Alumni

Your Chance to Cook with 5 Famous Columbia Chefs

Add these classic cookbooks to your collection.

By
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Judy Joo: Emli Bendixen; Jacques Pépin: Tom Hopkins; Christopher Kimball: Connie Miller / CB Creatives; Melissa Clark: Eric Wolfinger; Anita Lo: chefanitalo.com

Jacques Pépin

Many say that we have Jacques Pépin ’70GS, ’72GSAS, ’17HON — along with his friend and longtime collaborator Julia Child — to thank for bringing French cooking to America. For over twenty-five years, Pépin has been a fixture on public television, patiently explaining in his ever-charming accent how to make a proper beurre blanc or *bœuf bourguignon*. Pépin is also the author of thirty cookbooks, the winner of twenty-five James Beard awards, and a talented artist — a skill he says he picked up while studying at Columbia.

Essential cookbook: *Jacques Pépin: Quick and Simple*

Jacques Pépin may be the master of complicated French classics, but during the pandemic, he was on a different mission — helping people whip up basic dishes using freezer and pantry staples. Since March 2020, he’s posted over 160 three-minute recipes to Facebook, and he recently updated his 1990 cookbook, *Quick & Simple*. Full of genius shortcuts (like using a food processor to make a baguette) and last-minute dinner ideas (a hearty stew with frozen vegetables), it’s perfect for kitchen novices, or anyone with a case of culinary fatigue.

Melissa Clark

Melissa Clark ’90BC, ’94SOA is a home cook through and through; in fact, she’s never worked in a restaurant kitchen. But for the last thirteen years she’s written the popular “A Good Appetite” column in the *New York Times* and developed thousands of recipes for the paper’s food section, introducing readers to everything from sheet-pan suppers to deep-fried Twinkies. Clark is also the author of more than forty cookbooks and hosts a cooking video series on the *Times* website.

Essential cookbook: *Dinner: Changing the Game*

The weeknight dinner grind is real, even if you’re working from home, but Clark’s *Dinner* makes life much easier. The author deploys interesting pantry ingredients (i.e., harissa or pomegranate molasses) to spice up dishes that are shockingly easy to whip up on a meeting-packed Tuesday.

Anita Lo

For nearly two decades, Anita Lo ’88CC was the chef and owner of Annisa, the beloved Michelin-starred Greenwich Village restaurant that brought global flavors to fine dining. A favorite of food-TV fans, Lo was the first woman to win a challenge on *Iron Chef America*, and she also appeared on *Top Chef Masters*. Lo closed Annisa in 2017 and has been working on several new cookbook and restaurant projects since.

Essential cookbook: *Solo: A Modern Cookbook for a Party of One*

Lo’s ode to cooking for one found new life during the pandemic, providing great recipe ideas for anyone quarantining alone. Lo’s recipes are unapologetically sophisticated — think steamed sea bass with shiitake mushrooms or chicken tagine with couscous — in perfect proportions for a singleton.

Christopher Kimball

Most people know Christopher Kimball ’73CC as the cofounder of America’s Test Kitchen and the magazines *Cook’s Illustrated* and *Cook’s Country*, all of which take a scientific approach to recipe development. In 2016 he created a new venture, Milk Street, a website, magazine, and cooking school that celebrates international flavors — a departure from Kimball’s New England roots.

Essential cookbook: *Milk Street*

The first cookbook produced under the Milk Street brand proves that ethnic cooking doesn’t have to be fussy or involve a long list of hard-to-find ingredients. Kimball’s recipes are bold and exciting, like Somali chicken soup and Japanese fried chicken, but easy for any home cook to master.

Judy Joo

Chef Judy Joo ’97SEAS splits her time between New York, London, and Hong Kong and hosted the Cooking Channel’s *Korean Food Made Simple* from 2014 to 2016. One of the four “iron chefs” on the UK’s version of the hit TV show in 2010, she’s passionate about sharing her love for Korean fusion cooking. Joo was also the first chef and owner of Jinjuu — a restaurant with two locations in London and one in

Hong Kong. She left in 2019 to open another hit London restaurant, Seoul Bird.

Essential cookbook: *Korean Food Made Simple*

The companion book to Joo's popular TV show, this cookbook does exactly what the title promises. Anyone looking to make restaurant favorites like japchae and bibimbap won't be disappointed, but there are also some creative new dishes like "krazy Korean burgers" and pork-belly cheesesteaks.

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