



Phoenix Claws and Jade Trees: Essential Techniques of Authentic Chinese Cooking

Kian Lam Kho , Jody Horton (Photographer)

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Create nuanced, complex, authentic Chinese flavors at home by learning the cuisine's fundamental techniques.

Phoenix Claws and Jade Trees offers a unique introduction to Chinese home cooking, demystifying it by focusing on its basic cooking methods. In outlining the differences among various techniques—such as pan-frying, oil steeping, and yin-yang frying—and instructing which one is best for particular ingredients and end results, culinary expert Kian Lam Kho provides a practical, intuitive window into this unique cuisine. Once one learns how to dry stir-fry chicken, one can then confidently apply the technique to tofu, shrimp, and any number of ingredients.

Accompanied by more than 200 photographs, including helpful step-by-step images, the 158 recipes range from simple, such as Spicy Lotus Root Salad or Red Cooked Pork, to slightly more involved, including authentic General Tso's Chicken or Pork Shank Soup with Winter Bamboo. But the true brilliance behind this innovative book lies in the way it teaches the soul of Chinese cooking, enabling home cooks to master this diverse, alluring cuisine and then to re-create any tempting dish they encounter or can imagine.

Phoenix Claws and Jade Trees: Essential Techniques of Authentic Chinese Cooking Details

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From Reader Review Phoenix Claws and Jade Trees: Essential Techniques of Authentic Chinese Cooking for online ebook

Susan says

Anyone interested in authentic Chinese cooking will benefit from this book. It focuses on the techniques of Chinese cooking rather than just the recipes. Until I read this book I was unaware of the differences between “simple stir-fry” and “dry stir-fry”. I had also never heard of “velveting” nor did I realize the many different means of frying in oil. This book is good at explaining why certain techniques are used and what it brings to the ingredients and dishes.

There are recipes for familiar dishes such as “sweet and sour chicken”, “moo goo gai pan” and “General Tso's chicken” but there are lots of other, to me unfamiliar dishes. The authors aim is really to teach the techniques behind the cooking so that you can then make your own dishes and vary the ingredients that you want to put in them.

It's full of good photos, tips and explanations which will hopefully make it easier for Westerners to learn to cook authentic Chinese food. And if you've ever wondered how and why something tastes so good at your local Chinese restaurant, or take away, this book will give you a better understanding of what went on behind the scenes in the kitchen and how it was all prepared.

Thanks to blogging for books for allowing me the read this book in exchange for an honest review.

Nora St Laurent says

Kian Lam Kho briefly talks about how this book came about in the introduction. He moved to America and found out the only way to eat good Chinese food was to make it himself. He was unable to find a cook book to make the dishes he craved. So he started to write family members requesting their recipes. The authors says, “In this book I demystify Chinese cooking by taking a unique approach. I believe that the cuisine is easiest to learn by technique... over the years I've mastered techniques and developed recipes that helped me in my kitchen.”

Inside this beautiful hard back book that has over 200 pictures and 158 recipes are some pretty amazing looking meals along with practical and easy to understand instructions. The book also has a red ribbon attached inside to mark your place. Most of the ingredients in the book are easy to find and/or order on line.

The author goes on to say,...”The chapters here are organized according to cooking methods rather than the usual division by ingredients or region...I have kept the home cook in mind and have omitted some that are seldom used.”

Recipes inside this book include many classic, home-style and restaurant dishes, and ones that are for every day family dinners. The author includes some banquet type meals as well. I liked that this author included a brief history and culture talk about regional Chinese Cuisine and The Birth of China's culinary cuisines. He includes a map and gives you the basics; it's a wonderful overview.

I liked the Explosion in the Wok section – the author talks about how to use it, the importance of the heat levels and ingredients, great step by step photos on cooking technique. Can't wait to try Fried Rice, Stir-Fried Lo Mein and Moo Goo Gai Pan.

In the Dipping in Oil chapter – the technique looked interesting. Can't wait to try Crispy Chicken, Friend Sesame Port, Tenderloin, and Fried Tofu skin Rolls.

