

Annabel Karmel's Fun, Fast and Easy Children's Cookbook

Annabel Karmel

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Annabel Karmel is a celebrated food authority in Great Britain, known for her emphasis on nutrition and cooking for babies and children. This is her forty-seventh book, full of recipes and tips for youngsters to help them navigate the kitchen, learn about healthy eating and math skills, and try out new foods and flavors along the way.

The book emphasizes colorful and appealing dishes that are packed with fruits, vegetables, and “glorious grains.” Many are less spicy, healthier versions of take-out favorites, like Fruity Chicken Korma, Empanadas, and Pizza. Comfort foods, like Popcorn Chicken and Ramen Noodles, are zipped up with additions of sweet potato, diced veggies, and bean sprouts.

The recipes are exuberant in their presentations, with color food shots that encourage a playful approach to food, as with sports and animal designs. Coconutty, banana-studded porridge is styled as an owl with the right placement of cut-up fruit; tear-and-share bread coils resemble a cheery snail; bear faces top muffins with the strategic decoration of dried fruit. The encouragement to have fun with cooking is boosted by Bryony Clarkson’s whimsical mixed-media illustrations of mice, bunnies, and other cute creatures cavorting through the pages.

The book also introduces basic kitchen skills and important rules for food preparation and safety, as well as promoting awareness of allergies and special diets. Karmel encourages kids to cook for and with friends at sleepovers, parties, and play dates. Recipe symbols make it easy to find snacks that are free of gluten, dairy, and eggs, as well as recipes that are vegan, vegetarian, or suitable for freezing and serving later.

Positive and educational, this entertaining cookbook delivers on its title promise to make cooking fun, fast, and easy, with a side order of deliciousness.

RACHEL JAGARESKI (September / October 2021)

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