



The Reading List

New must-buys for food lovers. BY KIMBERLY Y. MASIBAY

Rustic Fruit Desserts Crumbles, Buckles, Cobblers, Pandowdies, and More

by Cory Schreiber
and Julie Richardson

(Ten Speed Press, \$22)

They say you can't judge a book by its cover, but I took one look at the luscious cobbler on the front of this slim volume and pretty much made up my mind. Happily, my intuition was spot on. This book is a pleasure.

The authors—two of Portland, Oregon's, most beloved chefs—deliver 70 unfussy recipes for good old-fashioned desserts. Most of them you'll want to devour promptly, but at the height of summer, when you've got fresh fruit up to your ears, the authors suggest keeping unbaked crisp or crumble toppings on hand in your freezer—then just bring home the fruit, and dessert is a snap.

Goat Song

A Seasonal Life, a Short History of Herding, and the Art of Making Cheese

by Brad Kessler

(Scribner, \$24)

About a decade ago, novelist Brad Kessler and his wife moved to a 75-acre farm in the moun-

tains of Vermont, where they planned to raise dairy goats. The couple knew nothing of goat herding, let alone living by nature's rules, so each day brought its share of dismay, discovery, and delight. In this spellbinding memoir, Kessler chronicles his adventures and his transformation from urban writer to artisan cheesemaker, while also gracefully weaving in historical musings that illuminate the pastoral roots of our modern world. Fascinating, poetic, and erudite, this is a book that beckons the reader to return to its pages time and again.

The New Portuguese Table Exciting Flavors from Europe's Western Coast

by David Leite

(Clarkson Potter, \$32.50)

When award-winning food writer David Leite journeyed to Portugal to explore his native cuisine, he was struck by how different it was from the rustic Portuguese food he'd been raised on in New Jersey. Since his father's emigration in the 1950s, new ingredients and cooking techniques have flooded Portugal. Modern chefs are reinterpreting classic



fare to delicious effect, borrowing flavors from India, Asia, and Africa. In the hands of one witty chef, for example, chicken in a pot becomes an aromatic grilled dish that Leite dubs Chicken out of a Pot and onto the Grill. He spotlights this new Portuguese fare and rounds out his recipe collection with plenty of classic family favorites, like spicy Grilled Shrimp with Piri-Piri Sauce, a Portuguese beach shack standard.

The Big Sur Bakery Cookbook

A Year in the Life of a Restaurant

by Michelle and Philip Wojtowicz, and Michael Gilson with Catherine Price

(William Morrow, \$40)

Month by month, this magical book takes you through a year at a renowned restaurant perched along Highway 1 in rugged Big Sur, California. You'll find stunning photographs, essays about life in Big Sur, profiles of local purveyors, and a collection of inspiring monthly menus, with recipes. The Big Sur Bakery is all about down-to-earth fare made with the freshest, best ingredients, so many of the recipes in this book are remarkably simple. There's nothing difficult about

making Braised Green Garlic; or Whole Rockfish, Scored and Charred; or Grilled Prime Rib Steak; or Roasted Apricots. The challenge for the home cook is in finding top-notch seasonal ingredients and then letting them sing.

Fresh Mexico

100 Simple Recipes for True Mexican Flavor

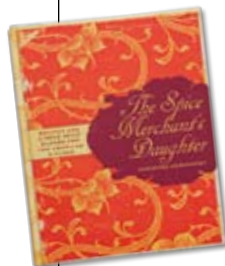
by Marcela Valladolid

(Clarkson Potter, \$22.50)

Vibrant and deliciously feisty, the modern Mexican recipes in Marcela Valladolid's new cookbook are as irresistible as the young Tijuana-based chef herself. Valladolid is passionate about Mexican cuisine, but she's no stickler for tradition. Whether she's infusing an Indian technique with Mexican flavor (as in her Cilantro Tandoori Chicken), wrapping a tortilla around duck confit (for a Duck Burrito), or sneaking tequila into crème anglaise (for her Apricot-Tequila Ice Cream), Valladolid finds inspiration where others see culinary boundaries. Her accessible recipes emphasize fresh, easy-to-find ingredients and are perfect for summer—or anytime.

Kimberly Y. Masibay is a Fine Cooking contributing editor.

what we're reading now



The Spice Merchant's Daughter (Clarkson Potter, 2008), by cooking instructor Christina Arokiasamy, is a beautifully designed book that inspired me straight into the kitchen. Arokiasamy teaches how to buy, store, and cook with the spices, herbs, and chiles that she learned about from her mother, a spice trader and caring cook from Malaysia. I especially love her make-ahead spice pastes and rubs (or "cook's little helpers"), which are great for adding layers of flavor to simple home cooking. —Denise Mickelsen