

Curried Favors



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Many people enjoy Indian food in restaurants, yet would hesitate to cook it at home. For those intimidated by the stereotypes that Indian cooking is rich and heavy, difficult to prepare, and made with hard-to-find ingredients, this book is full of delicious surprises. With accessible ingredients and simple methods, these recipes introduce the light, tropical tastes of South Indian food. All over India, an endless variety of "curries" are prepared, depending upon locally available ingredients and religious preferences. South Indian curries are distinguished from northern ones by the predominance of coconut and seafood, along with a host of exotic fruits and vegetables, including fresh hot chilies. The book focuses on the traditional home cooking of southern India, but the author also includes the classic favorites of the North, such as Lamb Korma, Tandoori Chicken, and Spinach Paneer. Over 100 straightforward recipes were developed and tested by the author's father, Chandran Kaimal, over a period of 25 years (not to mention the many generations of family development). Mr. Kaimal, a physicist, applied the scientific method to his cooking, writing everything down so it could be duplicated exactly each time. The author has fine-tuned her father's recipes from the perspective of a food writer and frequent cookbook user. The fewest possible steps and the clearest language communicate methods which are not complicated yet may be unfamiliar, such as popping mustard seeds in oil. All of the ingredients are

available in supermarkets or health food stores, and when a hard-to-find ingredient is called for, the author suggests a substitute or makes it optional. A wide range of dishes from appetizers to desserts provides an excellent introduction to Indian cooking. Menu suggestions give a sense of how to combine flavors and textures to create an authentic Indian meal. Ideal for anyone who appreciates good food, this book serves as a general primer for the first-time Indian cookbook buyer or as a treasure of lesser-known southern specialties for the more sophisticated chef.

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目录:

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