly easy recipes with a little flair. Will be using several of these recipes for the annual Summer Soiree I throw for the local foodbank donors and think they will love them. A few can be made in advance so that will work well. Ingredients are also readily available without needing a specialty grocery so added bonus. You also get nice photos and gives you hope that your backyard will someday have the same character!!!!

Every year I hold an Italian dinner at my house for 14 friends. I plan from appetizers to dessert and assign my friends various dishes. This year I purchased Under the Tuscan Sun Cookbook and had the best time planning our menu.. From Pear Angolotti with Gorgonzola & Walnuts, Baked Peppers with Ricotta and Basil, Citrus & Fennel Salad to Il Falconieres's Chocolate Cake with Vanilla Sauce...what a treat. Add a bottle of Arditto from the Baracchi winery and I'm back in Tuscany. The recipes are easy to follow, the pictures are beautiful and most important the dishes are superb! Can't wait to try more out of the book!

There are some very good recipies in this book. Admantly some are not dissimmilar to those my mom and grandmother used to make but there are a few new ones. All of the dishes my wife has prepared came out great.Worth a look.

I bought this after returning from a week in Tuscany. Great recipes and information around how to

pick the best ingredients to use. I'm loving re-creating our Italian experience at home!

Beautiful book, which gives one the feeling as if they are sharing the best recipes under the Tuscan Sun ...

Yum!! Every single recipe I've tried is beyond delicious!

Great book, especially if you've been to Tuscany...

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