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# Handwritten Recipes: A Bookseller's Collection Of Curious And Wonderful Recipes Forgotten Between The Pages



## Synopsis

Leaf through your cookbooks, and you're likely to find a bit of paper with a recipe written in a familiar (or not-so-familiar) hand. It could be a family secret finally divulged, a scribbled interpretation of something seen on TV, even a culinary experiment long since forgotten. What happens to these recipes when the books are passed on? By day, Michael Popek works in his family's used bookstore. By night, he's the voyeuristic force behind the websites ForgottenBookmarks and HandwrittenRecipes, where he shares the weird, wonderful objects he has found among the stacks at his store. Handwritten Recipes is a treasury of Michael's most fascinating found recipes. You'll find classic Americana like pies and casseroles alongside ethnic mainstays such as Italian cookies, springerle, and German dumplings. Some are perfectly clear and complete, while others leave crucial elements like cooking times and ingredient measurements to the reader's imagination. You can venture to try any recipe, or just enjoy Popek's findings as a time capsule from kitchens of generations gone by.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Is there anything better than something "found" in between the pages of a book? This is a collection of serendipitous recipes from cooks you will never know. So in a way this anthology is the antithesis of a "reality show" that is more real than a Nigella. How can you resist a noodle pudding that is culled from the interleaf of Barbara Cartland's Wild Unwilling Wife (page 65). Or Blonde Brownies from Motherless Brooklyn? Read the book. Bake the bread. Be your own star knowing that anonymous, faceless, not Facebook others, have recorded their savouring and it is your fortune to

be tempted by them through this delightful book.

Through the years, a used-book seller kept track of the recipes that he found tucked away in the books that came through his shop. He also kept track of the books in which he found them. He put it all together in a book: Interesting idea; cute idea; but to what end? Yes, it was interesting to turn the pages and see a picture of the recipe, whether on a card, or envelope, or scrap of paper; and to see next to it a picture of the book in which it was found. But the "interest" ends there: The author did not reminisce on the people who brought the books in, nor did he search out, then tell us, the story behind the recipe and how it came to be in the book. (Sometimes he contacted a blogger to gain some info on the recipe's ingredients.) Plus, the recipes are nothing special. I can count on one hand the recipes I found that interested me enough to try. Yes, I suppose one could call a few of them "curious". Calling the recipes "wonderful" is quite a stretch. I bought this book because I collect old recipes--I search for them at estate sales and have had a lot of fun in the process. This book has been a disappointment for me; I had hoped for more. I suggest you try to get a hold of a copy through your local library before making a purchase. I actually regret that I bought this one, and I give it 2.5 stars, rounded up to 3. If you are in search of some worthwhile heirloom recipes, (that have been updated for today's available ingredients) check out this cookbook: *Heirloom Cooking With the Brass Sisters: Recipes You Remember and Love*; and here is another one by the same authors: *Heirloom Baking with the Brass Sisters: More than 100 Years of Recipes Discovered and Collected by the Queens of Comfort Food(TM)*. I recommend the "Cooking" one because I cook from it and I especially love the stollen recipe in that book.

Some reviewers have expressed disappointment in this little book, but I'm glad I decided to buy it in spite of the negative comments. If you've ever smiled with delight when you found a handwritten recipe or clipping tucked away in a used book -- and speculated about how it came to be saved and then lost -- you'll enjoy this collection in exactly the same way. No lofty aims here, no major lost recipes rediscovered, just a sort of gentle, "Oh, look here at what I found between the pages." In most cases there's a picture of the original clipping and of the book in which it was found along with the transcription. For recipes with missing or unreadable pieces, Popek found someone to try out the dish and report on the results. If your curiosity is intrigued by the very IDEA of this odd little book, you'll be pleased that you gave in and ordered it.

Even if you don't cook, this is a wonderful peek into other people's lives. The premise: you buy a

used book, get it home, and find a recipe stuck inside it somewhere. Maybe it was used as a bookmark and forgotten in time. "Handwritten Recipes" is an actual collection of those recipes, with pictures of the original, handwritten (or typed) recipes along with the books they were found in. Throughout the book, Michael Popek (who states he isn't a cook and doesn't even play one on T.V.) has plucked out certain recipes and sent them along to foodie bloggers for their take on the recipe and how they tweaked it. Really great stuff. I can't wait to try a couple of these recipes.

I am an avid unique and rare cookbook collector. I prefer the amazing few to the mundane many. This little book is so well put together. I have never seen anything like it. The pictures are great. The recipes even better. This would make an excellent gift. Better yet get one for yourself. You will not be disappointed!

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