



Saltbox Seafood Joint Cookbook

Ricky Moore

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Ricky Moore's *Saltbox Seafood Joint Cookbook* is a tasty compilation of recipes and information about traditional North Carolina foodways with helpful guidance for selecting, prepping, and cooking fresh fish and shellfish.

Reflecting the vibe and flavors of coastal North Carolina, the book's sixty recipes tweak tradition with considerable, sophisticated knowledge of seasonings and culinary techniques. There are many down-home Southern fish shack favorites included, like Skillet Succotash and Crab Cakes, and that are redolent of the freshest ingredients, their instructions given in clear terms. Other recipes are elevated by complex, unusual flavors and techniques, including Hot Smoked Trout and Sour Chowda, which is spiked with brined, fermented corn kernels.

Moore's Saltbox Seafood Joint restaurants are steeped in local tradition and reflect his passion for seasonal and sustainable seafood. He notes that many abundant local species are underused in restaurant and home kitchens, and is a keen evangelist for the Sugar Toad, the Tripletail, the Hogfish, and other native fish species. He is also persuasive in arguing that choosing quality ingredients and making stocks, sauces, and spice blends from scratch is paramount to seafood success.

Chapters about frying, grilling, smoking, and stews are elegant as they break down the techniques involved in cooking different fish and seafood varieties. Interesting and opinionated sidebars cover North Carolina history, folklore, and food lore, while a chapter on grits and seafood amps up the traditional shrimp and grits pairing; it includes cakes, dumplings, and a delicate trout bathed in warm vinaigrette over cauliflower "grits." Luscious recipes for vegetables and sides include Saltbox Seafood Joint's signature dish, Hush-Honeys. Suggested menus for everything from a beach cookout to picnic fare round out the cookbook.

Saltbox Seafood Joint Cookbook is a unique and authoritative cookbook for anyone looking to hone their seafood-cooking skills.

RACHEL JAGARESKI (November / December 2019)

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