



Gather: A Dirty Apron Cookbook

David Robertson

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David Robertson of Vancouver's Dirty Apron Cooking School and Delicatessen shares rustic yet sophisticated recipes and cooking advice in *Gather*, an inviting cookbook tailored for relaxed sharing in the "collective joy" of preparing meals with others.

These recipes don't focus on complicated techniques or esoteric culinary gear. Here, the emphasis is on coaxing maximum flavor from quality ingredients. Instructions are clear, whether the recipes involve only two ingredients, as with Brown Sugar Bacon, or ramp up to twenty-four, as with the Thai Beef Steak Sandwich with Lemongrass Aioli. Even classic puff pastry seems less daunting thanks to Robertson's patient, descriptive directions and parenthetical asides. Color photographs and pages of useful kitchen information regarding things like barbecue basics and developing flavor in bread baking add to the book's usefulness.

Recipes incorporate foods from a variety of cultures. Its many flavors of brunch, for example, come from Scandinavia, Spain, Mexico, Japan, and Italy. Robertson also showcases seafood and foraged ingredients from British Columbia's outdoor pantry, and photographs of him fishing and feasting al fresco with his family add personal charm. Recipes for vegan and gluten-free eaters are also sprinkled throughout.

Where *Gather* shines is in its inventive and unexpected flavor combinations. From Toasted Cumin and Eggplant Soup drizzled with freshly made mint oil to Kale and Zucchini Spaetzle, there are many inspired twists to familiar dishes. Recipes for making homemade red and green curry pastes and pickled sunflower seeds also add pizzazz.

The Dirty Apron storefront houses a take-out delicatessen, and Robertson shares some of his most sought-after breads and desserts from it. There are step-by-step directions for mixing up his bestselling Salted Caramels, Gluten-Free Naan Breads, and Maple Mascarpone Cheesecakes.

Packed with vibrant and innovative recipes for entertaining, *Gather* is a good choice for home cooks looking to up their game for their next get together.

RACHEL JAGARESKI (September / October 2019)

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