

★ Taste Tibet: Family Recipes from the Himalayas

Julie Kleeman

Yeshi Jampa

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Julie Kleeman and Yeshi Jampa's enticing cookbook *Taste Tibet* is a labor of love for the couple, who own a popular restaurant in England by the same name. Its recipes include traditional and adapted dishes, gathered to put "Tibet on the food map."

Kleeman and Jampa met in 2009, when Kleeman was traveling through India, and Jampa was a Tibetan exile studying in Dharamsala. Their serendipitous encounter led to Jampa's offer to prepare Tibetan *thenthuk*, or handmade noodles in broth. The *thenthuk* was warm and nourishing; it led to their culinary and romantic partnership.

Taste Tibet presents its recipes in a fascinating cultural context. Its Walnut and Chile Dip incorporates Eastern Tibet's enduring bounty of walnut trees. *Sabtuk* is a legendary soup eaten by Milarepa, a twelfth-century holy man, during his conversion from a "murderous sorcerer" to a revered yogi. *Khabsey* are ceremonial cookies enjoyed during Tibetan new year, with a special scorpion-shaped cookie made as a talisman against bad luck.

As detailed in *Taste Tibet*, the meat and milk of the mighty yak are of great importance to Tibetans. *Balep* is a versatile flatbread that doesn't require yeast or an oven, while *Sha Balep* are plump Tibetan hand pies, stuffed with ground beef, spinach, and Sichuan peppercorns. The delightful Chocolate Tsampa Truffles combine cocoa, honey, and barley flour's distinct "nuttiness." And there are Tibet's famed *momos*, or dumplings, which Kleeman describes as the "ultimate comfort food." *Taste Tibet* features various *momo* recipes, including a heavenly vegan version filled with cabbage, spinach, and chives. For a sweeter taste, cinnamon-spiced Apple and Pear Momos can be served with custard or yogurt.

The cookbook includes a guide to basic techniques and ingredients, along with substitutions for harder to find items. Flavorful, colorful, and inspired, *Taste Tibet* captures the spiritual and personal essence of a unique cuisine.

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