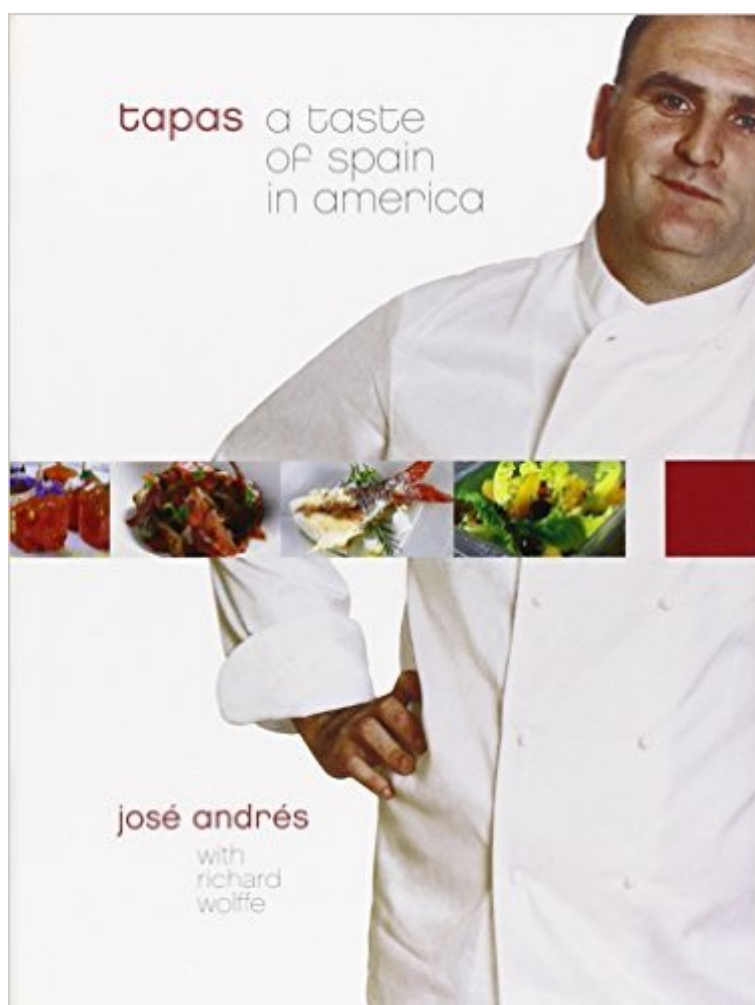


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Tapas: A Taste Of Spain In America



Synopsis

The first major Spanish cookbook in two decades, from Jos  Andr s, recently named America's Chef of the Year by Bon Appetit. Tapas are Spain's gift to the world of great cooking: a fresh and fun way to eat with friends and family and easy to make at home. Using simple Mediterranean ingredients, a tapas feast is a perfect combination of little dishes packed with big flavors. Tapas by Jos  Andr s is the first major book in a generation to celebrate this world-renowned way of eating, from a man who is the best possible authority: an award-winning Spanish chef in America, with seven highly acclaimed restaurants to his name. Recently named Bon Appetit's Chef of the Year, Jos  is a new star in American cooking, as well as the nation's leading expert on Spanish cuisine. Having worked as a chef in the United States for two decades, he's also a thoroughly American cook who draws on American ingredients for his inspiration, and is a master at translating his native Spanish cooking for this country's kitchens. His simple and delicious recipes include: Fish such as American Red Snapper Baked in Salt; Monkfish with Romesco Sauce; and Basque-Style Stuffed Maryland Blue Crabs Chicken including Catalan-Style Chicken Stew; Chicken Saut ed with Garlic; and Chicken with Lobster Pork such as Chorizo Stewed in Hard Cider; Figs with Spanish Ham; and Roasted Pork Tenderloin with Apples and Rice dishes including Lobster Paella; Black Rice with Squid and Shrimp; and Traditional Rice with Clams All these recipes are full of tremendous flavor and creativity, as well as in-depth ingredient notes and a rich atmosphere that will transport you to the lush countryside, hip caf s, and sun-drenched coasts of Spain and back again to dinner at home. This is a breakthrough cookbook from an extraordinary chef.

