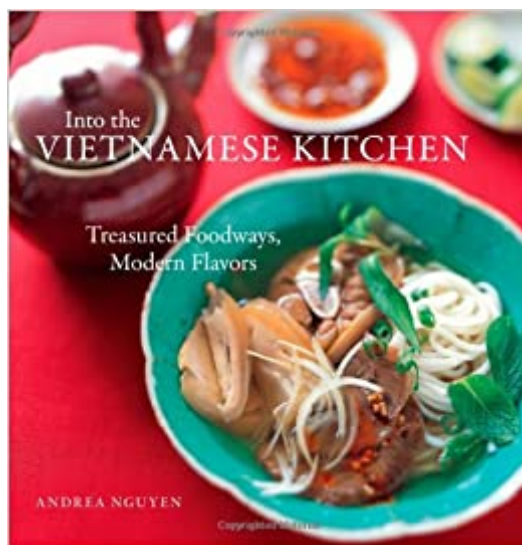


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Into The Vietnamese Kitchen: Treasured Foodways, Modern Flavors



Synopsis

An intimate collection of more than 175 of the finest Vietnamese recipes. When author Andrea Nguyen's family was airlifted out of Saigon in 1975, one of the few belongings that her mother hurriedly packed for the journey was her small orange notebook of recipes. Thirty years later, Nguyen has written her own intimate collection of recipes, *Into the Vietnamese Kitchen*, an ambitious debut cookbook that chronicles the food traditions of her native country. Robustly flavored yet delicate, sophisticated yet simple, the recipes include steamy pho noodle soups infused with the aromas of fresh herbs and lime; rich clay-pot preparations of catfish, chicken, and pork; classic bánh mì sandwiches; and an array of Vietnamese charcuterie. Nguyen helps readers shop for essential ingredients, master core cooking techniques, and prepare and serve satisfying meals, whether for two on a weeknight or 12 on a weekend.

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Customer Reviews

Vietnam-born Nguyen writes passionately and knowledgeably about the history and fundamentals of Vietnamese cuisine and offers more than 175 tempting and largely nonintimidating recipes, with the Vietnamese translation of the name beneath the English name and headnotes that provide excellent context and helpful tips. Chapters begin with alluring introductory text—the first set of recipes, for example, are the "Gifts to the Mouth," which the author explains is a translation of the Vietnamese phrase for snacking. The chapter includes such dishes as Beef and Jicama Hand Rolls, the Baguette Sandwich—the "one sandwich in the Vietnamese repertoire... a tour de force"—and

Fried Shrimp Chips. Other chapters are Sacred Soups (Chicken Dumpling and Chrysanthemum Leaf Soup is one beautiful entry), Classic Meats (like Beef Flank and Ginger Simmered in Caramel Sauce), Vegetables Many Ways, and Delightful Sweets and Palate Refreshers, which features Grilled Bananas with Coconut Sticky Rice and Lemongrass Ice Cream. Chapters on noodles, poultry, fish and shellfish, and basic sauces, as well as guides to Vietnamese ingredients, round out this culturally rich culinary tour. (Nov.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

IACP Finalist James Beard Award nominee
Andrea Nguyen may be to Vietnamese food what Julia Child was to French fare and Barbara Tropp to Chinese cuisine.
"Chicago Tribune" Best for: Anyone who wants to fall in love truly, madly, deeply with Vietnamese food.
"San Jose Mercury News" [A] smart, soulful collection of Vietnamese recipes.
"Saveur" A comprehensive take on a delicate yet dynamic cuisine.
"Philadelphia Inquirer" No other author has presented such a detailed account of the culinary abilities of Vietnamese home cooks, and subjects like the role of pickled vegetables and the techniques of charcuterie have never been so clearly explained for a wide audience.
"New York Times" Only now is Vietnamese food culture getting the attention it deserves, and a book of this beauty and seriousness will do much to explain the origins, traditions, and refinement of the country's cuisine.
"John Mariani's Virtual Gourmet" Nguyen makes Vietnamese cuisine accessible with this extensive cookbook, which stretches from soup to charcuterie.
"Houston Chronicle" An impressive, carefully researched, and thoroughly readable guide to Vietnamese food and culinary tradition.
"Library Journal

I spent a month traveling around Vietnam eating some of the most delicious food that I have ever had. I have a great appreciation for Vietnamese food and I would say that it is my 3rd favorite cuisine, so I wanted to learn how to cook it. I did take 2 cooking classes while in Vietnam but you don't get to actually cook the whole dish. I am also really good at cooking authentic Chinese food (Sichuan). I would say that I am a novice at cooking Vietnamese food with some knowledge of what is authentic Vietnamese food. I bought this book here that I am reviewing plus I got a couple of others from the library. There are some pros and cons to this book compared to the ones I got from the library (Vietnamese Home Cooking and Pleasures of the Vietnamese Table.) The positive aspects of this book include the explanations of why you would use one ingredient over another or why Vietnamese do one thing over one. I appreciated the guidance on what fish sauce to buy. There were a lot of other great tips such as what do when you just have store bought chicken stock.

