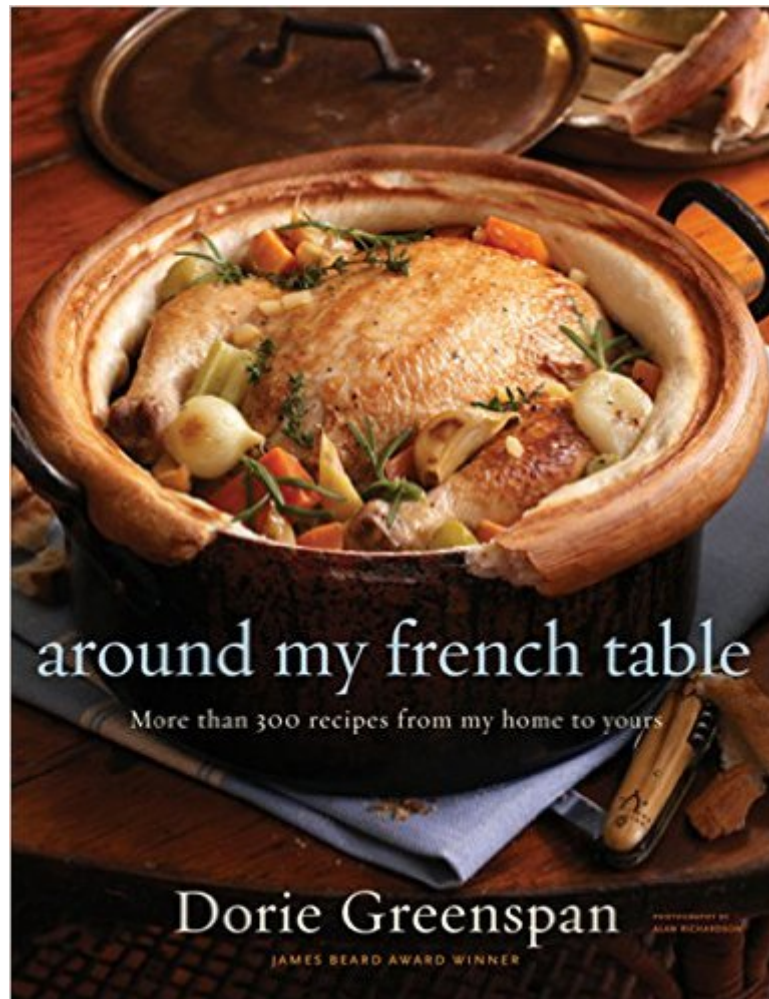


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Around My French Table: More Than 300 Recipes From My Home To Yours



Synopsis

When Julia Child told Dorie Greenspan, "You write recipes just the way I do," she paid her the ultimate compliment. Julia's praise was echoed by the New York Times and the Los Angeles Times, which referred to Dorie's "wonderfully encouraging voice" and "the sense of a real person who is there to help should you stumble." Now in a big, personal, and personable book, Dorie captures all the excitement of French home cooking, sharing disarmingly simple dishes she has gathered over years of living in France. *Around My French Table* includes many superb renditions of the great classics: a glorious cheese-domed onion soup, a spoon-tender beef daube, and the "top-secret" chocolate mousse recipe that every good Parisian cook knows "but won't reveal." Hundreds of other recipes are remarkably easy: a cheese and olive quick bread, a three-star chef's Basque potato tortilla made with a surprise ingredient (potato chips), and an utterly satisfying roast chicken for "lazy people." Packed with lively stories, memories, and insider tips on French culinary customs, *Around My French Table* will make cooks fall in love with France all over again, or for the first time.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I first discovered Dorie Greenspan after reading David Lebovitz's book "The Sweet Life in Paris." I loved the book and started reading everything I could on him. Since Lebovitz and Greenspan are friends, naturally on Google, I soon discovered Dorie's blog, doriegreenspan.com. The first time I went there, I was in search of a Financiers recipe. I used to get them in a wonderful bakery in New

