FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Cooking

Fast Appetizers
Hugh Carpenter
Teri Sandison
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Good things come in small packages, and well over 100 fresh recipes for appetizers neatly packaged in a slim, 10” x 10” cookbook is a pleasant thing indeed. Although the title suggests a less sophisticated book, and many of the recipes are best prepared ahead rather than in a jiffy before serving, the book’s content—twenty sections, including those covering kitchen shortcuts, lists for pantry items, tips and a glossary—is worth the price.

While the recipes are international, many with flavor combinations from two or more cuisines, e.g, Spicy Thai Ground Lamb with Seared Tortillas, the collection is admittedly heavy on healthy Mediterranean recipes like Chilled Marinated Eggplant or an easy tapenade. Some, like Phyllo Coins Filled with Spicy Orange Lamb, are nearly exotic in conception, but there are also fresh takes on classics, in this case Chef Brian Streeter’s Beggar’s Purses with Warm Goat Cheese (recipe also included).

There are recipes for some appetizers for folks of every taste and also some recipes for cooks of differing abilities. The suggestions for incorporating appetizers in various menus, in plans for several social occasions and for serving portions would be immensely helpful to a beginning cook. Suggestions like using dips, e.g., Sweet-and-Sour Apricot Dip or Jade Dip to glaze deep-fried wontons and spring rolls are helpful. More worldly cooks, especially those who love the tastes of the Pacific Rim, will especially enjoy two chapters, Sushi, Sashimi, and New World Rolls and also Asian Dumplings and Spring Rolls.

Although some directions could be a little more specific (three ancho chiles should note that they are dried chiles), Carpenter and Sandison succeed in their mission to “tease, tempt, and torment” with their appetizing suggestions.

Sally Ketchum