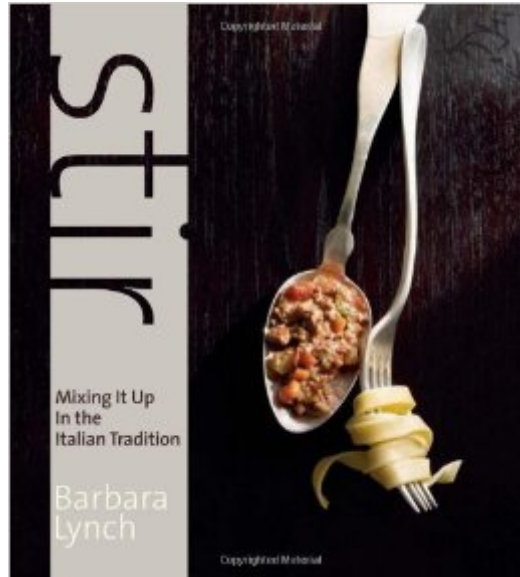


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Stir: Mixing It Up In The Italian Tradition



Synopsis

Although Barbara Lynch was born and raised in South Boston, not Tuscany, many critics believe her fo....

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I am lucky enough to live two blocks from Barbara Lynch's B&G Oyster, Butcher Shop and her test/demonstration kitchen Stir. I often pop into the Butcher Shop for some of their amazing house made sausages or a pint of their fantastic bolognese sauce, so when I heard that Barbara was writing a cookbook I was excited. Honestly, I was excited but concerned that this might be another restaurant chef sharing overly complicated recipes that don't fit into my busy lifestyle. Opening this beautifully photographed cookbook, I was instantly pleased to see that this was a cookbook for all home cooks. Filled with mouthwatering recipes that are easy to follow, "Stir" turns intimidating foods, such as homemade gnocchi, into approachable, show stopping meals that can be made by just about anyone. One of the most fantastic aspects of this well written book, are the notes Chef Lynch shares regarding preparing the dishes ahead of time. Let's face it, when hosting a dinner party, there is nothing worse than having to slave in the kitchen while the guest are enjoying the cocktails and appetizers that have been prepared. Lynch offers tips on which recipes can be made ahead of time, and how to reheat the dishes so they may be perfectly served. With wit and a no-nonsense "Southie" undertone, this cook book is destined to be a classic for cooks at any level. The Italian, meets French meets Boston cuisine offers everything from comfort foods to Barbara Lynch's

signature Prune Stuffed Gnocchi with foie gras (btw... don't knock it until you've tried it!) I'm thrilled to have added this cookbook to my collection and look forward to making even more recipes from it. Oh, and I might not need to stop by the Butcher Shop as often, since I now have the recipe for the Bolognese!

I usually don't like restaurant chef cookbooks because (1) they seem to be only fit for cooking on special occasions (hello, molecular gastronomy!) and require multiple internal mini-recipes and special equipment and (2) often the recipes are poorly tested for a home kitchen or just poorly tested, period. I'm happy to say that Stir is an exception. I've made several recipes from it. They have all turned out nicely, received compliments, and none have been overly complicated. I find myself reaching for it when I'm in the mood to make something Italian and innovative. I highly recommend the recipes for Butcher Shop Bolognese (p. 121, who knew that livers made such a difference?), Spicy Tomato Soup with Grilled Cheese (p. 91), and the Pappardelle with Tangy Veal Ragu (p. 138). One special day I will make the gnocchi recipe (I had the gnocchi once at No. Park, and the texture was to die for). I've been to many of the Barbara Lynch Gruppo restaurants and had spectacular service and food each time. The recipes in Stir are the real deal, I think.

We live in Boston and frequent BL's restaurants- this brilliant cookbook includes some of her fabulous accessible recipes that she serves so we can try them at home i.e. bolognese sauce (to die for), poulet en pain, roasted winter squash with maple syrup and sage cream (perfect for Thanksgiving). Besides loving the layout and gorgeous photos, the tidbits and infectious tone from Barbara herself make this both gourmand and down-to-earth reading. I can't wait to curl up in front of a fire and peruse... the most difficult choice will be which recipe to try first!

The Gorgonzola Fundue was the first thing I made out of the cookbook, though Barbara Lynch's legendary bolognese is coming up soon. The photography in the book is especially good and is what initially caught my eye in the bookstore. But the recipes are well setup for the home kitchen. So many great restaurant cooks and their cookbooks have a difficult transition to the smaller quantities, the lower heats, and the impracticality of whole day cooking in the home kitchen. Aside from the photos and the recipes, the story of cooking as an escape from the projects and poverty via self-taught cooking is an inspiration. Quite a book!

It's been 2 weeks since I bought this book and already my husband and I have cooked 6 dishes and

I've tagged many more recipes to try. Every recipe has been superb! This book is accessible, modern and the recipes so original and delicious. I have learnt many new techniques from the few recipes we've tried so far and used some easy to find ingredients in some very original ways. Tonight we made the braised short ribs with some creamy mascarpone polenta and the olive oil glazed baby vegetables. Last week after dining at the Butcher's Shop and enjoying the duck confit we made it ourselves at home with Kumquat Marmalade. The Seared Sea Scallops with Sauce Verte and Toasted Hazlenuts was fabulous and my favorite so far has been the Green Bean and Seared shrimp Salad with Spicy Curry Vinaigrette - what a great summery salad and one we'll make again and again. I hope that Barbara Lynch puts out more cookbooks as wonderful as this one.

I have made 14 of the recipes so far from this book and they all were complimented by guests. I am a fan of the simplicity of ingredients. While I do not have to go too far to get special ingredients anyway, most of recipes call for vegetables supermarkets carry year round. I also love how the leftover quality is just as good as the fresh, so I'm not afraid of making double amounts for future use. The recipes are Italian in context, but I would say that the American spin on them is excellently fused so that no matter who you are serving to, kids and adults alike will love this food.

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