Clarion Review

Cooking

Sear Me Hear Me, Cookin' & Grillin'
Deaf Chef Paul Hansen
AuthorHouse
978-1-4772-7683-9
Four Stars (out of Five)

Hotel kitchen veteran Paul Hanson's *Sear Me Hear Me, Cookin' and Grillin'* is jam-packed with more than 250 crowd-pleasing recipes that feature vibrant flavors while using fresh, natural ingredients that limit sodium.

Hansen, who calls himself the "deaf chef" (a childhood illness left him deaf), presents this compilation of hearty recipes for appetizers, sides, and main dishes that have been honed over his twenty-five years in the business. Only a few recipes contain pre-made ingredients; the majority reflect the chef's "cooking from scratch" philosophy and rely heavily on the use of fresh herbs, marinades, and flavorful homemade sauces. Though Chef Hansen is obviously highly skilled, the recipes presented in this book are not technically difficult and are clearly and easily presented for the home kitchen.

The Deaf Chef dearly loves his meat, though there is a slim vegetarian chapter, as well. Many standard dishes are included, but there are also some unusual recipes gleaned from Hansen's restaurant years that will entice the gourmet, from Prosciutto-Wrapped Pork Loin with Cherry Chutney to Korean Short Ribs. Overall, Hansen presents many dishes that do not need a great deal of fancy preparation. This is a book that would appeal to those who love to grill.

Home cooks will appreciate the generous proportions of the large soft-cover format and the fact that most recipes appear on the same page or continue on the facing page so there's no need to flip pages while cooking. Each chapter is prefaced with a color photo of some subject dishes, and a muted version of this image serves as the background for the remainder of the chapter. This not only makes for a rather stylish cookbook, but gives visual cues to the reader when paging through to find a particular recipe. The lack of a recipe index makes this last feature very welcome.

Chef Hansen is an enthusiastic writer, but the tidbits that follow many of the recipes are

somewhat repetitive. They don’t provide stories about developing the recipes or behind-the-scenes kitchen tales, but mostly advise the reader on pairings with various potent potables or accompanying dishes. There are also many grammatical errors, misspellings, and an overuse of exclamation points that detract from the overall quality of the book.

Sear Me Hear Me, Cookin’ & Grillin’ is a great compilation of recipes that will appeal to readers who enjoy bold food and love to entertain. It is decidedly not the sort of cookbook full of culinary anecdotes and asides that one would sit down and read through in a sitting. If readers are of the first species, this volume will soon be dog-eared, wrinkled, and full of spatters; if of the other, Hansen’s cookbook will likely leave them hungry for more.

Rachel Jagareski