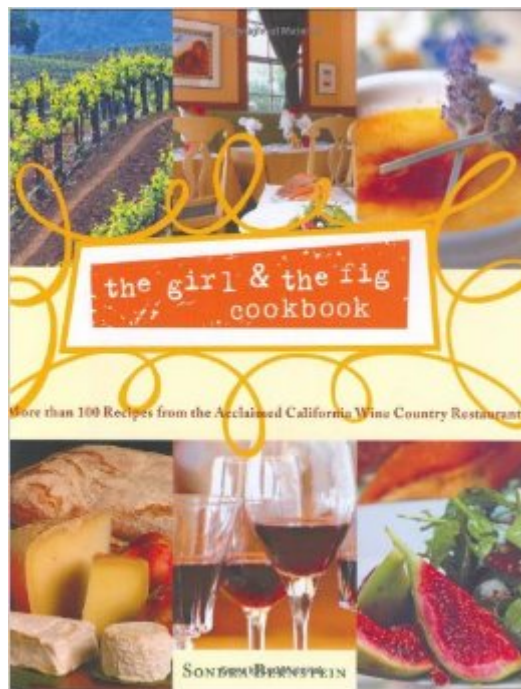


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The Girl & The Fig Cookbook: More Than 100 Recipes From The Acclaimed California Wine Country Restaurant



Synopsis

In 1997, Sondra Bernstein opened the doors to the first girl & the fig restaurant, showcasing her love of locally grown ingredients and her passion for French food. She named her restaurant for the fruit that symbolizes passion: the fig. Now with three restaurants in Sonoma County and with chef John Toulze at the helm, the girl & the fig restaurants are not only local favorites but also captivate thousands of visitors every year. In the girl & the fig Cookbook: More than 100 Recipes from the Acclaimed California Wine Country Restaurant, Bernstein offers an inspired collection of simple, yet sophisticated recipes from the restaurant, featuring the finest, freshest ingredients. These are restaurant-quality recipes adapted for the home kitchen, with dishes for beginners as well as experienced cooks. Bernstein brings the culinary traditions of France to the California wine country. The author's devotion to seasonal ingredients is wonderfully apparent in every recipe—from the savory appetizers, soups, salads, and large plates to the innovative desserts. Starters such as Heirloom Tomato Gazpacho, Cauliflower Gruyère Soup, Shrimp and Salmon Cakes, and Grilled Asparagus Salad with Lemon-Thyme Vinaigrette make the most of the region's bounty. Large plates such as Grilled Salmon with Lavender Beurre Rouge, Pan-Seared Scallops with Orange-Tarragon Beurre Blanc, Wild Mushroom Risotto, and Grilled Pork Chops with Apple Cider Sauce make wonderful main courses, while French classics like Coq au Vin and Duck Confit with Lentils, Applewood Smoked Bacon, and Cabbage will comfort you on a cold winter's night. Side dishes that can complement a large plate or be eaten alone include Braised Fennel, Citrus Pearl Couscous, Apple-Yam Gratin, and buttery Basil-Scented Potato Cakes. Bernstein's desserts range from the sinfully scrumptious (Chocolate Pots de Crème and Lavender and Wildflower Honey Crème Brûlée) to the unique (Roasted Figs with Honey and Vanilla Ice Cream and Warm Fig and Thyme Crisp with Fig Syrup). With gorgeous photographs throughout, the girl & the fig Cookbook also offers tips on wine pairings, highlighting California wines inspired by the Rhône Valley; imaginative ideas for aperitifs, charcuterie platters, and cheese plates; detailed sidebars on ingredients (including Bernstein's favorite food—the fig!); and brief glimpses of the author's favorite artisan food purveyors. This is country food with a French passion, perfect for a casual dinner or a formal dinner party. Let the girl & the fig Cookbook bring a taste of California to your kitchen.

Book Information

Hardcover: 288 pages

Publisher: Simon & Schuster; 7th Print edition (April 12, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0743255216

ISBN-13: 978-0743255219

Product Dimensions: 7.4 x 0.9 x 9.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (18 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #389,240 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #88 in Â Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Regional & International > U.S. Regional > California

Customer Reviews

This book by restaurant owner Sondra Bernstein, with recipes by executive chef John Toulze represents the cuisine served at a chain of Sonoma County based restaurants after which the book is titled. Based on the passions of Ms. Bernstein and her staff, the book and the restaurants focus on figs; dishes based on figs; the produce of Sonoma County; the cuisine of Provence, France; and the similarity of the terroir of Sonoma with Provence. One object of the book is to publicize the chain of restaurants and the line of products based on the owner's love of figs. This is not too unusual, as I am certain this is one of the motives behind every celebrity chef / restaurant owner's cookbook. Some, like Tom Colicchio are less obvious about this interest. Others, like Emeril Lagasse, are pretty out front about this objective. All restaurant based cookbooks aim at providing the reader with some twist to their cuisine or it's presentation which adds sugar to the bait to create an interest in the restaurant(s). One special feature of this book is borrowed from Ms. Bernstein's distinguished California culinary neighbor, Thomas Keller of the French Laundry. This is the addition of sidebars on some of the restaurants' more important, or, at least, more interesting suppliers. This includes fig, mushroom, and cheese vendors, past and present. This highlights one weakness to the book, in that it is so thoroughly based on what is available from the gardens and vineyards of Sonoma County. Not everyone in the United States is blessed with access to wild mushrooms and the talented foragers who supply them, or to cheeses from artisanal cheese makers. Happily, the chef / recipe writer has supplied generally available products to substitute for his Sonoma pantry.

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