

Clarion Review ★★★★★

COOKING

Signs of the Tines: The Ultimate Astrological Cookbook

Joan Porte**Adam Gainsburg, Contributor**

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Look to the stars to decide what to eat with the recipes in this easy-to-follow, astrological cookbook.

Signs of the Tines: The Ultimate Astrological Cookbook is a new take on the typical cookbook. Recipes are based on traits attributed to each Zodiac sign and categorized by food preferences, with a focus on nutrition to encourage healthier habits.

Author Joan Porte, an astrologer who has offered readings for thirty years, combines her love of cooking with her life's work. For example, recipes for those born under the Aries sign, who are said to like hot and spicy dishes, include a roasted tomato gazpacho soup with jalapeño peppers and a pepper pasta made with spicy Italian sausage. The section for Leos, who have a taste for luxuries, includes smoked salmon pâté with caviar and lobster ravioli. To appeal to the adventurous Sagittarius, ethnic dishes are suggested, such as the Greek lemon soup (avgolemono) and Korean bibimbap (rice, vegetables, and bulgogi, which is a marinated beef).

There are ten recipes for each sign, with a range of appetizers, side dishes, entrées, and desserts. There is also a "To Their Health" recipe for each sign. For Tauruses who love rich foods, Porte encourages them to satisfy their craving with a healthy fish Provençal dish; to appeal to the curious nature of Geminis, the unusual blueberry polenta recipe is packed with nutrients; to quell Cancers' tendency to worry, a chocolate icebox cake can serve as a mood enhancer.

The recipes include ethnic, national, and regional foods, including tagine, pad thai, kugel, paella, Yankee pot roast, New England clam bake, and negimaki beef. Some recipes are of unexpected combinations, but sound tasty, such as the basil pesto and cheese torte, pollock with berry prosecco sauce, and broccoli and olive salad. The recipes seem uncomplicated; dishes are simple and instructions easy to follow. As a result, *Signs of the Tines* will be accessible even to new cooks. It will also appeal to the environmentally conscious, as recipes promote using sustainable fish and organic foods. There are a few unusual ingredients that might be difficult to find, though, like wild boar, elk, and ground bison.

Some of the astrological aspects are confusing at times. The sun signs (those known to most as they are the twelve signs of the zodiac) are straightforward, but Porte also encourages following the rising and south node signs and the fourth and sixth house signs, which the book does not clearly explain.

Each section includes a list of famous people with their sign and foods they enjoy. The celebrity focus feels out of place within the overall context of the cookbook, as Porte shares family oriented stories of cooking with her mother, grandmother, and aunt.

The 120 recipes are unique, healthy, and easy to make. For those who have an interest in both cooking and astrology, this cookbook offers a fun way to think about food choices.

MARIA SIANO (November 22, 2013)

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