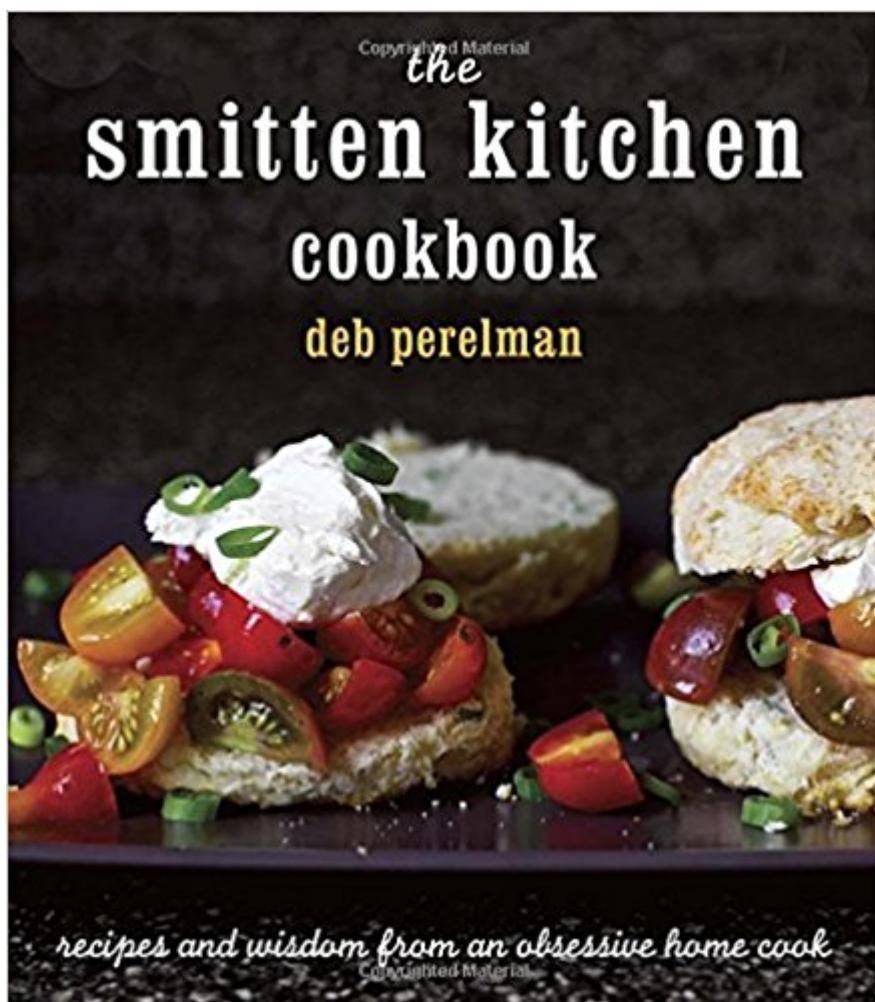


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# The Smitten Kitchen Cookbook: Recipes And Wisdom From An Obsessive Home Cook



