



Aromas of Aleppo: The Legendary Cuisine of Syrian Jews

Poopa Dweck

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When the Aleppian Jewish community migrated from the ancient city of Aleppo in historic Syria and settled in New York and Latin American cities in the early 20th century, it brought its rich cuisine and vibrant culture. Most Syrian recipes and traditions, however, were not written down and existed only in the minds of older generations. Poopa Dweck, a first generation Syrian-Jewish American, has devoted much of her life to preserving and celebrating her community's centuries-old legacy.

Dweck relates the history and culture of her community through its extraordinary cuisine, offering more than 180 exciting ethnic recipes with tantalizing photos and describing the unique customs that the Aleppian Jewish community observes during holidays and lifecycle events. Among the irresistible recipes are:

- Bazargan—Tangy Tamarind Bulgur Salad*
- Shurbat Addes—Hearty Red Lentil Soup with Garlic and Coriander*
- Kibbeh—Stuffed Syrian Meatballs with Ground Rice*
- Samak b'Batata—Baked Middle Eastern Whole Fish with Potatoes*
- Sambousak—Buttery Cheese—Filled Sesame Pastries*
- Eras bi'Ajweh—Date—Filled Crescents*
- Chai Na'na—Refreshing Mint Tea*

Like mainstream Middle Eastern cuisines, Aleppian Jewish dishes are alive with flavor and healthful ingredients—featuring whole grains, vegetables, legumes, and olive oil—but with their own distinct cultural influences. In Aromas of Aleppo, cooks will discover the best of Poopa Dweck's recipes, which gracefully combine Mediterranean and Levantine influences, and range from small delights (or maza) to daily meals and regal holiday feasts—such as the twelve-course Passover seder.

Aromas of Aleppo: The Legendary Cuisine of Syrian Jews Details

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From Reader Review Aromas of Aleppo: The Legendary Cuisine of Syrian Jews for online ebook

Lynda says

Great reading and information. The recipes were great. Have tried several recipes and have a sea of bookmarks of recipes to try. One recipe I will probably add to my cooking cycle in Noodles and Cheese Tortellini.

Mills College Library says

641.5676 D989a 2007

Stuart says

DON'T YOU JUST HAVE TO HAVE A POOPA DWECK ON YOUR BOOKSHELVES?

Jessica says

My only complaint about this book (keeping it from 5 stars) is that it is a HUGE over-sized, HEAVY coffee-table book and not conducive to using in the kitchen. It is beautiful but so hard to make functional.

The recipes are all very good although it is a specific cuisine and, therefore, there are often prep steps and/or other recipes to make to complete a full dish but the recipes are clear and well written and many of the recipes have a photo of the finished product. I have had no failures with the recipes (well one, but only because I forgot to set my timer...)

A very interesting history of the people and the cuisine throughout the book and the photos are lovely.

Sarah says

This book is beautiful! In addition to the lovely presentation, this book contains authentic, simple, and delicious recipes. After moving back to the US from the Middle East, I'll have to make many of the dishes I grew to love myself, and this book will be at my side the whole time. Unlike chef cookbooks that take classic recipes and feel the need to add in their own twist, this book is about everyday cooking by normal people (who happen to make delicious Syrian food).

Molly says

For this book I did something I don't often do, I read all the introductory material. Most cookbooks I just want to dive in to the recipes and get cooking. However, the reviews for this all mentioned how wonderfully the author captured the history and culture of Allepian Jews, so I read it all. I did enjoy the history, some of which was familiar, some very new to me. The recipes all sounded delicious, though many I was already familiar with (they share a lot in common with other middle eastern cultural cuisines) or were meat based (not too helpful for me, the vegetarian). I didn't care for the layout of the book. It is beautiful (wonderful color photographs) but oversized and heavy, which I find awkward in the kitchen. Overall, a nice book and I wouldn't hesitate to recommend it.

Bracha says

I love cookbooks that speak to the history and lifestyles of the community from which the food came, and this is one of my favorites. Just writing this is creating thoughts of delicious aromas and many layered and lovely flavors; it also however, reminds me of the hell in which present day Syrians have to live.

Elizabeth says

I married into a large Syrian Jewish family. According to my sister-in-law, this book's recipes very closely mirror those that my mother-in-law used to cook. I haven't yet made any of the recipes, but I plan to shortly (starting with the Sambusak). The cookbook itself is full of rich historical and anecdotal information, and the accompanying photographs are lush and inspirational.

Sydney (?????) says

Just beautiful. The attention to detail is love. The history and the recipes are sure to delight ~ definitely want to own this one day. X

Happyreader says

This is a stunning food history/cookbook/coffee table book. The recipes are good but it's really about the food history and the photography. It would make a great gift for anyone who is interested in Jewish food or culture.

Snail in Danger (Sid) Nicolaides says

More looked through than read, and I haven't actually made anything from this book -- but it has quite a few

interesting recipes. The book is somewhat more accessible to omnivores than vegetarians, but vegetarians should be able to cook many interesting recipes.

Of note: there are several recipes for soups that don't start with making stock as a step.

Major drawback: the book has lovely production values, but they have made it rather pricey. So I suggest seeing if your library has a copy of this.

Susan says

Ut-oh. I found this at a bookstore the week before I left L.A.; and if it weren't so big and heavy I would have brought back with me to devour. Gorgeous photos and extensive history, with authentic recipes. Those of you who know me well know this is right up my alley. Food porn with a soul.

Taylor says

This book is one that we have looked at quite a lot, it has some of the most amazing recipes in it. We shall be getting this soon as a staple for our household. just dont let the authors unfortunate name turn you off.

K says

This one's for you, Rivkie!

I was actually embarrassed to put this up, because it feels so decadent to have two new cookbooks at the same time, but I couldn't resist. I ended up buying this for myself as a little gift before I knew Saadia was buying me the other cookbook (some unexpected editing work came my way, and I decided to treat myself), and it was a great choice. So far, the recipes I've tried have been really tasty -- exactly the way I remember my wonderful Syrian neighbor's food from my high school years. In addition, I love the book's beautiful photos and lush history sections -- I really love cookbooks that offer history and culture as well as recipes.

I considered taking off one star because some of the recipes are, predictably, quite labor-intensive. This cuisine developed at a time when women did not work, and probably had servants to help them with the shopping, cooking, and cleaning. I have a husband who occasionally acts as my sous-chef when it comes to peeling, chopping, and dishwashing, but I can just imagine the look on his face if I asked him to sit and stuff little meatballs!

However, I ultimately decided against taking off the star for two reasons. First, not all the recipes are prohibitively labor-intensive; some of them are quite doable. Second, to Poopa's credit, even the more labor-intensive recipes are often made more manageable by providing instructions as to when you can stop and freeze what you have, and easily finish up later when you want to serve the dish.

Of course, it's still something of a commitment to sit and make little stuffed things, even with the option of freezing them and quickly cooking them up when you need them. I can't see doing it on a regular basis. I still enjoy the cookbook, though, and decided to give it full marks, especially since my kids (surprisingly) love

this food too!

Korri says

Poopa Dweck's mouth-watering cookbook combines recipes, Syrian Jewish history & an overview of Jewish feasts and customs. Not too shabby for one volume.

The recipes themselves are delicious. Some are so simple & intuitive that I'm kicking myself for not having thought of them. Others are more elaborate and require lots of preparation (simmer beans for an hour & a half, prepare filling and stuff meatballs, etc) but that sounds like a perfect excuse to catch up with family members while making delicious food together.

If I find a copy of this for less than the publisher's price, I'm definitely going to buy it.
