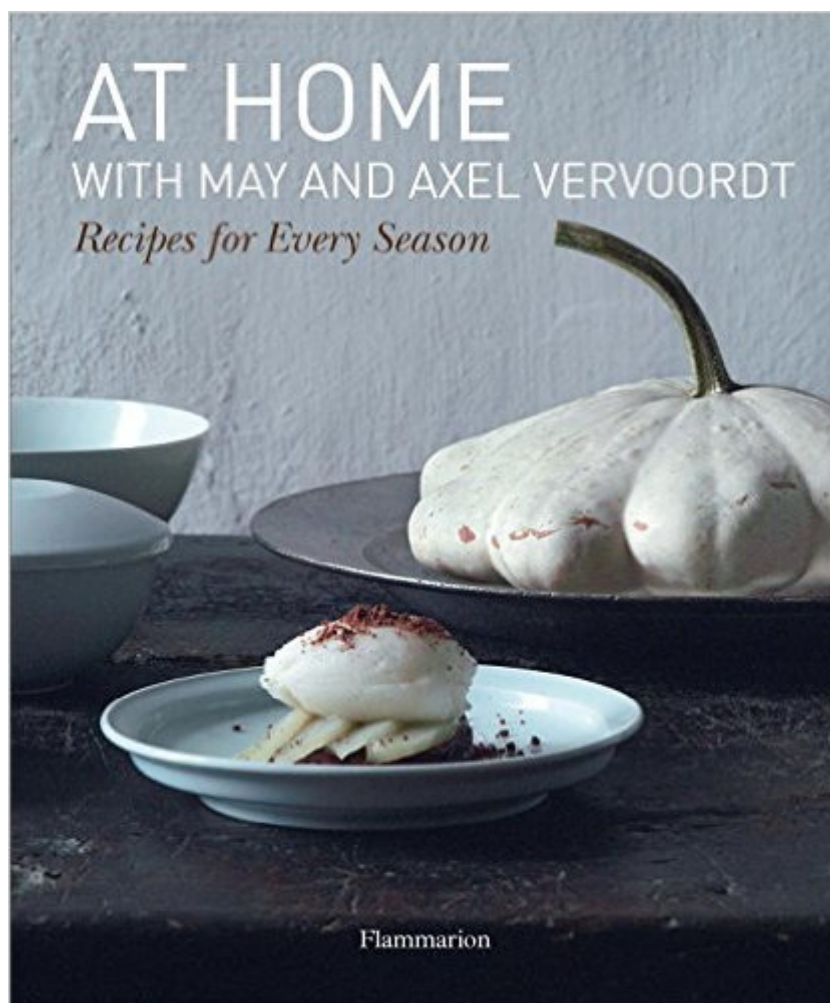


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At Home With May And Axel Vervoordt: Recipes For Every Season



Synopsis

In the same understated, covetable style as her husband's interiors, May Vervoordt's recipes bring out the essence of fresh ingredients in simple yet exceptional dishes. Over the past twenty-five years, Axel and May Vervoordt have cultivated a reputation for excellence in the fields of art, interior design, and entertaining. In this contemporary cookbook, May shares 107 seasonal recipes for entertaining in style. With an emphasis on the essence of individual ingredients and cooking in harmony with the seasons, May "in typical Vervoordt fashion" demonstrates that simplicity is the ultimate sophistication. Her dishes are easy to prepare, original, and healthful, and still allow the home chef time to enjoy the meal with guests. Grouped by season, the recipes offer a broad selection for all occasions, from Mango and Sweet Potato Salad or Sesame-Tarragon Chicken to Chocolate Fondant Cake with Pear Sorbet. Close-ups of the recipes are complemented by lifestyle photographs offering a glimpse inside the elegant Vervoordt residence.

