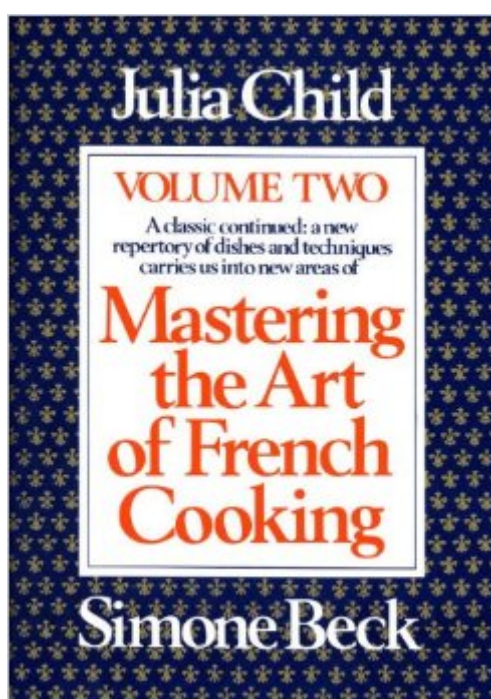


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# Mastering The Art Of French Cooking, Vol. 2: A Classic Continued: A New Repertory Of Dishes And Techniques Carries Us Into New Areas



## Synopsis

The sequel to the classic *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* Here, from Julia Child and Simone Beck, is the sequel to the cooking classic that has inspired a whole American generation to new standards of culinary taste and artistry. On the principle that "mastering any art is a continuing process," they continued, during the years since the publication of the now-celebrated Volume One, to search out and sample new recipes among the classic dishes and regional specialties of France "cooking, conferring, tasting, revising, perfecting. Out of their discoveries they have made, for Volume Two, a brilliant selection of precisely those recipes that will not only add to the repertory but will, above all, bring the reader to a yet higher level of mastering the art of French cooking. This second volume enables Americans, working with American ingredients, in American kitchens, to achieve those incomparable flavors and aromas that bring up a rush of memories "of lunch at a country inn in Provence, of an evening at a great Paris restaurant, of the essential cooking of France. Among its many treasures: " the first authentic, successful recipe ever devised for making real French bread "the long, crunchy, yeasty, golden loaf that is like no other bread in texture and flavor" with American all-purpose flour and in an American home oven; " soups from the garden, chowders and bisques from the sea" including great fish stews from Provence, Normandy, and Burgundy; " meats from country kitchens to haute cuisine, in master recipes that demonstrate the special art of French meat cookery; " chickens poached (thirteen ways) and sauced; " vegetables alluringly combined and restored to a place of honor on the menu; " a lavish array of desserts, from the deceptively simple to the absolutely splendid. But perhaps the most remarkable achievement of this volume is that it will make Americans actually more expert than their French contemporaries in two supreme areas of cookery: baking and charcuterie. In France one can turn to the local bakery for fresh and expertly baked bread, or to neighborhood charcuterie for pâtés and terrines and sausages. Here, most of us have no choice but to create them for ourselves. And in this book, thanks to the ingenuity and untiring experimentation of Mesdames Child and Beck, we are given instructions so clear, so carefully tested, that now any American cook can make specialties that have hitherto been obtainable only from France's professional chefs and bakers. With the publication of Volume Two, one can select from a whole new range of dishes, from the French bread to a salted goose, from peasant ragoûts to royal Napoleons. Each of the new master recipes is worked out, step by infallible step, with the detail, exactness, and clarity that are the soul of *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*. And the many drawings "five times as many as in Volume One" are demonstrations in themselves, making the already clear instructions doubly clear. More than a million American families now own Volume One. For them and, in fact, for all who would

master the art of French cooking, Julia Child and Simone Beck open up new worlds of expertise and good eating. Bon appétit!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

First, I cannot cook. other then basic heat and serve. So I bought a ton of cookbooks and tried a ton of recipes from the food network. Still could not cook. Picked up this book at a flea market ( the 1963 printing ). This book is incredible. My kids not only will eat the food, but they love it. ( and they demand the food now ). I do not agree with other reviews about complexity and cost of the recipe's. She provides both easy and complex recipes. The recipes are well thought out, with step by step instructions and illustrations. The illustrations are priceless, cooking is a lot of technique, and the illustrations walk you through it. Every question I would have had about the ingredients or prep are covered. Oh, and ingredients.. She assumes that the grocery store is the only place you have to shop. So she notes how to adjust for canned or frozen vs fresh, and what you can substitute. Not some cute ethnic market in New York City where everything is always in season from the 4 corners of the world. You can literally take the book to the grocery store to buy your ingredients. and come out with everything you need. ( I have a 40 year old copy of this book, and Julia's assumptions about what I will be able, and will not, to find in my grocery store is 100% correct. ) Crepes - been trying for a year to make the kids crepes. tried several recipes online. failed. first attempt with Julia, and voila crepes. Omelette - so I could always make an omelette. or at least I thought. now I am an omelette gourmet cook. I cannot wait to graduate to her other cookbooks.

Rarely are we able to say with certainty that a book is at the top of its subject in regard and quality.

