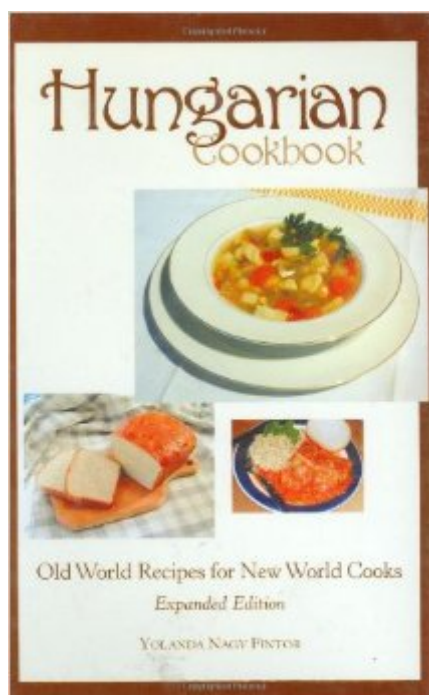


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Hungarian Cookbook, Old World Recipes For New World Cooks (Hippocrene Cookbook Library)



Synopsis

These Old World recipes were brought to America by the author's grandparents, but they have been updated to accommodate today's faster-paced lifestyles. In many cases, the author presents a New World version of the recipe, in which low-fat and more readily available ingredients are substituted without compromising flavor. This collection includes timeless dishes, and spans the range of home cooking with recipes for Kohlrabi Soup, Stuffed Cabbage, Chicken Paprika, and a host of tempting dishes like Walnut Torte and Dilled Cottage Cheese Cake. The new chapter on breads focuses on yeast breads, with a short section on quick breads. It includes recipes for Sour Cream Biscuits, Hungarian Fried Bread, and Beer Bread Sticks, among others. This is more than just a collection of 142 enticing Hungarian recipes. The author offers culinary tips, explains characteristics of the Hungarian language, and includes a glossary of terms used throughout the book. Several chapters also describe the seasonal and ceremonial observances transplanted from Hungary and still practiced by Americans of Hungarian descent: bacon cookouts, fall grape festivals, weddings, baptisms, Christmas, New Year's, and Easter celebrations.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Hungarian Cookbook: Old World Recipes for New World Cooks" by Yolanda Nagy Fintor has a long title. It should. There is a lot packed in it. As cookbooks go, this is among the most accessible I have read. While many tend to err with a tone too haute cuisine, Fintor realizes she's suggesting ordinary people cook these dishes. To many Americans asking themselves what Hungarian food is, I

can say it is a good, good thing. It will challenge your arteries, but delight your soul. Your stomach will be happy too. Here, you will find recipes proving that. Fintor explains in a brief introduction a history of Hungarian cuisine. She writes how, despite its present unique place in the culinary world, it began as an amalgamation of French, Italian, Turkish, German and Transylvanian food. While not exactly useful to the American cook, she has a section on Hungarian language. Now, you can pronounce the dish names when your Hungarian date comes over for dinner. If things work out, you will impress your spouse's family too. More practical to most readers is her section on how to interpret the recipes, and what ingredients you will need handy. The difference this makes is important, like that vinegar to be used is distilled white, and that butter should be the salted kind. Keyed into the needs of beginning cooks, Fintor provides some useful tips, a glossary of basic cooking terms (like dredge, dice, trussing, and what roux is). Recipes are the bulk of the book, with some black and white pictures of dishes. The layout is easy on the eyes. Directions are straightforward. Occasionally, she gives ideas to adapt the recipe to an American context, in case the ingredients are somewhat different.

I gave this book 5 stars because it accomplishes so many things at once that most cookbooks fail to do! Its genuine and honest tone captures you and makes you want to refer to the book again and again. It makes you feel like your grandma is talking you through the experience. It also helps that it is written without the assumption that all Hungarian spices and other ingredients will be available at any part of the world... And most of all, it's not just about the food, it's about tradition and life in Hungary too. It helps the non-Hungarian reader understand the occasions for which a dish is prepared, as well as remind the Hungarian reader of their childhood experiences of eating those dishes. Reading certain parts of it brought back memories that made me emotional and want to prepare the food then and there. :) The book gives some background on the language too, and helps beginner cooks with some basic tips, reminding others of those same ones in an effective, no nonsense manner. Short cuts always help, as do "rescues" for any dish and I enjoy learning about other cooks' methods before reading their recipes. This book has a great structure for that. I see some reviewers complaining that the book leaves out some ingredients and makes things "bland" but the truth is that sometimes it just isn't practical to make things the old school "hearty and Hungarian" way. If you are ordering this book from in English, chances are that you live outside of Hungary and trying to cook with what you can buy in your local "ethnic food store". You are probably also cooking for your non-Hungarian friends, some of whom were not raised with food that spicy.

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