## Synopsis

The New York Times bestselling, IACP award-winning cookbook (and aÂ Â Cooking Light Top 100 Cookbook of the Last 25 Years) from the celebrated food blogger and founder of smittenkitchen.com. Â Â Look for Deb PerelmanÂ¢â ¬â„¢s new book, Smitten Kitchen Every Day: Triumphant and Unfussy New Favorites, coming October 24, 2017. Â Â Deb Perelman loves to cook. She isnÂ¢â ¬â„¢t a chef or a restaurant ownerÂ¢â ¬â„¢sheÂ¢â ¬â„¢s never even waitressed. Cooking in her tiny Manhattan kitchen was, at least at first, for special occasionsÂ¢â ¬â„¢and, too often, an unnecessarily daunting venture. Deb found herself overwhelmed by the number of recipes available to her. Have you ever searched for the perfect birthday cake on Google? YouÂ¢â ¬â„¢ll get more than three million results. Where do you start? What if you pick a recipe thatÂ¢â ¬â„¢s downright bad? Â Â With the same warmth, candor, and can-do spirit her award-winning blog, Smitten Kitchen, is known for, here Deb presents more than 100 recipesÂ¢â ¬â„¢almost entirely new, plus a few favorites from the siteÂ¢â ¬â„¢that guarantee delicious results every time. Â Â Gorgeously illustrated with hundreds of her beautiful color photographs, The Smitten Kitchen CookbookÂ Â is all about approachable, uncompromised home cooking. Here youÂ¢â ¬â„¢ll find better uses for your favorite vegetables: asparagus blanketing a pizza; ratatouille dressing up a sandwich; cauliflower masquerading as pesto. These are recipes youÂ¢â ¬â„¢ll bookmark and use so often they become your own, recipes youÂ¢â ¬â„¢ll slip to a friend who wants to impress her new in-laws, and recipes with simple ingredients that yield amazing results in a minimum amount of time. Deb tells you her favorite summer cocktail; how to lose your fear of cooking for a crowd; and the essential items you need for your own kitchen. From salads and slaws that make perfect side dishes (or a full meal) to savory tarts and galettes; from Mushroom Bourguignon to Chocolate Hazelnut Crepe Cake, Deb knows just the thing for a Tuesday night, or your most special occasion.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Asks: Deb Perelman Q. What's your elevator pitch for The Smitten Kitchen Cookbook? (Or what inspired you to fill this niche?) A. My hope is that The Smitten Kitchen Cookbook is filled with your new favorite things to cook--approachable recipes made with accessible ingredients that exceed your expectations. Q. Which upcoming fall cookbooks are you most excited about? A. I am ridiculously excited about Ottolenghi's new Jerusalem book, as I've loved everything he's made so far. I have already tried out a couple recipes from the Mile End Cookbook, and can tell it's going to be an obsession all winter. I just spied brown butter snickerdoodles in the new Baked Elements book; I am pretty sure that needs to happen immediately. And I've been cooking out of the Sprouted Kitchen cookbook and everything has been fresh, wholesome and stunning. Q. What's on your nightstand? Your Kindle? A. An Everlasting Meal (Tamar Adler), The Tenth Muse (Judith Jones), A Peace To End All Peace (David Fromkin) and I Want My Hat Back (Jon Klassen), all print. Can you guess which one my toddler left there? Q. What's your favorite restaurant or the best place you've eaten recently? A. My husband and I are the last people to get to The Breslin in the Ace Hotel, but it doesn't matter, we fell head over heels and have been back three times in three months. The crispy boiled peanuts, lamb burger, fresh, crunchy salads and their grapefruit gin-and-tonic are unforgettable. Q. What's been your most memorable moment so far as an author (or blogger)? A. The process of planning the book tour -- making the jump from someone who types things to strangers who might or might not be listening via her laptop to someone who is going to show up in various cities at specific times to hang out with these strangers -- is wild. I am not sure I've gotten my head around it yet, but I still can't wait to get on the road. Q. What other talent would you most like to have (not including flight or invisibility)? A. Well, I wish I could dance. Q. What are you obsessed with now? A. I've been on a running kick, although I'm really bad at it. No really: terrible. But strangely, that's my favorite part. Starting my day completely humbled by my inability to run half as long or fast as these people on the other treadmills (who can probably dance, too), well, the day only gets better from there. I'm hooked. Q. What's next for you? A. The moon! Just kidding. I really hope to just keep doing what I'm doing -- cooking, writing, having fun with my

family and running around NYC like a tourist. My goals are less rooted in a desire for a designer kitchen (though, you know, if you have one lying around...) and balcony overlooking Central Park and more a hope that I'll keep having fun doing what I do, so that it feels as un-work-like as possible.