The Virtues of Slow Cooking chapter had dishes I'd like to try such as; Braised Chicken, Three cup Chicken, Braised Chicken Wings, and Blanched Shrimp and I the liked the food as medicine section too.

The Intricacy of Boiling section had dishes I'd like to try such as Blanched Asparagus, White cooked chicken, Steeped Whole Tilapia.

My family and I love soup so The Making of Hearty Soups chapter was a delight to discover. So many soups to try like the Eight Treasure Winter Melon Soup, Crabmeat and White Asparagus Soup, Pear Soup. Another chapter I found interesting is about Playing with Fire. Can't wait to try the pancakes and Barbeque port in this section. I found the two page spread of step by step pictures of how to prepare the meat for cooking and other techniques throughout the book very helpful.

The Appetizing Cold Dishes chapter looked yummy. I look forward to trying eggplant salad, Chinese celery and pressed tofu salad and shrimp salad.

The Sweet but not Dessert chapter looks good too. It shows you how to cook with syrup, and caramel coatings. I'd like to try sesame candied walnuts, pulled Carmel apple, Sugar coated cashew nuts. I'm thrilled at the prospect of making Chinese food at home that tastes like I got it from a the restaurant.

Disclosure of Material Connection:

I received a complimentary copy of this book from Blogging for Books. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255 "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising"

Nora St. Laurent

TBCN Where Book Fun Begins! www.bookfun.org

The Book Club Network blog www.psalms16.blogspot.com

Book Fun Magazine www.bookfunmagazine.com

Autumn says

Too hardcore for me, but great for people who want to go beyond Fuschia Dunlop. Well-designed and clearly written. Super classy!

Grace Kwan says

Great introduction to Chinese cooking techniques, just as the title says. As a Chinese-American whose

parents never spoke much about their cooking, this book felt wonderfully familiar and helped put a lot of the concepts I'd seen on the dinner table into precise instructions. My wishes for this cookbook are that it 1) had more photos of the dishes, and 2) had more simple recipes. A lot of dishes have obscure ingredients or require deep-frying, which isn't something that I can do often. I did appreciate the detailed introduction to the essential parts of a Chinese kitchen, however – I now own my first cast-iron wok and love it dearly!

David says

From Splendid Table enewsletter - 1 March 16

SLEEP, READ, EAT, REPEAT!!! says

Good techniques and recipes.

S Vanorse says

It's all here, everything you need to cook authentic Chinese food, along with great history, utensils, spices, and gorgeous photography.

Farrah says

This is the first and only Chinese cookbook I own, and I love that it's organized by cooking method, and also has different sections describing each of the regional cuisines, as well as the culture (so maybe I'll stop being such a failure to my own culture)! It also has a section on food as medicine, which is definitely a philosophy I believe in!

The book contains over 150 different recipes and has gorgeous photos. (My mom took em' and sent them over, because I was a sloth over the weekend and neglected to do so--she works night shift, so please excuse the glare--she took em' before going to work!)

I like how this book breaks the different cooking techniques down, and am really excited to try making food with my parents when I'm back home! Chinese food is their favorite, and I've had many a conversation in the past that would end with:

: Why don't you pick where to go for dinner?

F: How about this place? (Not Chinese food.)

: ...Wouldn't you rather go here instead? (Chinese restaurant)

F: Uh, if you insist.

As with standard cookbooks, each recipe came with a little introduction, as well as serving size (for main dishes vs. side dishes), ingredients, and instructions...but two extra tidbits I especially enjoyed were that they also provided the recipe title in Chinese characters (good practice!) as well as the province/region the recipe was from!

Just as a sidenote, there were what felt like a lot of pork dishes in here, but that's always been fairly typical [at least to me] in Chinese cooking. I don't eat pork, but it can be very easily substituted out for another type of protein, so it wasn't a problem! (If you live in the middle o' nowhere though, obtaining a couple of the ingredients might be difficult!)

The attached red ribbon bookmark was a really nice touch--I can't wait to get started on this! :] (While I haven't tried out any of the recipes yet, I had my dad look em' over and he says they're legit!)

Disclaimer: I received this from Blogging For Books in exchange for an honest review. All thoughts and opinions are mine and mine alone.

