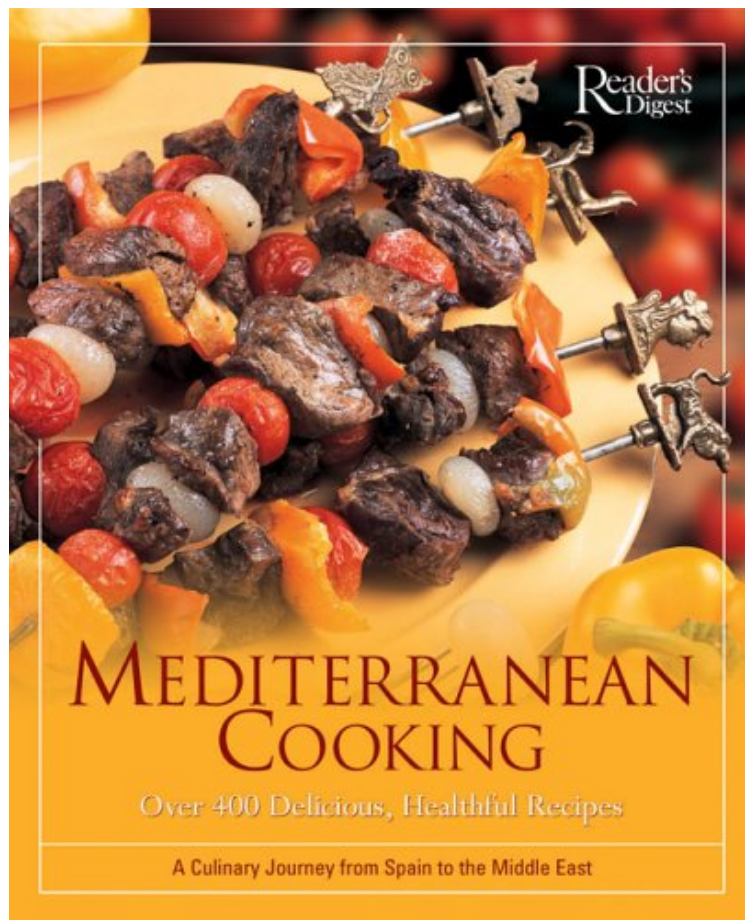


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Mediterranean Cooking: Over 400 Delicious, Healthful Recipes A Culinary Journey from Spain to the Middle East

Cristina Blasi, Gabriella Mari

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Book by Blasi, Cristina, Mari, Gabriella

From Publishers WeeklyThis crammed cookbook takes a slapdash tour of the 16 countries with Mediterranean coastlines, making the usual stops in Italy and Spain, but also unexpected detours into Africa and the Balkans. France is represented with Provenal dishes like Mussel Soup with Saffron, but also, incongruously, with northern recipes like Upside-Down Apple Tart and Sole with Lemon and Butter. In their chapter on North Africa, the authors include many variations on couscous alongside tempting Moroccan tagines, but they also present less well-known dishes like Libyan Stew and Makroud, which taste like date bars gone to heaven. Surprisingly, the most offbeat recipes come from Greece. The authors go beyond the familiar grape leaves and egg-lemon soup to showcase unusual but tasty specialties like Beef with Prunes, Octopus with Pasta, and Soft Cabbage Polenta. In a way, this volume is more useful as a travelogue than as a book to actually cook by; it's so crowded with recipes that the type is too small to read comfortably. Worse, it's frenetically illustrated with unappealing photographs, each one jammed with ingredients (potatoes and cheese assembled next to a pan of gnocchi; garlic, bacon and a cutting board alongside a roll of pork). Somehow, even beloved dishes like French Onion Soup manage to look as sickly as possible. Nevertheless, cooks who steer clear of the pictures will find this book a noteworthy catalogue of the diversity of the famed Mediterranean diet.