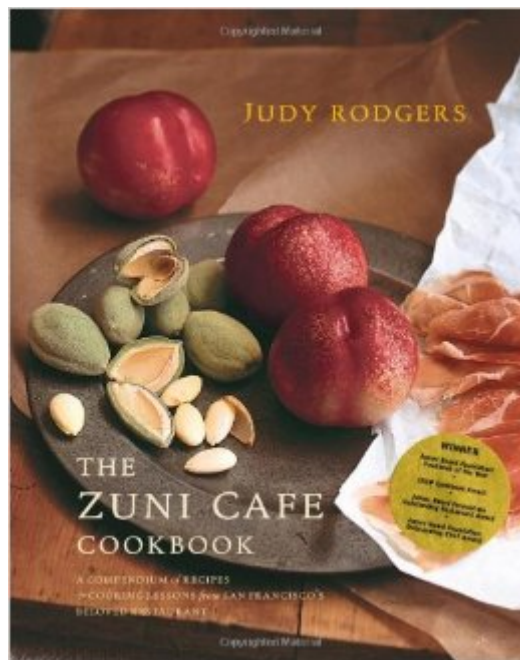


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# The Zuni Cafe Cookbook: A Compendium Of Recipes And Cooking Lessons From San Francisco's Beloved Restaurant



## Synopsis

For twenty-four years, in an odd and intimate warren of rooms, San Franciscans of every variety have come to the Zuni Café with high expectations and have rarely left disappointed. In *The Zuni Café Cookbook*, a book customers have been anticipating for years, chef and owner Judy Rodgers provides recipes for Zuni's most well-known dishes, ranging from the Zuni Roast Chicken to the Espresso Granita. But Zuni's appeal goes beyond recipes. Harold McGee concludes, "What makes *The Zuni Café Cookbook* a real treasure is the voice of Zuni's Judy Rodgers," whose book "repeatedly sheds a fresh and revealing light on ingredients and dishes, and even on the nature of cooking itself." Deborah Madison (*Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone*) says the introduction alone "should be required reading for every person who might cook something someday." 24 pages of color; 50 black-and-white photographs

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This ambitious masterwork seems to be doing just fine (as I write this, it ranks 215 in sales on this site). It hardly needs a recommendation, for the book will surely find its audience without this review. But it is so unique, so fine, that I can't help myself. While I am a chef and cookbook writer myself, I choose to remain anonymous for personal reasons. Judy Rodgers is well known in San Francisco, but she hasn't published much before. I don't recall any articles by her in food magazines, but I could have missed them. She is simply the best food writer that has emerged in a long, long time. She seems to have absorbed cooking knowledge the way the rest of us breathe, and in her book, she puts it all down. Open any page, I mean ANY page, and you will get a piece of information, an

idea, a tip, or tidbit that will make you rethink the way you cook. Her recipes are written with the same loving detail that she puts into her restaurant cooking. She writes a recipe like she might simmer a complex and utterly delicious stock--slowly, gently, without shortcuts. Cooks who are looking for the fast and easy should pass this book by. I do have a few criticisms, which are totally immaterial when you think of the vast amount of gold to be mined. Nonetheless, they are worth mentioning for those who calculate the amount of recipes they might use from a book. The dessert section reflects Judy's simple tastes in this area, and it could have been balanced with a few more cake-like pastries. There are plenty of recipes that mere mortals will not make, unless you dedicate the auxiliary refrigerator in your garage to hold the odiferous masterpiece (salted anchovies, salted cod), but at least she is frank about the problems you face in making them.

San Francisco chef Rodgers teaches as she cooks and her clear, authoritative voice is an inspiration, reinforced by 24 luscious color photographs and 50 black and white photographs illustrating technique. Emphasizing quality ingredients and constant tasting, she painstakingly explains what to look for and how to taste. More than once she cautions that it may take several tries before a dish sounds that note of perfection on the tongue. Rodgers' style of cooking requires some forethought - all her meat and poultry is lightly salted at least a day before cooking - to "open up" the proteins, and some dishes, like Artichoke Caponata, improve when made ahead. The book is organized by course and the introductions to each recipe offer tips on ingredients or technique, suggestions for leftovers and sometimes the dish's history in her repertoire, which is French and Italian-influenced. Some dishes are simple - her signature Roast Chicken with Bread Salad is a snap as long as you remember to salt the chicken the day before (it does make a difference). Several soups (Asparagus & Rice with Pancetta & Black Pepper) are quick and easy, as long as you've got the stock on hand - canned stock is beneath mention - and several pickles, condiments and sauces (Preserved Lemons, Roasted Pepper Relish, Sage Pesto) are simple enough to keep on hand, but basically, Rodgers is not about quick and easy. The hamburger that the pickles are served with starts with grinding your own chuck - twice. Pasta with Sardines & Tomato Sauce begins with cleaning, broiling, then filleting the sardines, although the roasted tomato sauce is quick, easy and different. Pot Roast begins with reducing a bottle of red wine to a half cup and four cups of beef stock to two.

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