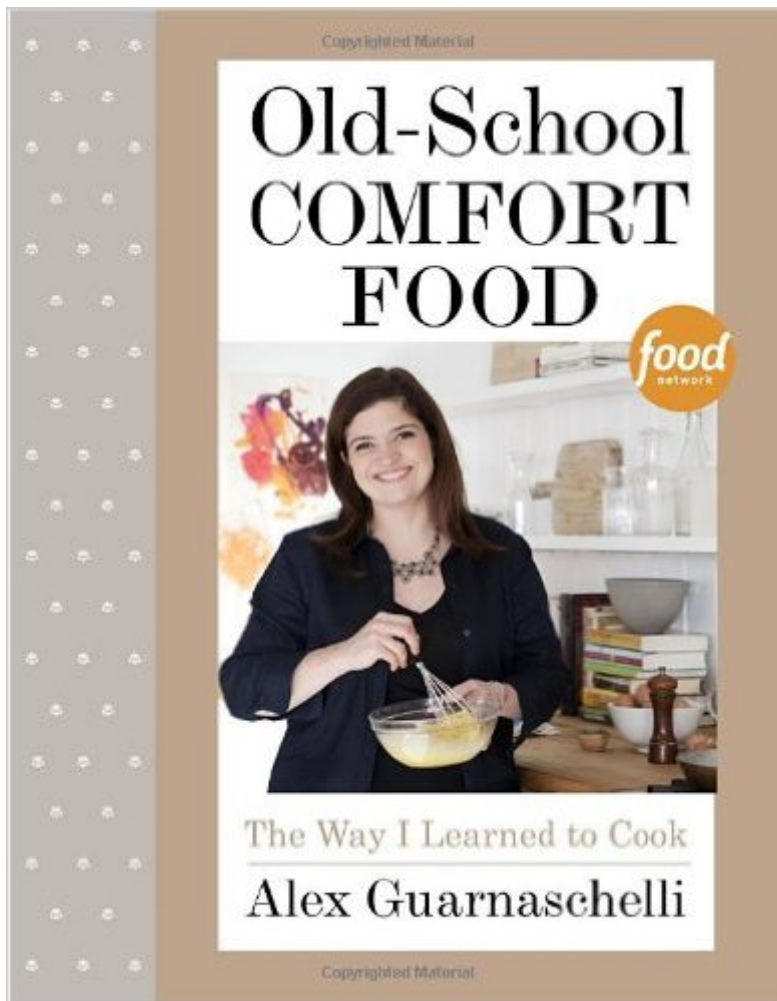


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# Old-School Comfort Food: The Way I Learned To Cook



## Synopsis

How does one become an Iron Chef and a Chopped judge on Food Network—and what does she really cook at home? Alex Guarnaschelli grew up in a home suffused with a love of cooking, where soufflés and cheeseburgers were equally revered. The daughter of a respected cookbook editor and a Chinese cooking enthusiast, Alex developed a passion for food at a young age, sealing her professional fate. *Old-School Comfort Food* shares her journey from waist-high taste-tester to trained chef who now adores spending time in the kitchen with her daughter, along with the 100 recipes for how she learned to cook—and the way she still loves to eat. Here are Alex's secrets to great home cooking, where humble ingredients and familiar preparations combine with excellent technique and care to create memorable meals. Alex brings her recipes to life with reminiscences of everything from stealing tomatoes from her aunt's garden and her first bite of her mother's potage to being one of the few women in the kitchen of a renowned Parisian restaurant and serving celebrity clientele in her own successful New York City establishments. With 75 color photographs and ephemera, *Old-School Comfort Food* is Alex's love letter to deliciousness.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Over the years, I have enjoyed watching chef Alex Guarnaschelli on Food Network. Alex's *Day Off* was one of my favorites. I also enjoy her work as a judge on *Chopped*. Her work—along with that of Anne Burrell, Bobby Flay, and Michael Symon—on *The Big Waste* was eye-opening and life-changing for me. Of course I was pleased when she became the newest Iron Chef America. And I mean really, a restaurant called *Butter*? Gotta love it. I also follow her on Twitter. It was there I

learned about her first cookbook, *Old-School Comfort Food: The Way I Learned to Cook*. I immediately preordered it, and it arrived last week. When you've been eagerly awaiting something, sadly, when it arrives, you can be disappointed. I've not been disappointed with *Old-School Comfort Food: The Way I Learned to Cook*. First, a word about the title. Many of these are not exactly things I immediately think of when it comes to comfort food or how I learned to cook. But then my mother isn't a cookbook editor. (I mean really. I've been in publishing for more than 20 years. How do I get one of those gigs?) I'd venture to guess the same may be true for many of you. So you're expecting the same-old, same-old, you probably won't find it here. And that's a good thing. The book is beautifully designed. The photos are gorgeous, as you'd expect from a Clarkson Potter book. The seemingly handwritten notes and hand-drawn pictures are interesting and informative, and the "Old-School Tips" are very helpful. If you're one of those who read a cookbook like a novel, and even if you aren't, Alex's brief history of her childhood and career are interesting and help put everything in context. Don't skip that section. Seriously. Her recipes are well written and easy to follow.

When someone says "comfort food" your mind is automatically taken to thoughts of mostly southern type dishes like fried chicken, chicken fried steak, chicken and dumplings, mashed potatoes, peach cobbler, buttermilk biscuits, banana pudding, corn bread, macaroni and cheese, lemon meringue pie, bread pudding and so forth. Actually if you Google comfort food, many of those dishes and more will come up. While I was thinking "who needs more comfort food recipes" I chose to purchase this book for a couple of reasons. 1. today the bulk of "comfort food" recipes are made with pre-packaged foods like cream of whatever soup, or potato chips (for the crunch factor). I personally find that disgusting. When I make meatloaf, it's going to be a loaf mostly made out of meat. Not equal parts of meat (or less even) mixed with oatmeal, rice crispy, corn flakes, or chips! Bread crumbs is tried and true for me, and takes a back seat to the main ingredient of meat. To enhance not over-power. So I mistakenly thought that this book would have tried and true old school (meaning no soup or other prepacked goods) above mentioned type of comfort foods made with actual real food ingredients that require real cooking. 2. The absolute main reason I bought this cookbook is that my 10 year old daughter wants to be a chef and from the first time she saw her on The Food Network, Alex Guarnaschelli has been her "role model". Alex Guarnaschelli has a different view of comfort food. No doubt comfort to her reminding her of the foods her mother made. Most of us were not raised in Manhattan with a mother who made pate. Chef Guarnaschelli says she fell in love with food in her mother's kitchen, recalling watching her mother make a souffle (of which she

doesn't include a souffle recipe in her book).

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