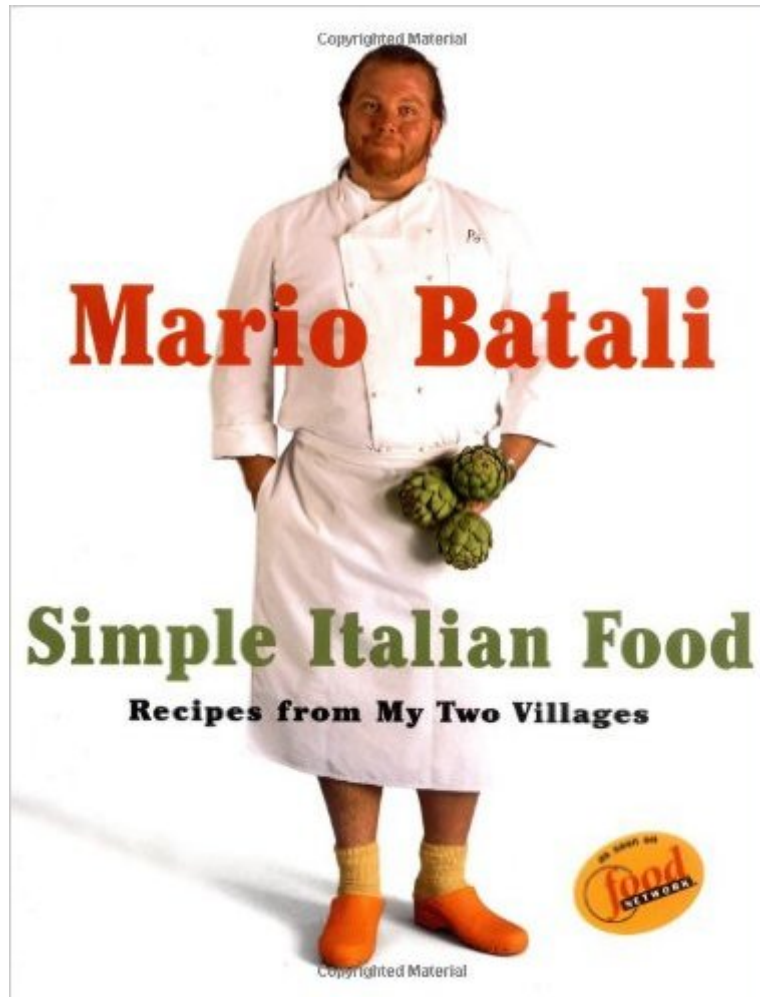


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Mario Batali Simple Italian Food: Recipes From My Two Villages



Synopsis

Perfectly pristine ingredients, combined sensibly and cooked properly, are the unmistakable hallmarks of the best Italian food. Chef Mario Batali, known to fans far and wide as "Molto Mario" from his appearances on television's Food Network and as chef of New York's much-loved PÂ restaurant, has elevated these simple principles to fine art, creating innovative new fare that pays tribute to traditional Italian home cooking in a distinctly modern way. Now, for the first time, more than 200 of his irresistible recipes for fresh pastas, sprightly salads, grilled dishes, savory ragus, and many others are gathered in Simple Italian Food, a celebration of the flavors and spirit of Italy. Mario draws inspiration for his distinctive dishes from the two "villages" that have left their stamps on his cuisine: Borgo Capanne, the tiny hillside village in Northern Italy where he lived and cooked for several years, and New York's Greenwich Village, where he has ready access to bountiful produce and outstanding artisan-made products; his full-flavored, smartly presented fare combines the best of both worlds. Chapters covering antipasti, pasta and risotto, fish, meat and poultry, contorni (side dishes), and cheese and sweets offer classic dishes such as Baked Lasagne with Asparagus and Pesto and pork loin cooked in caramelized onions and milk alongside Batali's own enticing improvisations--Penne with Spicy Goat Cheese and Hazelnut Pesto or Tuna Carpaccio with Cucumbers, Sweet Potatoes, and Saffron Vinaigrette. And because his recipes succeed on the strength of their ingredients rather than on virtuoso techniques, home cooks can easily duplicate the clear, clean flavors and lively presentations that are Mario's signature. Thirty-two pages of color photographs showcase Chef Batali's colorful and approachable recipes. Traditionalists as well as those who thrill to the new will want to make dozens of these crowd-pleasing dishes a permanent part of their repertoire and embrace Mario Batali's philosophy of Simple Italian Food.

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Customer Reviews

I find it hard to be entirely objective about this book, as Mario Batali is my number one culinary hero. Through his show 'Molto Mario' on the Food Network, he exposed me for the first time to Italian regional and microregional cuisines and the 'if it grows together, it goes together' doctrine. This is called 'terroir' by the fans of cooking from 'the F country', which Mario loves to hate. This also brought into full light the doctrine of 'buy the very best of what is fresh today and that will determine what you cook tonight.' Mario does not give you the cerebral approach of someone like Paul Bertolli or Tom Colicchio or, ultimately, like Thomas Keller, but Mario gets all the important stuff right, in a way we can appreciate and use. I love the way Mario quite honestly confesses to having lifted most of his recipes from Italian grandmothers, as he believes that the best Italian cooking is done in the home and not in the Restaurant. In spite of his heart being with Italian cuisine, he is never disrespectful of American food and produce, especially when the American product is superior to the Italian. This book is comprised of recipes primarily from the extended three-year stage he served in a little trattoria in Emilia-Romagna, a stone's throw from the border with Toscana. But, it does contain several recipes from other parts of Emilia-Romagna, Toscana, Lazio (Rome) and even Sicily. His two 'villages' are Porretta Terme in Italy and Greenwich Village in Manhattan. The book has six chapters of recipes, these being: Antipasti, 43 recipes including crostini, bruschetta, polenta, pickled vegetables, mushrooms, and cured fish. Primi (pasta or rice), 49 recipes including recipes for fresh pastas, gnocchi, couscous, and risottos.

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