This book, the continuation of 'Mastering the Art of French Cooking' by Julia Child and Simone Beck is certainly in that most unique position among cookbooks written in English and published in the United States. This volume is truly a simple extension of the material in the original work, which was recently published in a 40th anniversary edition by its publisher, Alfred E. Knopf and its principle author, Julia Child. As told in Ms. Child's autobiography, the original manuscript brought to Judith Jones at Knopf ran to over a thousand printed pages. About two fifths of that material was put to the side and most of it appears in this second volume. All this means is that you are unlikely to really have a full coverage of the subject of French Cooking as intended by the authors unless you have both volumes. The first chapter has a clear sign that this volume rounds out the work in that it gives soups a much more thorough coverage than the first volume. Most importantly, it includes recipes for that quintessential French dish, bouillabaisse. To complement this subject is coverage of seafood such as a tour of the anatomy of a lobster that would put seafood specialist cookbooks to shame. The biggest single addition to the subject in this book is its coverage of baking and pastry. Here is one place where the book may be seen to diverge from its focus of the French housewife's cooking practice. As the book states clearly in the first chapter, practically no baking is done at home, since there is a Boulangerie on every street corner. I generally find the level of detail on baking in cookbooks specializing on savory dishes to be much too light to give the reader an adequate appreciation of the subject. This book covers baking with a level of detail which would make most baking book authors blush. A sign of this deep, quality coverage is the diagrams used to illustrate baking techniques. The line drawings typically succeed where photographs do not in that they can be easily incorporated into the text and the drawing can eliminate extraneous detail and show the reader only what is important in understanding the technique. The section on making classic French bread ends with a 'self-criticism' section we may nowadays call a debugging section. It lists several different things that may go wrong with your product, and how to fix them. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in only baking, let alone the rest of us. The quality of presentation continues with the coverage of pastry. Some books on pastry give one pie dough. Some good books on pastry may give three or four. This book gives eight, with a clear indication of the differences in when to use the various doughs. Some books on pastry describe how to make puff pastry. This book gives a really complete explanation, with abundant diagrams. I suspect that very few people want to make their own puff pastry, but anyone who uses store-bought pastry will benefit from knowing how it is made. This section is worth five different expositions on the subject on the Food Network rolled into one. Another major subject untouched in the original volume is the long chapter on Charcuterie. That is, the techniques needed to make sausages, salted pork and

goose, pates, and terrines. Like the description of puff pastry, this chapter contains a lot you may never need, but then again, I am a great believer in serendipity. You never know where you may hit upon an idea to add interest to your cooking practice. The simplest product you can garner from these techniques is the method for making breakfast sausage, which needs no casing. The subject really wakes up when you realize that the subject arose as a method for preserving meats, just like canning and pickling were developed to preserve fruits and vegetables. If economy and the old hippie / whole earth catalogue ethic are your thing, this is something you will want to check out. And, I have seen this subject covered in recent books such as Paul Bertolli's 'Cooking by Hand', and this book's coverage of the material is more useful. Another gem in this book is the coverage of desserts, including frozen desserts, custards, shortcake, meringue, charlottes, and on and on and on. The guidance on novel uses of puff pastry has probably been a source for more TV shows on the subject than you can count on your fingers. The recipe for leftover pastry dough is just another indication of how practical the material in this book can be. The appendices contain 'stuff' that virtually no other cookbooks touch. One contains a cross listing of recipes for meat and vegetable stuffings. I did not have enough room in my review of volume one to cite the quality of the material on kitchen equipment. As both books have been updated several times since the early sixties, both contain modern tools such as the food processor and the latest heavy-duty mixer attachments. Aside from being as complete a catalogue of hand tools I have ever seen, I find the presentation done with the kind of good humor which was the hallmark of Julia Child's PBS shows. The last major feature of this volume is a two-color index that covers both volumes. Please be warned. These books have neither simple cooking nor low calorie dishes. The object of this style of cooking was to make the very best of inexpensive ingredients. Each page offers more reasons to be impressed by this work. Any true foodie should be ashamed if they do not own and read these volumes.

My mom was insistent that we kids learn to cook, and when Julia Child came on public television in the 60's, the whole family was glued to the set. We watched with fascination as she did things with food we Americans didn't know you could do. Mom bought this cookbook then, and I still have it, cover hanging by threads and covered in all kinds of saucy stains. It's still going strong, getting more stains every time I give a dinner party. We learned how to make omelets, roasts, soups like Vichyssoise (surprisingly simple potato and leek soup), and how to cook the bumper crop of garden green beans in a new and very delectable manner. I still think that this may be one of the best cookbooks for vegetables that I have on my shelf. I prize it for the meat section, especially a veal ragout that is possibly one of the most luxurious company dishes for a dinner party. It can be made

ahead, and in fact, improves if you do. There are a lot of delicious desserts, some complicated (like Creme Bavaroise) and some cakes such as Reine de Saba (Queen of Sheba), a darkly moist and modest looking little chocolate cake. This is easy to make, but so rich and delicious it should be banned by the AMA. What's not in here is French Bread. That's in Volume II. Just in case you were looking for that recipe, fyi. We made French-style green beans and the Reine de Saba cake one memorable Thanksgiving when we were very young, and even the kids (seven cousins, five of which were BOYS) sat politely glued to the table for the ENTIRE meal instead of getting up and running around halfway through the feast. The food was THAT good. While I don't make French food every day because I watch my weight, I do use this book for the principles of good food preparation, even if omitting cream or substituting lower fat choices. I still find that these recipes are the ones I use as the "gold standard", whether it's boeuf bourguignon or a pear recipe (pears with macaroons) that has stood me in stead as a quick but unusually good dessert for years. My copy is bedraggled and I've had it for fifty years. Still going strong.

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