

Egyptian Flavors: 50 Recipes

Dyna Eldaief

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From dips to desserts, Dyna Eldaief's *Egyptian Flavors* is a fond tribute to her homeland's culinary customs.

Eldaief finds that "cooking food that is part of my heritage is like looking through a portal to the past." For her books and her cruise ship cooking demonstrations, she draws on Egypt's rich history and culture, as well as on other countries' trademark foods, to introduce twists on Mediterranean and North African fare.

Some of the included appetizers and snacks—pita chips with hummus dip; falafel; and lentil soup—are familiar. But the book's inventive entrées combine Northern European cuisine with Middle Eastern flourishes, as with a parsley and onion omelet with marinated feta, and a roast chicken stuffed with freekeh. Most tempting of all are the book's sweet treats, including baklava, rice and noodle puddings, and fried pancakes bursting with nuts, sultanas, and coconut, or dripping with butter, honey, and cream.

Most dishes split a two-page spread between context and the recipe, though a few more complicated plates involve multiple sauces and garnishes. In places, the explanatory text blocks are unwieldy; those recipes that are streamlined or divided into more steps are easier to follow.

A palm tree woodcut motif adorns the opening pages, while frequent monochrome drawings illustrate key ingredients or finished products. And while some of the recipes include uncommon products like caul fat and oxtail, most are straightforward for home reproduction. Eldaief is careful to note all vegetarian and vegan options, gives both metric and imperial units of measurement and both Arabic and English names for dishes, and includes useful serving and storage suggestions.

Highlighting traditional dishes and edging toward fusion food, *Egyptian Flavors* includes many mouthwatering delights.

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