Cooking

Ying's Best One-Dish Meals: Quick & Healthy Recipes for the Entire Family
Ying Chang Compestine
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When schedules get complicated and hungry tummies seek food that's healthy, delicious, and easy to prepare, it's challenging for families to find time to fix nutritious meals. Fortunately, Ying Chang Compestine has compiled a selection of tasty and simple one-dish recipes that minimize time and effort and maximize taste and value for people with a lot going on in their lives.

Compestine certainly knows busy. As an award-winning author and food editor for Martha Stewart's *Body +Soul* (now *Whole Living*)*, Cooking Light, Eating Well, Self,* and *Men's Health* magazines, and as the author of children's books, cookbooks, and novels, she appears on national television and is often profiled in the media. She also understands the comfort and preparation of good homemade food, thanks in part to memories of her grandmother's kitchen in Wuhan, China, when she was a child. Now, as a mother of a cross-country runner just off to college, wife of a distance biker, and badminton player herself, she also knows hungry families and encourages us to chop, cook, and eat together to share and expedite the process of creating really good meals.

Compestine's recipes make mouthwatering reading as well as eating: Pan-fired Tofu Salad with Green Tea and Honey Dressing, Black Rice With Cranberries, Carrots and Ginger, Candied Walnuts With Shrimp in Spicy Garlic Sauce, and Curried Coconut Pumpkin Chicken Stew are among the fifty unique and enticing dishes that are divided into sections by mode of preparation: Meals in a Wok, Meals in a Pot (soups and stews), Meals in a Hurry, Global Inspiration, and Deserts in a Flash. Color photos accompanying the recipes also look good enough to eat.

What makes Compestine's collection stand out from other cookbooks is her balanced and thoughtful approach to incorporating various food types into one-dish meals. While healthful, colorful, and fragrant, there are no unusually challenging recipes here, no hard- to-find

ingredients and no allegiance to one particular regional heritage. Rather, Compestine offers cuisine that borrows and blends elements from farms, forests, fields, and waters of many geographic and cultural traditions: Asia, Europe, Africa, the Caribbean, the Americas, and beyond. Meats, fish, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and a variety of grains compose equal parts in the balance of protein, fiber, and minerals she seeks to offer in each meal.

Writes Compestine: “I have always believed that food not only satisfies hunger, but it also plays an important role in our connection to others and to our past. Often when I cook certain dishes, they remind me of the places I have traveled, the people who taught me how to prepare the food, and the family and friends with whom I have shared meals.” During these days of economic change and the re-emergence of home as the primary place of sharing meals with friends and family, Compestine’s inspiring collection of recipes will be a welcome addition to many kitchens, made hopeful and warm by the magical trilogy of food, fellowship, and fun.

Pamela Harris Kaiser