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Cooking

Born to Grill
Bill Jamison
Cheryl Alters Jamison
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To grill is not just to barbecue or smoke. That is the first thing learned upon reading the Jamison's latest cookbook. Having previously dealt with smoke and barbecue cooking in Smoke & Spice (1994) and Sublime Smoke(1996), a James Beard Award-winning book, they now teach us thoroughly what it means to grill our meal. Complete from appetizers to dessert, the Jamisons give us recipes (over 250) to cover it all.

The book opens with informative history of grilling, i.e. cooking over an open fire, and a brief discussion of covering grills, fuel sources, techniques for fire building and how to "hand test" the temperature of a grill fire. The authors then state their definition of the subject: "Grilling is a specific form of cooking … it produces its own distinctive flavor … it's the taste that tells." High-heat browning creates the distinctive grill flavor. What makes this broader definition most enticing is that it is applied to all foods, including fruits and vegetables. A recipe for wilted fancy lettuces surprises with the thought of grilled endive and radicchio. Honeyed rainbow fruit kebobs would be a perfect ending to a grilled supper on any occasion.

Although a bit heavy on the cute "menu" recipes names, the balance of sidebar information makes this an interesting cookbook to browse. The recipes appear well organized and straightforward in their presentation. Frequently "technique tips" follow a recipe adding more information to assure the success of the chef. Illustrations and the index were not seen.

Marly Wyckoff