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Customer Reviews

`tapas, a taste of spain in america' by Washington restaurateur, jose andres with wordsmithing by richard wolffe, is a very creative look at tapas from a modern point of view by a disciple of the great Spanish chef Ferran Adria. While there are many excellent books on traditional tapas by Spanish food experts such as Penelope Casas, this book gives us a whole new look at this genre of cooking. The first thing that appeals to me about the book is the organization of the chapters by principle ingredient. The highlighted ingredients are: Olives and olive oil Tomatoes Potatoes Mushrooms Legumes Peppers Vegetables and More Citrus Garlic and onions Rice Cheese and eggs Fish Shellfish Chicken Pork Other Meats The first entry is obvious as there is no cuisine on earth, even the Italian cucina that is more infused with olive oil, as Spain is the producer of the largest share of the world's olive oil by a significant margin. Things the French may do with pork fat, such as confits, the Spanish do with olive oil. Of course, I could not resist jumping to the chapter on potatoes to see Andres' take on the Spanish tortilla or, as Andres puts it, `Tortilla de patatas' which is actually much less confusing than its more familiar name. Virtually every treatment I have seen of `Tortilla do patatas' uses the same basic four ingredients, potatoes, eggs, onions, and olive oil, plus salt, and Andres' recipe is no exception. The procedure is just a bit more fussy than traditional recipes, with the quartered and thinly sliced Idaho potatoes being fried to almost the consistency of a chip before combining with the other ingredients. The sautéed onions are also given a special treatment in that they are strained to remove excess oil after cooking. Otherwise, the recipe is pure tradition. That cannot be said of the next recipe, where the raw potatoes are replaced with commercially available potato chips. Instead of sauteeing the potatoes, the chips are `marinated' in the raw egg. The tortilla is then cooked de rigeur, but without onions. There are a lot of little things about this book that endear it to me. In addition to the organization, I like the table of contents at the beginning of each chapter which gives the Spanish and English names of each dish plus the wine tip for the dish. This small consideration means, for example, that you can look down the list of mushroom dishes to find one which best matches a wine you may wish to serve. Be clear that chef Andres goes far beyond the original meaning of tapas from Andalusia where it meant something to cover your glass of wine, generally sherry. This means that not all the dishes herein are `finger food' AND many, such as the lobster paella and the roasted beef tenderloin will serve well as a full course of a sit-down meal. On the other hand, almost all recipes are imbued with the

tapas spirit in that they are relatively easy to prepare, although some, such as the 'slow-roasted' beef tenderloin may take a fair amount of hands off cooking time. On the other hand, I did find some instructions that begged more details. One dish instructs us to add vinegar to an olive oil confit, with no instructions on how we are to get the oil and vinegar to work together. So, the price for the simple instructions is that you will do much better with these recipes if you already know your way around the kitchen. In addition to the 'Tortilla do patatas', I found several other takes on very familiar recipes such as the apple, cheese, and walnut salad which is customized by the use of Murcia al vino goat cheese instead of a blue cheese and the absence of a green such as Belgian endive. Overall, we get about 120 relatively simple recipes at the standard price on a popular theme but all with enough of a twist to raise the eyebrows of the culinary cognizanti.

"A Taste of Spain in America" makes the perfect holiday gift for anyone who enjoys cooking, glorious photos of food, or Spanish culinary delights. The book is gorgeous and easy to use. Designed for the home cook, the recipes are inventive and interesting, but not intimidating. Directions are clear and concise, and ensure that the novice chef -- or an experienced cook just learning about tapas -- can create attractive and tasty dishes. Chapters are designed around ingredients, so if you don't like olives, or fish, or mushrooms, you can just skip those sections. At the same time, this arrangement allows you to fully explore the possibilities of an ingredient through multiple, varied recipes. A sure winner!

I bought this book because a friend of mine took me to Andres' restaurant in DC while on vacation. I loved the food and wanted to recreate it when I got home. The main thing I like about the book is that it has the recipes for the items offered in the restaurant. I know what they are supposed to taste like because I've tasted them at the restaurant. Many times you buy the cookbook for a TV chef or restaurant chef and it doesn't have the recipes from the show or the restaurant which is annoying to me. The directions and ingredients are very easy to follow and I love the pictures showing me what the end product is supposed to look like and with plating suggestions. The reason I gave it four stars instead of five wasn't necessarily because of the book itself. Many of the recipes have complicated components that must be made ahead of time. There are many ingredients that aren't commonly found in grocery stores requiring a trip to a specialty market. In most cases, substitutions are suggested. Many of these recipes aren't last minute "I have guests coming over and need something to serve them recipes". This is more of a planned evening, probably with everyone in the kitchen drinking wine as the tapas are prepared and placed out for everyone to enjoy.

I just recently purchased the book, Love it! The recipes are very well written, very easy to follow, not too many ingredients. I have tried quite a few of the recipes and have received very pleasing comments! The book is well worth the purchase price, great holiday gift for the cook at heart. Darlene

We found this book in the local public library and tried three or four things from it. They were wonderful. We bought the book and have loved almost everything we've tried. In fact, our New Year's dinner and our Valentine's dinner were both home-cooked tapas meals, with almost everything prepared from this book. It's wonderful.

Despite being a long-time self-professed foodie, gourmand, and accomplished cook, I'm not usually a fan of cookbooks, finding most shallow in technique and ideas, with big names or glossy photos trying to cover for a lack of substance. Jose Andres' cookbook, by comparison has a big name -- the man responsible for some of the best dining in the Washington DC area, and lots of glossy photos. But it breaks the stereotype I expected by tying in culture, techniques, and excellent combinations of ingredients. The book is broken into chapters by its inspiring ingredient (eg, "potatoes" or "olive oil"). Each chapter has an introduction on the subject food, and each recipe in each chapter has both background on what makes the recipe special in Spain (or what inspired his creation of the recipe), and a tip on making the dish, as well as a suggested Spanish wine pairing. And of course the recipe itself, and the requisite gloriously glossy photo. All of that works and works really well. The book is a joy to flip through, the recipes seem attainable, and the writing is inspired. Highly recommended whether you're new to the world of small plates or already an experienced fan of tapas.

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