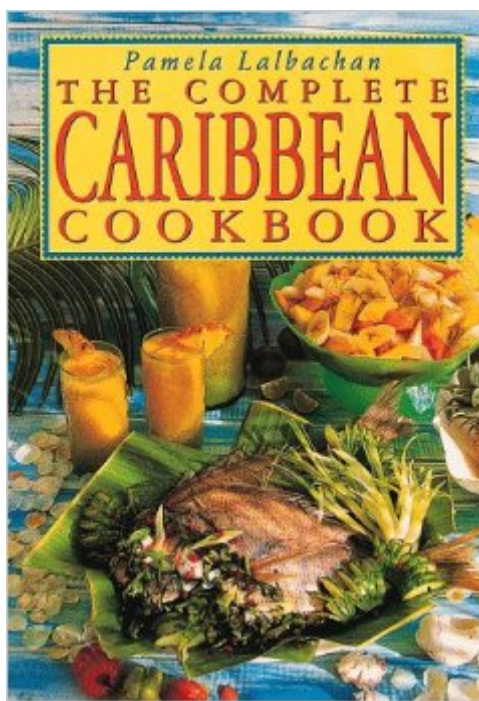


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# The Complete Caribbean Cookbook



## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A beautifully written and constructed book, containing every recipe from Guyana, Suriname, and from the Caribbean (U.S. French, Spanish, British, etc.) that you could possibly wish for; e.g. Soupe, Pepperpot, Metagee, Jerk Chicken, Sancocho, Garlic Pork, Crab (& Calloo) Soup, Foo Foo, Cou-cou, Roti, Tooloom, Muzik Di Zumbi. The recipes are very easy to follow, even if you are new to this type of cuisine. Full colour photographs throughout make the reading soooo satisfying .

This hardcover reference is chock full of great recipes from the region. Although from Guyana, Pamela Lalbachan offers recipes from all of the Caribbean islands. Lots of great colour photos compliment this work. An excellent compliment to the web site "Recipes from Guyana and the Caribbean.

I was so excited when I found this book. It has lovely photographs & historical information about the beautiful islands of the Caribbean. I grew up there but living in the US my cooking was much more "local" food and I was at a point in my life that I was dying to cook the food I grew up with while I lived in Trinidad & Tobago. I made several recipes from this and was beginning to think that the food from home was a fond memory but not as good as I remembered. My children liked nothing I made from this book. I made about 8 main dishes including the Aloo Pie another reader spoke about & was disappointed by all of them. I then decided to bake, after all sweets are always yummy. I made the Rock Cakes a child hood favorite of mine & they looked perfect, however they tasted so bad I threw them all away. That same day my mother mailed me some recipes that she'd found in a box

of my old things at her home. Among them was the Rock Cake recipe written in my 7 year old hand writing that my aunt had taught me to make all those years ago. I made my aunt's version of the Rock Cakes recipe again and was delighted by the flavor & taste the "old recipe" had. My kids and husband loved my version. A couple years later my sister-in-law came over & saw this book on my shelf and asked me if I'd had any luck with the cookbook- said no not really. She told me she had also bought the book but after cooking 10 recipes she also was very disappointed. There are better options out there if you want authentic West Indian food.

