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Make It Ahead: A Barefoot Contessa Cookbook



Synopsis

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER For the first time, trusted and beloved cookbook author Ina Garten, the Barefoot Contessa, answers the number one question she receives from cooks: Can I make it ahead? If you've ever found yourself stuck in front of the stove at your own party, scrambling to get everything to the table at just the right moment, Ina is here to let you in on her secrets! Thanks to twenty years of running a specialty food store and fifteen years writing cookbooks, she has learned exactly which dishes you can prep, assemble, or cook ahead of time. Whether you're hosting a party or simply making dinner on a hectic weeknight, Ina gives you lots of amazing recipes that taste just as good—or even better!—when they're made in advance. In *Make It Ahead*, each recipe includes clear instructions for what you can do ahead of time, and how far in advance, so you can cook with confidence and eliminate last-minute surprises. Make a pitcher of Summer Rosé Sangria filled with red berries, let it chill overnight for the flavors to develop, and you have a delicious drink to offer your friends the minute they arrive. Simmer a pot of Wild Mushroom & Farro Soup, enjoy a bowl for lunch, and freeze the rest for a chilly evening. You can prep the kale, Brussels sprouts, and lemon vinaigrette for Winter Slaw ahead of time and simply toss them together before serving. Assemble French Chicken Pot Pies filled with artichokes and fresh tarragon a day in advance and then pop them in the oven half an hour before dinner. And for dessert, everyone needs the recipe for Ina's Decadent (gluten-free!) Chocolate Cake topped with Make-Ahead Whipped Cream. Ina also includes recipes for the biggest cooking day of the year—Thanksgiving! Her Ultimate Make-Ahead Roast Turkey and Gravy with Onions & Sage may just change your life. With beautiful photographs and hundreds of invaluable make-ahead tips, this is your new go-to guide for preparing meals that are stress-free yet filled with those fabulously satisfying flavors that you have come to expect from the Barefoot Contessa.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As Ina Garten points out, "there is ahead of time and there is WAY ahead of time." That's why she's included recipes that cover a wide range of "make ahead" schedules. Some of them, especially soups (one example is Zucchini Basil Soup) and gravy (Make Ahead Turkey Gravy with Onions and Sage) can be completely cooked and frozen for months. Others can only be made a few hours - or perhaps a few days- ahead of time. This includes Thanksgiving turkey. Although it seems obvious now that she's suggested it, I like the idea of cooking and slicing the turkey well before guests arrive....just have to make sure it stays warm. I bought this book primarily to streamline our Thanksgiving and other holiday menus - especially since we have both meat lovers and vegetarians in the family. UPDATE: I tested two recipes on October 30th. See info below. I plan to make Roasted Vegetable Lasagna for the vegetarian option, and freeze it and that solves the main course situation. There are also some side dishes and desserts in here that I'll be contemplating, perhaps the Cauliflower and Carrot Puree (can be prepped ahead of time but not frozen). UPDATE: I tested both and they're delicious. I've made an extra lasagne for the freezer, following the freezer instructions, and plan to defrost and test how it works after being in the freezer. Will update again then. I don't like to use any untested recipes although Ina's are reliable. The majority of these recipes are NOT frozen ahead of time so if you're looking for a freezer cookbook this isn't the one. You might want to keep this in mind but it didn't bother me. I'm happy to simply save time and not be a frazzled host.

Ina has done lovely cookbooks before & always the photography is fantastic (it's always nice to envision a recipe before making it). However, everyone on Earth knows you can make soups, dips, sauces, hummus, & lasagna ahead of time, & then heat/reheat. Everyone knows if you freeze something, it needs thawing before heating/serving (except for ice cream-like items, course). She "borrows" recipes from her former cookbooks for this book, which is extremely disappointing. She even showcases a dog biscuit recipe which you do ahead of time (you have to anyhow as that is what makes 'em crunchy....leaving the oven door open as the oven cools , or just plain using a very

hot oven which she does. Then you just keep them in a tightly covered container or Ziplock bag - I don't get the inclusion of a dog biscuit recipe in this cookbook at all. Does she serve her guests dog biscuits that she made months ago?! don't care for the style - she writes the recipe "as is" with no "do aheadness" to it, that is the main (lengthy) focus to all the recipes, then she writes 1 to 2 tiny sentences in the corner on how a partial recipe component - or the whole recipe - can be made ahead. Everyone knows how to cut up veggies, put them in Ziplock bags and then toss together at the last moment. At times it's only a couple of hours ahead that she talks about (which really doesn't help a cook in the long run in most cases).? Uncorking the wine one day ahead to taste it? You better have a Vacuvin or some other reliable method of "recorking", keeping oxygen out, and maintaining the integrity of that wine (especially if it's expensive!) while you wait for the serving time!

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