Starred Review. A tiny kitchen and great eats are the winning formula for popular New York City food blogger Deb Perelman, confessed picky and obsessive self-taught cook of smittenkitchen.com blogging fame. In her first cookbook, awaited by an enormous fan base, Perelman shares her undisguised love of cooking and 300 recipes that come out of her apartment's postage stamp-Ã¢â€œsize kitchen. Driven by curiosity and a desire to share her cooking discoveries, Perelman delivers a collection of lab notes from well-tested culinary experiments and open dialogue with blog fans whose questions Deb credits with having fine-tuned my cooking by forcing me to question everything. What makes the best roast chicken? How can you make gnocchi light as pillows? She approaches each cooking challenge with aplomb, breaking the mold while inspiring readers to work with whatever challenges a tiny kitchen, limited budget, equipment, or untried recipes present. What better way to convince a friend of the virtues of popcorn than by combining it with a buttery brown sugar cookie? Perelman's love of strawberry shortcake inspires a biscuit-as-cradle for juicy tomatoes topped with whipped goat cheese. Included are a great number of vegetarian recipes. This fearless home cook's humorous anecdotes and delectable photos make for a food blog-Ã¢â€œgone-Ã¢â€œbook that translates beautifully into any kitchen and fulfills Perelman's promise to help cooks prepare food that both she and you will love. Photos. Agent: Alison Fargis. (Oct.)

These recipes are like something you'd find in your grandmother's top-secret cookbook. They are made from scratch, with all-natural ingredients, no shortcuts, no pre-made mixes, etc. This doesn't make it a super light or particularly "healthy" cookbook, however. When making the apple cake, for instance, I was shocked that it called for two full cups and five tablespoons of sugar (eek)! Yes, I know it's a dessert and these usually have a lot of sugar in them, but I guess I was secretly hoping I could make everything in here and not worry about my kids eating too much of something. On that note, the author does list a few substitutions you can make in the beginning of the book to make the recipes healthier, as well as vegetarian variations throughout the book. Here is a count of the recipes per category:

17 Breakfast items	11 Salads	13 Sandwiches, Tarts & Pizzas	13 Vegetarian Main Dishes	12 Seafood, Poultry & Meat dishes	8 Cookies	8 Pies and tarts	9 Cakes	5 Puddings and
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Candy10 Party Snacks and Drinks

The PROS:<sup>\*</sup> Recipes are categorized very well.<sup>\*</sup> Ingredients needed are easy to find and usually inexpensive. They are also REAL ingredients, so you're pretty much making everything from scratch. Nothing with weird chemicals in the label.<sup>\*</sup> The author includes a clever/funny/witty/entertaining short story before each recipe that gives some history/insight into how she acquired the recipe or how she came up with it.<sup>\*</sup> Each recipe includes at LEAST one full-page, full-color photograph, and most also have photos of the ingredients or a few of the steps involved.

The CONS:<sup>\*</sup> The "stories", although enjoyable, are occasionally a bit lengthy.<sup>\*</sup> Recipe directions are in paragraph form, rather than numbered. This, of course, depends on personal preference. I like to see the steps numbered, which helps me keep track of where I am without having to waste time by re-reading the directions to find my place again.<sup>\*</sup> Pretty much all of the recipes are split between two pages. By this, I mean the recipe begins on, say, page 2 (on the right hand side), and you have to flip the page over to page 3 (on the left hand side) to see the rest of the directions. Again, this is not a HUGE deal, but it has become inconvenient for me when my hands are covered in flour or whatever and I have to flip the page back and forth. It would have been better if the recipes were each spread over two opposite-facing pages. This way, the book could just stay open the whole time I'm preparing the recipe.