The dishes listed include many of the ones that I tried throughout Vietnam especially in the North and South. They did not include many of the dishes that I tried in the central part, though. I was only there a month so I did not try everything. There was a wide variety of dishes and I appreciated that the Vietnamese name was included unlike the Vietnamese Home Cooking book because I am more familiar with the Vietnamese name and not the English name. Basically this is a treasure trove of amazing facts, information, and dishes. I am glad I bought it for these reasons. The negative is that there are not enough pictures for me, a novice who is not very familiar with all of the dishes. For example, if you want to make the steamed buns with pork, there are no pictures showing you the steps in making them like in Vietnamese Home Cooking. I need Charles Pham's book if I really want to make this dish. Also, some of her dishes are overly complicated such as Chicken Pho and include steps that I cannot do because of my burner. So I had to read other books and go online to find alternative ways to cook the food. Also, with Banh Xeo (Vietnamese Crepes), she says to make the flour by hand and not use store bought rice flour, which is really overly complicated. I learned how to make this dish in my cooking class using store bought rice flour. Other cook books and videos online say use store bought rice flour. Using her book requires you to do some research online and to possibly have a second and third book to help you. The recipes in all 3 books are not the same. For instance, the ingredients for papaya salad in all 3 books are very different. I have cooked 2 recipes from the book so far: papaya salad and chicken pho. I messed up on the papaya salad. Part of the problem with the dish was my fault (I did not eat papaya salad in Vietnam, but ate other salads), but I think the recipes from other books would have given a more flavorful dish with a lot more texture (carrots, mint, and fried shallots). The chicken pho turned out well, but I had done a lot of research before cooking it and had to use an alternative cooking method for the onions and ginger. I watched tons of videos, so I was well prepared (unlike the papaya salad). I think her instructions were confusing especially about making the broth, but I am also not familiar enough with making broth or stock. Anyways, the broth was very flavorful and complex. I loved the herbs. Finding necks and backs was difficult and I didn't find any. I used chicken wings instead and the neck from the whole chicken. I think the flavor was similar to what I ate in Vietnam. I like this book and I prefer it to the other ones from the library, but I still need those other 2 to help me cook.

This book came in bigger than expected. It was pretty heavy I was so surprised. Recipes seem doable.

If you have any interest in Vietnamese cooking and live in a western country, this is the book to get.

One of the difficulties with Vietnamese cooking is that a lot of the ingredients are only purchasable in Asian markets, and even then, there are differences in the quality of the ingredients. This book goes over names, both in English and Vietnamese, herbs and substitutions that might be more readily available, and the qualities and brands of ingredients to get (e.g. there is an entire section on fish sauce alone). I've only made about five recipes so far, but all of them have been very authentic and delicious. The recipes cover all the main aspects of Vietnamese cooking, including sandwiches, soups, salads, desserts, meats, and more. Note that there are criticisms that note this book's recipes have modified or simplified Vietnamese cooking in an unfavorable way. I find that true to a certain extent, but I think it works better with modern sensibilities towards cooking, especially in the west. A lot of purists will find problems with her recipes, but for a novice, it is a fantastic place to start. There are two things that keep me from giving this a perfect score. The first is that there are surprisingly very few photos, which is odd for a modern cookbook. The second is that the selection of soups is surprisingly limited which I consider to be a staple in Vietnamese cuisine. I still highly recommend this book as there is not another quite like it available in the west.

Andrea Nguyen's "Into the Vietnamese Kitchen" is terrific. There are no Vietnamese restaurants where I live and it's wonderful to be able to recreate some of my favorites.

This is a great reference book to have for a rich assortment of Vietnamese foods; Nguyen provides ample information about the cuisine and pictures of the food for the type that needs to see what the end result is before cooking. She even addresses substitutes that are available if the herb or seasoning isn't available.

I love Vietnamese cuisine, and I cook as a hobby. I have been searching far and wide for a Vietnamese cookbook that could help me recreate my favorite Vietnamese dishes, and I've finally found that book. Andrea Nguyen does a masterful job making the cuisine accessible. Her dishes taste authentic and delicious, and her instructions are so thoughtful, with helpful tips and details. For ex, her recipe for caramel sauce (nuoc mau, an essential component for claypot dishes) instructs you on gradations in color that you should observe, from champagne yellow to red wine to molasses, in determining whether the sugar has caramelized sufficiently. I have followed her recipes to a T, and each one has come out marvelously. My favorites so far are her garlicky oven-roasted chicken (ga ro-ti), caramelized minced pork (thit neo bam, which was a big hit among friends and family), and grilled chicken (ga nuong) including her vegetarian modification of grilled zucchini. Into

the Vietnamese Kitchen is now one of my go-to cookbooks, and I'm always excited to try a new recipe each week. I highly recommend this book.

I am Vietnamese American, and although my mother was a great cook, my interest in cooking did not start until I had my son a few years ago. And with my mother long gone, I searched for a cookbook that would allow me to replicate some of her recipes, to bring back some lovely memories and flavors. I have found it with Andrea's book and it is my 'bible' for Vietnamese recipes. I have made at least 3-4 recipes to date, and they have been delicious. Granted, I do personalize recipes to my own taste, as everyone should, but the basic guideline is there in very clear written instructions. Thank you Andrea, for sharing your immense talent with fellow foodies and for making me proud to cook Vietnamese dishes for my friends and family!

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