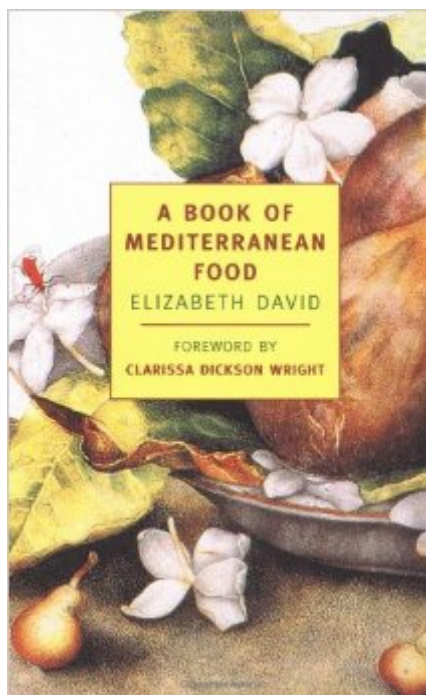


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A Book Of Mediterranean Food (New York Review Books Classics)



Synopsis

Long acknowledged as the inspiration for such modern masters as Julia Child and Claudia Roden, *A Book of Mediterranean Food* is Elizabeth David's passionate mixture of recipes, culinary lore, and frank talk. In bleak postwar Great Britain, when basics were rationed and fresh food a fantasy, David set about to cheer herself --and her audience-- up with dishes from the south of France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, and the Middle East. Some are sumptuous, many are simple, most are sublime.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This volume is one of the very few culinary titles published over fifty years ago, which is not only still in print, but still influencing how people think about food. To understand the importance of the book, it is more than usually important to place it in context, in the England of 1950 which was just coming out of six years of World War II followed by four years of rationing austerity, when a pound of butter was difficult to find and olive oil was sold by the pint in apothecaries 'for external use only'. Complimentary blurbs from Alice Waters can be found on many books nowadays, but this one I know is more heartfelt than usual. Based on Jeremiah Tower's recent memoir, I know David influenced both Waters and Tower. She was also a major influence on later writers on Mediterranean cuisine such as Claudia Roden and Paula Wolfert. David's notion of Mediterranean cuisine is somewhat limited to the western and central European coasts of Spain, France, Italy, and Greece, even though David did live and work in Egypt during World War II. Even here, she seems to color outside the lines a bit, reaching as far north and west as Lyon and Bordeaux. There is little here from North Africa. There is not even a mention of couscous in the index. To remedy this

deficiency, David refers us to Claudia Roden's excellent book on Near Eastern food. I can imagine that the recipes, foodstuffs, and stories of the Mediterranean shores had much the same influence on post-war Londoners as Provence had on the painting of Cezanne. David's word pictures brought the bright light and blue seas into the London parlors and stirred an interest, which had been dormant for over 10 years.

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