Misty says

First off I really am barely a hobby chef. I cook occasionally when needed and I do not cook meat at all. I am a complete vegetarian, no meat at all, but I do eat animal products like milk and such. I was interested in this book because the techniques could be used to cook tofu. I was rather disappointed on this front because most of the recipes involved meat and I had to wade through them and the massive amounts of history and background information to find the few tofu recipes. I really wish there were more of them. However on the bright side almost all of the recipes can be adapted to use tofu instead of meat with just a few changes. I found the images to be beautiful. I also like the fact that the book came with its own page marker (very useful).

View my Full review at:

<http://misty103.hubpages.com/hub/Phoe...>

I was sent this book for free for only my honest and unbiased review by blogging for books.

Virginia Campbell says

In popular culture, "Chinese Food" is a very broad term used to describe a diverse, fascinating cuisine which offers a legendary mystique all its own. "Phoenix Claws and Jade Trees: Essential Techniques of Authentic Chinese Cooking" by Kian Lam Kho, with photographs by Jody Horton, emphasizes cooking techniques as the best way to achieve the desired results. Chapters are arranged according to cooking methods, and then instructions are given for which method works best for the recipe ingredients. Much historical data is provided--explaining how the regions of the country developed, and then advising how the regions shaped the food culture of China. Ingredients and utensils are given full their due, and over 200 color photographs supplement the text and entice the reader to try something new outside their normal recipe box. This thorough, well-presented cookbook includes over 150 recipes which range from basic to more complex, and along with familiar favorites, there are many intriguing and exotic dishes to tempt the reader. "Phoenix Claws and Jade Trees" is an excellent tutorial, but it is as enjoyable as it is educational. Here's a sampling of the variety of recipes you will find: "Sweet-and-Sour Dipping Sauce"; "Simple Stocks"; "Garlic Stir-Fried Greens"; "Stir-Fried Shrimp"; "Kung Pao Chicken"; "Shrimp and Asparagus Fried Rice"; "Moo Goo Gai Pan"; "Salt and Pepper Fried Fish Fillet"; "Fried Sesame Pork Tenderloin"; "Sweet and Sour Pork"; "General Tso's Chicken"; "Steamed Striped Bass"; "Eight Treasures Winter Melon Soup"; "Crispy Roast Duck";

"Beggar's Chicken"; "Shrimp Salad with Mustard Mayonnaise"; "Sesame Candied Walnuts"; and "Sugar-Coated Cashew Nuts". The appealing cover recipe is "Stir-Fried Ho Fan with Beef and Yellow Chives". KIAN LAM KHO is a chef, culinary instructor, restaurant consultant, and the James Beard Award-nominated blogger behind redcook.net. He has taught at the Institute of Culinary Education and Brooklyn Kitchen. He lives in New York City.

Review Copy Gratis Clarkson Potter Publishers via Blogging for Books

Amuse says

Good for techniques and unfamiliar ingredients. The recipes seem very authentic. I would prefer more vegetarian recipes.

Jecho says

A single cookbook perhaps is too limiting to try to parse China's diversity in its food cultures. Which may be why Mr. Kho's emphasis is techniques which help draw in the many diverse tastes and textures of Chinese cookery. I think that this book received too little attention compared to Carolyn Phillip's fine book All Under Heaven. In a way these two books should have been put together. They are complimentary and round out many things that a home chef and cuisine scholar can learn from them.

Lady Leal says

At first I was confused about the lack of photos for each individual recipe, a finished product photo if you will, but a glance at the table of contents and the title cleared the confusion. This book is ultimately about Chinese cooking techniques. The techniques are center stage here, not individual ingredients or recipes. In the large world of Chinese cuisine, there are countless recipes with their own variations. You only will need to know the vast variations of red cook pork recipes to know that to be the case. There is really no way to put them all in. Thus Kian Lam Kho focus in on the techniques.

As the book stands right now, it is in a very convenient size packed with various recipes per cooking technique for you to learn and master. With these techniques and knowledge on how to use them, you can apply it to any ingredient. From what you can learn, you can cook phoenix claws and jade trees.
