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Adventures In Starry Kitchen: 88 Asian-Inspired Recipes From America's Most Famous Underground Restaurant



Synopsis

The behind-the-scenes story of America's most famous underground restaurant, featuring more than 80 eighty-eight deceptively simple and unbelievably delicious pan-Asian recipes and dozens of luscious full color photos. In 2008, as the American economy cratered, newly unemployed Nguyen Tran and his newly unemployed wife-to-be, Thi, opened an off-the-grid eatery in their small Los Angeles studio apartment. Word of their fabulous food quickly spread, turning their culinary "speakeasy," Starry Kitchen, into an underground sensation and the #1 Asian fusion restaurant in L.A. on Yelp. Threatened by the city's health inspector, Nguyen and Thi transformed Starry Kitchen into an acclaimed and wildly popular pop-up restaurant in a downtown sushi joint. But their success was only beginning. As their clientele exploded, thanks to raves in the Los Angeles Times, Nguyen and Thi moved to a bigger space of their own in Chinatown, where they helped make the neighborhood the epicenter of L.A.'s burgeoning food scene. Adventures in Starry Kitchen chronicles Starry Kitchen's DIY evolution "this beautiful accident gone right" the mayhem, mishaps, misdemeanors, milestones, and amazing meals that have contributed to (and nearly derailed) its success. As they tell their story, the Trans share more than eighty-eight easy-to-follow pan-Asian recipes mouthwatering and flavorful comfort cuisine, including Claypot Striped Bass, Buttermilk Beer Beignets, Singaporean Chili Crab, Double-Fried Chicken Wings and, of course, Starry Kitchen's trademark Crispy Tofu Balls. Whether you're cooking for two, four, or sixty, Adventures in Starry Kitchen demonstrates you don't have to be a desperately hip (or even trained) chef to master sensational modern food that will amaze and delight.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“Everything about Starry Kitchen is unexpected, from their crazy stories to their crazy-delicious food. This book, which serves up both in great big heapings, is sure to hit the spot.” (Brooke Williamson, Bravo’s Top Chef Season 14 Winner, and co-owner and co-chef of Hudson House, The Tripel, Playa Provisions, and Da Kikokiko) “This dude is crazy and I like that.” (Roy Choi, author of L.A. Son, and co-owner, co-founder, and chef of Kogi BBQ, Chego!, A-Frame, Commissary, POT, and LocoL.) “A book for the fans who waited in long lines, snuck into private dining rooms, and have followed [Starry Kitchen] through thick and thin. Starry Kitchen is a story by and for dogged, food-obsessed dreamers. (Plus, it has a recipe for [a] killer chili crab.)” (Eater)

From America’s most famous underground restaurant • delicious recipes and amazing stories of mayhem, misdemeanors, and cooking with balls *Adventures in Starry Kitchen* chronicles the unlikely transformation of a wildly popular (and definitely illegal) underground sensation into an (eventually) legitimate and celebrated mainstay of the Los Angeles food scene. Paired with the behind-the-scenes tales that contributed to, nearly derailed, and inspired its success are 88 recipes for Pan-Asian comfort food, mouthwatering and easy-to-make dishes like Lemongrass Chicken, Claypot Caramelized Striped Bass, Pandan Churros, Singaporean Chili Crab, Roast Pork Belly XO Fried Rice • one of the most elusive dishes in North America • and Starry Kitchen’s trademark Crispy Tofu Balls. Whether cooking for two, four, or for your own (portion sizes included!) underground operation, *Adventures in Starry Kitchen* is a fully illustrated, hilarious retelling, and gorgeously rendered how-to manual for accomplished and aspiring at-home chefs alike.

I cook a lot but mostly what you’d call fatty, comfort America fare. Lots of casseroles and spaghetti and tacos. Blah and boring. I’m not what you call a “foodee” and I’m somewhat intimidated by Asian food. However this book is not only fun to read, but the recipes seem easy enough and look appealing even to a non-foodee like me. I’m pretty excited to try some of them out. The instructions are super user friendly and the sarcasm and wit in the story telling is right up my alley! The book itself is a great quality, hard back with beautiful color! Kudos to the author.

I love this book!! I haven't tried the recipes yet, and am more inclined to visit Button Mash since I don't like to cook. My daughter and I love Starry Kitchen! I miss those underground days and loved the restaurant in downtown LA. Their food has this amazing sensibility; it is sublimely delicious and highly addicting! (BTW - I like good food, but am not a foodie.) Nguyen's story of being the son of immigrants really resonated with me. (My parents immigrated to the US from (North) Korea during the Korean War.) Nguyen is an incredibly friendly and bright spirit, and Thi, the Kitchen Ninja is lovely! I enjoyed reading about the evolution of Starry Kitchen. What a daring and exciting journey they have been through. Their resilience is inspiring.

This is currently on display on my coffee table. I love the recipes, the photos, and more importantly, the stories that tie the food, people and community together. This is truly a labor of love, and it shows. One of my favorite aspects of the book is that each recipe includes a snapshot of the quantity of ingredients necessary if you wanted to make large amounts for a party. I don't understand how anyone hosts a 4-6 person party (those sound really lonely) so I appreciate having the recipes easily available for large quantities.

We have been anxiously waiting for this cook book!!! It's amazing and didn't disappoint. Thanks Starry Kitchen you guys rock!

Gorgeous book, beautiful photos, great personal story, but most importantly easy to make recipes that are deep in flavor and delicious. Also THAT CHILI CRAB RECIPE IS WORTH THE PRICE OF ADMISSION

I bought this book after hearing an interview with the author on NPR. The crispy tofu balls sounded so intriguing that I decided to buy the whole book just for the one recipe. I am vegan, so I'm looking forward to the recipes that are accidentally vegan or that I can veganize, but I'm not disappointed in the book in any event, because the writing is so entertaining. I'll have to update this review after I try those crispy tofu balls!

Loved their food from their underground restaurant at their old place and have followed them everywhere since! This book was witty and the stories bring you right into their world and what was going on as they ran a restaurant! And now more importantly I can get their amazing garlic noodles whenever I want to make it!!! That and the XO Pork Belly and the Malaysian Chicken curry. So

excited to start cooking the delicious food!

Let's be real. I can't cook to save myself. However, I might just give it a shot after buying this cookbook. I met Nguyen when they had a brick and mortar restaurant in 1 Cal Plaza in downtown Los Angeles. While standing in line, he greeted me with some slight profanity and gave me a quick intro to the menu. I was a bit taken aback by his candor as I work in the legal field and was about to mouth off back to him. Boy am I glad I didn't because he's just the most genuine guy ever. The food is great and I ate there at least 3 times a week. I was so sad when they moved away and have followed them to each new location. I'm so happy they wrote a book because it tells you how they started out in the business, their influences and most important, they lay out their famous dishes for all the world to follow.

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