FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Cooking

Cooking Vegan
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Covering the basics of vegan eating, this cookbook is a how-to manual for those already following the diet, as well as those considering adopting it for environmental, animal-friendly, or health conscious reasons. Through easy-to-follow recipes, Melina, a registered dietician, and Forest, a professional chef, show that a vegan diet can be very accessible.

A secondary focus of the book is on the basics of cooking in general. The uncomplicated recipes will appeal to all beginning chefs, and anyone who wants to make healthy meals but doesn't have a lot of time to spend preparing them.

The mix of dishes, some requiring only assembly and others involving more ambitious cooking techniques, include vegan staples such as granola, hummus, and pesto, along with traditional meat- and dairy-based recipes that have been updated with vegan-friendly substitutions: Gardein's vegan chick'n scallopini is used in a paella dish; shepherd's pie is made with vegan ground round; and "Vegan Dazs" ice cream is made with frozen bananas. A variety of ethnic flavors, including Mexican, Italian, and Thai, are found in recipes for cranberry-ginger relish, baked yams with lemon and green chiles, and coconut-saffron rice. Most ingredients are found in all major supermarkets, with few exceptions; recipes calling for hempseed oil and hempseed milk might require a trip to the local health market or Whole Foods, but substitutions for these items are also suggested.

A discussion of how to blend the six tastes professional chefs like Forest strive for when developing a dish encourages readers to take inspiration from the recipes provided and create their own, a theme carried throughout the cookbook. Several entree recipes, including a potato bar, a salad bar, and international roll-ups, are presented in chart form, and offer unlimited possibilities for readers to assemble meals based on flavors they prefer.

With a strong focus on health, Melina and Forest provide a complete nutritional analysis and breakdown of calories, fat content, carbohydrates, protein, vitamins, and minerals with each

recipe, dispelling the myth that a vegan diet will not provide enough protein and other needed nutrients.

An element missing from the book is the use of visual aids. The authors state in the opening chapters that “we eat with our eyes first,” but they do not follow through by including photographs, which most readers expect in a cookbook.

By demystifying the basics of a vegan diet for the home cook, Melina and Forest illustrate that a healthy, socially-conscious diet can also be flavorful and easy to prepare.

Maria Siano