I have been on a bit of a cooking binge lately and started craving the foods that I grew up eating. I really hate that I grew up eating such good food but don't know how to cook any of it besides curry chicken. So, I started on a quest to find an authentic Caribbean cookbook to add to my library. I'm glad I checked this book out of the library before buying it. I tried several of the recipes while I had the book checked out and found them to have authentic flavor but the spice level was muted. The author may have done this intentionally to appeal to a wider audience but for a true Islander, it made what seemed like a promising recipe, a bit disappointing. I also took issue with some of the descriptions for the items. For example, one of the maybe two Antiguan recipes is ducana. My mom is the "ducana queen" in our family and made it quite often for us growing up. We ate ducana for breakfast, lunch, and dinner with just about anything. I was surprised to find the ducana recipe in the appetizer section where the author suggests serving it "topped with syrup...and eaten as a dessert, or served as an appetizer with a sauce made from salt cod". If you've never eaten it, ducana is a sweet, dense, and rich dumpling. My family, and many other Caribbean families, serves it as part of a meal. Salt cod is not served as a "sauce" but is a staple in many Caribbean households. A serving of ducana with cooked salt fish is a meal, not an appetizer. Nevertheless, I found most of the recipes I tried to be a good starting point to build on to get the Caribbean flavor and consistency I'm used to. The filling for the Trinidadian recipe "Aloo Pie" had great flavor and it looks like this is their version of Indian samosas. I had issues with the dough though...not very flavorful and none of the flakiness that you find in traditional Indian samosas. I also thought her recommendation to divide the dough into 6 parts made too large of an "appetizer". I tried the Salt Cod "Sauce" and knew that the 2 tablespoons of oil she recommends would not be enough. She also left out the tomato paste/sauce and used only fresh tomato. She didn't credit this recipe to any particular island, probably because most Island folks know that our saltfish is typically swimming in oil -there is nothing like using that flavored oil to moisten a piece of johnny cake or to flavor fungee/fungi- that has been thoroughly colored by the tomato paste. The book includes recipes for Stamp-and-go and salt fish cakes, one of

my favorite dishes. I knew from looking at both recipes that there was way too much flour. One recipe called for two cups of flour and the other one called for a combination of flour and mashed potatoes. I made a hybrid of the two because we do not use potatoes in our salt fish cakes. The result, while flavorful, was way too doughy. I could barely taste the saltfish, but it's a good starting point. The jerk chicken though was the star dish for me. I really liked that the recipe did not call for a lot of soy sauce. The jerk was a truly flavorful marinade but that was mostly from the onions, garlic, ginger, etc... There was very little allspice or cinnamon in this recipe. The recipe only used two scotch bonnet peppers which gave it some heat and didn't overpower the flavor of the rest of the ingredients. I served this with some peas and rice and really enjoyed it. It looks like all it needs is more spice and pepper and it's a keeper. My 3 year old loved the chicken chow mein- Trinidad...again- but I found it a bit dry. One tablespoon of soy sauce? Egg noodles? Really? Chow mein noodles are really easy to find and one tablespoon of flavoring liquid makes for a very dry and flavorless dish. Overall, it is a very comprehensive cookbook with authentic Caribbean recipes. In addition to the muted flavor in some of the recipes, I was disappointed that there were so many islands not represented. My family is Antiguan and I grew up in the US Virgin Islands. There are maybe two Antiguan recipes and zero recipes from the US Virgin Islands in this book. I also saw very few recipes credited to the Dutch islands. I know the Caribbean is very large but with the proliferation of recipes credited to Guyana - granted the author's family is from Guyana, but still..., the East Indies (mostly Trinidad), and Spanish Islands (mostly Cuba and Puerto Rico), I would think a larger representation of the islands could have been included in this book.

If you are looking for a Caribbean cookbook you've got to have this one. You won't be disappointed. Just wait for the right price. I paid \$90 for my book and later found another one for my kid for half the price.

This book is exactly what I'm looking for. Authentic recipes and methods from all around the Caribbean. It is like taking a three-month vacation eating in a Caribbean Mom's kitchen for every meal. Bingo hit!

I absolutely love this book. First saw it about three years ago, and have been trying to get one since. Thanks, and Puddleglum Books. I love the history of the region and of the dishes that's included. This in itself is delightful reading. The photographs are phenomenal and go a long way in helping users to know how to present the dishes.

I first checked this book out from the library 7 years ago and I was fascinated by not only the vibrant pictures and the authentic recipes, but also the research the writer put into the history that created the diverse cuisine of the Caribbean. I would highly recommend this cookbook to anyone that has an interest in Caribbean cooking.

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