Orleans' French Quarter and fell in love with them, and found a good recipe on the blog. A dear friend sent me Greenspan's latest book "around my french table." When I first opened it, I figured this would be so far out of my league, and probably mostly upscale Parisian food. Not having been to France (yet!) I wondered if I could find anything in the book that would be at my skill set, which is being a very good cook and baker but still, an amateur. I decided to take the book and lay across my bed perusing the recipes. In no time flat, I was off to the desk to get my post-it notes. By the end of the hour session, I had about a dozen recipes marked to make. Far from being anything like the average American envisions French cooking, this seemed to me to be French home cooking. (Actually, she had me on the front cover)...the photo of the recipe "chicken in a pot: the garlic and lemon version" which is depicted on the cover is a very good example of why it wasn't upscale cooking alone. A large, heavy porcelain cast iron dutch oven with a whole chicken, celery, garlic, sweet potato, onions and carrots surrounded by a golden ring of dough (a dough seal) between the pot and the lid. In my mind, this looked straight from Provence, like I know anything about Provençal cooking! I ventured into some of the recipes. The first I made was the brown sugar squash and Brussels sprouts en papillote.

First, what this book is NOT: an introduction to classical French cuisine. Or even modern French cuisine. As Greenspan herself points out in a post at the eGullet forums, "Here's what the book isn't: It's not Escoffier. It's not Mastering the Art of French Cooking. It's not a by-the-rules book. It's not a textbook. It's too personal to be any of those things." This is a collection of recipes that feels like it comes straight out of Greenspan's kitchen: which means that if your cooking style and tastes run with hers, you will like this book. If they don't, you won't. So despite my four-star rating, that is purely a reflection of how well my cooking style agrees with Ms. Greenspan's. I strongly encourage you to check out the table of contents before clicking "Buy" on this one. There are a lot of braises, including three different recipes for what amount to roast chicken. There are two veal stews, and two beef daubes. If that's the food you like to eat, you would be hard-pressed to find clearer, better-written recipes. Naturally Greenspan is not breaking any new culinary ground here: if you have even a medium-sized cookbook collection, you probably already have most of the recipes she presents. What you probably don't have is the exquisite photography (by Alan Richardson), or the extremely well-written recipe instructions. The production values of this book are very high indeed: I am astonished at how low the price is all things considered. A few favorite recipes of the dozen or so I've made so far: Chicken Breasts Diable, Veal Marengo, Lamb and Dried Apricot Tagine, and the Chard-Stuffed Pork Roast are all very good.

Have you ever come across a new technique in a book that is so revolutionary, that it changes the way you do that one task forever??? It's rare, in my world. Yet, in Dorie Greenspan's "Around my French Table," I came across her method for "ruffled eggs" and I'll never poach eggs the same again. I just never had much success with the old boiling water and vinegar method. I had moved to poaching in the microwave a few years back, but the texture was never quite the same. Then in Dorie's book, I read about her ruffled eggs. Basically, it's like a sort of "sous-vide" at home. Here's what you do: Take two squares of plastic wrap (such as saran wrap), and put them one on top of each other in a small tea cup or ramekin. You want to indent in the middle so you have a place to put the egg...and let the rest go over the sides. Then spray the plastic with oil (such as Pam) and crack in your egg. Bring up the edges of the plastic wrap and twist them together. Dorie says to tie with kitchen twine, but as I don't have any, I never have. It's worked fine without. Then put your little packet into boiling water for 5-6 minutes. Take it out, and you'll have a perfect poached egg! Every time! If it's not fully cooked, you can retwist and return it to the water until you discover the amount of time it takes on your stove. As for the rest of the recipes, they've been fabulous. I lived in the south of France as well as Paris, and have found numerous recipes which duplicate the tastes I remember. Dorie's recipes are definitely for the home cook--easy and accessible. She fills her book with little stories as well, so you feel like you're there along with her. I've made quite a few of the tartines as well as the soups.

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