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Customer Reviews

So I get this gorgeous cookbook. With the most spectacular photographs I've seen in ages. But when I flipped through it, I felt like a rube. Who are May and Axel Vervoordt? Do you know? I surely didn't. It turns out they are Major. The Vervoordts live in a 50 room castle near Antwerp. (It's open to the public twice each year.) Axel is an art and antiques dealer and a decorator whose clients include Sting, Pierre Bergé, Henry Kravis and Bill Gates. He has a staff of 85. His wife, May, heads the textile and fabric division. But her greater skill may be in the domestic arts. "When May prepares a

table," Axel writes, "the result is like a still-life painting." And the visuals are the least of it. "May believes food is energy and has the power to make people feel better, spiritually as well as physically," Axel writes. "Cooking can be a great pleasure, and just as for the potter who sculpts clay, the skill is a craft and the creation is a work of art." Easy art, it turns out. Simple art. Quick art. Most of May's recipes require just 20-30 minutes to prepare. Don't be put off by the long list of ingredients --- they're mostly herbs. May has done her ayurvedic homework; you'll often see turmeric, black pepper and cinnamon in her recipes. No surprise that, after dinner, she serves herbal tea, not coffee. What you won't find: dinners with meat in the starring role. There are a few chicken and fish recipes, one for a lamb casserole, one for veal. Mostly this is book that showcases vegetables in unusual combinations. Carrot, gingerroot and coriander salad. Green salad with mango and grilled sweet potato. Avocado salad with zucchini and red chili pepper. Butternut squash marinated in tarragon. And the fruit recipes! Rhubarb compote with star anise and red berry juice, a refreshing dessert or breakfast treat. Pineapple with saffron and lemon. May quotes Virginia Woolf: "One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well." I long to be her dinner guest. So, I think, would you.

May Vervoordt describes the essence of a healthy and balanced meal in a simple but sophisticated way. It is a delight to notice how she manages to bring everyday cooking to another level! And the photographs are absolutely stunning.

This book sits alone on my coffee table. It is a work of art and the recipes are simple and beautiful. I have recently given up TV to try and explore a world without fake reality and this book enriches my journey and reminds me that life is beautiful with simple enjoyments including friends and family. Not only are the photographs beautiful but the writing is superb and I look forward to a cup of tea and a couple of pages at the end of a long day. Thank you.

As a vegetarian who likes to entertain, this has become my new "go-to" cookbook. I enjoy adapting the healthful recipes for everyday meals. But the book has become essential when I'm wanting to prepare elegant but little-fuss meals for company. The large photos enable me to visualize the outcomes and to color coordinate the dishes for maximum drama. (As the author's husband states, his wife truly "paints" culinary still lifes.) The only slight negative is that a few- but only a few--of the ingredients are not readily attainable; e.g. nettles. It would be helpful to have an addendum for non-European cooks suggesting sources and/or substitutions. In a society sadly depleted of

everyday elegance, this book stands out. I am especially appreciative of the generosity of the Vervoordts for inviting the culinary world to their table.

I'm not a great cook. This book is not complicated. I already made the baked cod. Easy and so much better than I'd end up with if left to my own spice-less devices. Also enjoyed the photos and the stories along the way. There are a lot of cookbooks out there, but so few that I resonate with. This one makes me sing. This one I can use everyday. Lots of veggie and fish dishes -- which is good, because I don't eat meat.

I love Axel Vervoordt, and there are some nice images. However the quality of the printing of this book is poor quality. Matte printed pages that almost seem like recycled paper. When you buy a design book, you want it to be luxurious. This is not that.

How much do I love this book? I am going to buy a second copy to keep in my car, so that when I see what looks fresh and wonderful at the market, I'll be able to refer to this book and make sure that I have all the ingredients to make the fabulous recipes that are in this book. Fresh, healthy fare, with a strong emphasis on vegetables and herbs; never have I seen a cookbook that makes such liberal use of virtually every herb under the sun. We're bound to be healthier if we use these recipes. Nearly every recipe has a beautiful color photo of the prepared dish. The presentations are absolutely gorgeous. If you love to cook and eat with maximum healthfulness, buy this book.

The photographs are gorgeous, the color sensibility very Flemish; many of the photos look like a corner from a Vermeer painting. So, as an "art" book, I love it. However, if you are looking for recipes for traditional Flemish dishes, this is not the book for you. Many of the recipes use herbs and other ingredients that are never found in traditional Flemish cuisine. For Americans, there should have been notations suggesting alternatives to certain ingredients, i.e. nettles, sucrones, chervil. I live in California; I'd never heard of a sucrine and the last time I saw a nettle was in Belgium. Perhaps it's different in other parts of the U.S., but here in southern California you will have a very hard time finding fresh chervil, or even dried chervil. As beautiful to look at as the book is, the style of life it describes, and the recipes, are for the most part rather esoteric.

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