**BOTTOM LINE** Are these recipes good? Yes! Are they easy? Yes, but maybe not for absolute beginners. Are they quick? No, but that is part of their old-fashioned charm. Am I glad I bought this and would I recommend it to a friend? Yes and YES! :)

I love the blog and had a great time seeing Deb Perelman on her book tour, where I was crazy enough to pay MORE than the list price for the book. There are some great-looking recipes in this book, most of which are not on the website, and I look forward to trying many of them, starting with the apple cider caramels. It is definitely not a 'basics' cookbook. The recipes, although fairly simple, are unusual. Personally I like this because I already have many cookbooks covering the basics. My so-so rating has more to do with the format of the book. As another reviewer noted, recipes run 3-4 pages of prose, so the actual steps to the recipe are hard to pick out, and most of the time they are not on the same page as the ingredients, so you have to flip back and forth as you cook. Also, a pet peeve of mine with cookbooks, there is no table of contents or index listing the recipes with page numbers, so while you can see in the beginning of the book that sweets start on p. 193, when you get to page 193 there is no indication of which page 'cakes' starts on. After you shuffle through 90 pages of sweets to find that cakes start on p. 238, you have to shuffle some more to find the recipe for 'chocolate hazelnut crepe cake' on p. 256. It would have been so simple to put a page number

next to each recipe on the list. Also, the pictures aren't labeled and since they frequently aren't on the same page as the title of the recipe, you have to go back to see what you're looking at and whether that's the recipe you're looking for. More flipping around. I'm surprised, with her attention to detail and frequent reading of other cookbooks, that this book is so clunky.

I've enjoyed reading cookbooks since I was 12 and taught myself to bake using my mother's Betty Crocker Illustrated Cookbook. I've been reading Deb's blog for several years now, and was so happy to hear she had published a book. The photographs are amazing, crisp and clean and not out of focus (like Pioneer Woman's). Like Deb, I have a tiny kitchen and I liked the peek into her kitchen. Deb is not a blogging juggernaut; she comes across as a good home cook who cooks so she can eat the food she likes. I have to eat a gluten free diet for health reasons and was pleased to see many of her recipes are either gluten free naturally or can be adapted easily; for instance, her Leek Fritters only call for 1/4 cup of all purpose flour, so substituting a neutral GF flour works perfectly here. I made them the other night and was amazed at how a few simple ingredients made something so addictive. The recipe was also easy to adapt to use different vegetables; I've made them since with cooked asparagus instead of leeks and they turned out wonderfully. They were a tad salty to my taste, but this may have been a difference in salt, so I just dialed the salt down the next time I made them. So far in the sweets section I've only made the chocolate roll-out cookies, which were easy enough (though the dough was very stiff at first) and got a thumbs-up from my kids. Looking forward to making the granola and the latkes and the lemon bars, just to name a few. Some people have commented that the layout of the book makes it awkward for cooking. I've noticed that is true on a few recipes, where the ingredients are on a righthand page and then the directions are on the page after that...this was an editing snafu, but is no reflection on the recipes themselves. If anything it will encourage me to gather my ingredients first, as one should, and then proceed with the recipe. UPDATED 1/11/13--- I made the Whole Lemon Bars and at first was mildly disappointed; for having a whole lemon they didn't have a lemony, puckery "punch"--I thought perhaps too much butter, which muted the lemon. They were delicious, just not quite as lemony as I thought they'd be. But when my husband and sons tasted them they gave them RAVE reviews, my husband saying they had "just the right amount of lemon" and that more would have been overwhelming. My sons agreed with them. I tend to like things very tart and sour, which most people don't, so I will not change anything when I make them again, and I will make them again--my husband said he has never liked a lemon bar before in his life, so Deb must be on to something! The recipe is so freaking easy, too--as long as you have a food processor you can do it all in that

and never dirty a mixing bowl. I also adapted them to be gluten free--using an equivalent amount of King Arthur Gluten Free Flour for the crust--and they came out perfectly. The granola was easy, and as promised, made large chunks of granola. I did not have the coconut or walnuts, so used raw sunflower seeds instead. What a revelation that granola does NOT need tons of butter or oil or sugar to be delicious! And without having to stir it every ten minutes as in most recipes it was so much easier.

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