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FOREWORD REVIEW ♥♥♥♥♥ COOKING

A Simply Delicious Irish Christmas

Darina Allen
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As the title suggests, readers will discover many traditional Yuletide recipes that are easy to prepare, delicious and truly Irish. Darina also serves up a nostalgic look at what Christmas in Ireland was like, from making the Christmas puddings (and getting a wish if you help stir), to using up the leftovers in St. Stephen's pie.

Darina hopes the helpful tips, hints and practical shortcuts will give you the additional time needed to actually enjoy Christmas. And she shares her biggest secret of all—involve the whole family in the preparations right from the beginning. Included here is everything from "Starters" to "Edible Presents" with enough variety to prepare a sumptuous Irish feast for all to savor. There's the traditional roast turkey, duchesse potatoes, mince pies and Irish whiskey punch. These mouth-watering recipes come with practical advice, like how big a turkey to buy (only buy enough to feed your family with a little left over for sandwiches), menu planning and serving suggestions.

No Irish cookbook would be complete without a few good potato recipes; be sure to try the potato pancakes. This book has Darina's favorites, along with a paragraph or two on the importance of the potato to the Irish people. Her frank assessment of some of today's trends (like pre-washed vegetables) is as refreshing as it is candid, her homespun style charming.

Darina's approach to a carefree Christmas is simple and low-key. You don't have to knock yourself out to put on an impressive and memorable feast. The secret is to plan and prepare ahead, and those recipes that can be frozen or which keep for long periods are indicated with symbols.

There are a few colored photos of many of the recipes but not all. And some of the recipes, though there is an American conversion table, are a little confusing though a glossary is included, which helps in the translation.

Allen owns the famous Ballymaloe Cookery School in County Cork, Ireland. She is well known for her popular television series, Simply Delicious and her best-selling cookbooks. This is a tempting collection of traditional Irish recipes guaranteed to simplify and enrich holiday celebrations.
COLLEEN CLANCY ZANOTTI (December 16, 1998)

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