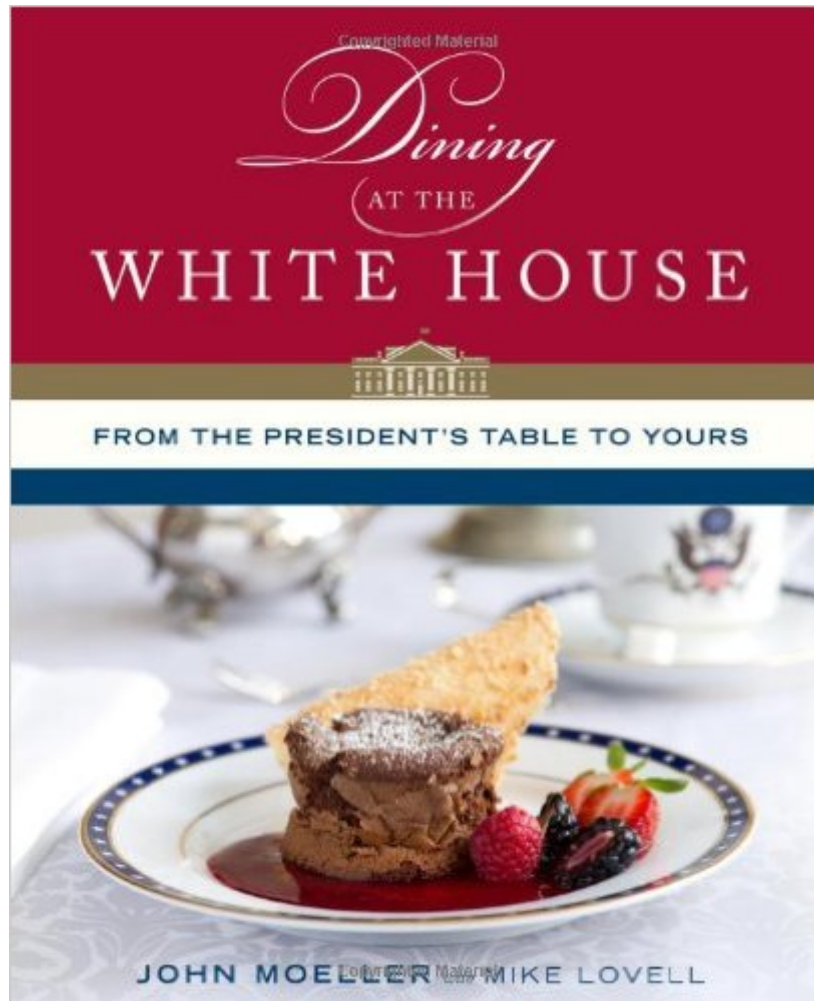


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# Dining At The White House: From The President's Table To Yours



## Synopsis

This book provides an insider's view into the experience of dining at the White House and describes Chef Moeller's most memorable moments cooking for three First Families. It includes over 100 recipes for one-of-a-kind dishes featuring his trademark use of fresh, seasonal ingredients inspired by his classical French training with an American twist. Useful chef notes help adapt fine French cooking techniques for the home cook.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Dining at the White House by John Moeller would make a wonderful present to yourself or for anyone who enjoys cooking or eating good food or who just enjoys reading about the inner workings of the White House. In the first section, the author shows us his transformation from a bistro chef in the United States through his early training in France to becoming a four-star chef working at the White House from the latter days of Bush Senior through the Clinton administration and into the days of Bush Junior. Without gossip, Chef Moeller shows us how the White House kitchen works. For example, he walks us through the food shopping. The chef shopped each day, paying in cash to keep the fact that it was going to the White House secret. Afterwards, he was paid from petty cash, and if the food was for the first family, the family was presented with an itemized bill each month. Interspersed throughout the book are beautiful photos of the china used in different administrations, plated dinners for state functions, and menus for the luncheons and dinners Chef Moeller served--the holiday dinner from 2004, the luncheon for Vladimir Putin, among others. In the second section, the recipes shown are straightforward, using common, easily obtainable ingredients. The hardest part for the home cook pressed for time is finding the perfectly fresh ingredients that the

chef insists on--that perfect, vine-ripened tomato for his Tomato and Fennel Soup, for example. After having eaten Chef Moeller's delicious Chanterelle Mushroom Soup at a Christmas dinner last year and seeing how simple it is to make, I intend to replicate it in my kitchen. For Thanksgiving, I think his Braised Celery Hearts and his Potato Celery Root Puree would be perfect with roast turkey.

Dining at the White House is a great book! I felt like I was at the White House and Chef John was walking me through the White House telling the story. At times, I was on the edge of my seat. It is very touching when Chef John describes September 11. It was from his heart. It is evident that he truly enjoyed serving the Presidents and he was in awe of working there. The First Families liked him too! When Chef John told each family good bye I could feel the sadness he felt. He depicts the First Families as very human. I felt like I was listening in as he talked to the President and First Lady about what they wanted for dinner. It is amazing how Chef John prepares a meal on a moment's notice. He describes how food plays an important role in our history and how food brings people together. He writes in detail about the State Dinners and the parties. He tells you everything from how the guests are seated to how the food is kept warmed and served. I loved how when he made the Chocolate Torte the lady attending the dinner called him in the dining room to get the recipe. It is delightful to read about Christmas and the Easter Egg Roll. My family attended the Egg Roll in 1996, and now I know Chef John dyed the eggs! The pictures of the White House china, place cards, and menus are an added touch. Look closely and you will see what Caroline Kennedy ordered for breakfast when she was a guest at the White House. It is remarkable how he plans a menu and puts different food together. After reading about Chef John cooking at the White House he shares his recipes with us! A well written, beautiful book that everyone will enjoy reading. This book will make a great gift too. Thank you Chef John for taking me to work at the White House with you!

if you think this is a book of White House recipes, you are only partially correct. For the first 200 pages, Chef Moeller tells the story of his road to culinary excellence and the White House, and then explains the protocols of dining at the White House. The book is actually great for teens who are thinking about a culinary career since it shows the years of hard work and training required, and the need to have a clean record for future employment. As a teen, Moeller attended a Vo-Tech high school program in Lancaster, PA. He graduated from Johnson and Wales University in 1981 and then traveled to the UK a bit. Later, striking up a conversation in France, he was offered an extra bedroom in Dijon and a chance to study French and work in some famous regional French kitchens

(places where when you cook a chicken, you have to first get rid of the feathers and head; by the way, real French dressing is not pink). Returning to the States in 1986, he went to visit his brother in DC before he accepted a job in the Caribbean. On a lark he popped into a DC French restaurant and asked about a job. He got the job on the spot since the chef knew the places at which he worked in France. When that restaurant closed three years later, he scored a job with another chef who needed someone in the White House, and that is where he stayed for the next three administrations. Did you know that White House dinners are served family style; a designated host at each table serves the guests from a main serving plate? You learn this and many other tidbits on White House dining, along with stories on guests, some of the 400 menu cards Chef Moeller saved, catering at Camp David, grocery shopping, the kitchen's small size, George W's recipe for Chex Mix, commemorative plates, Julia Child's visits, and more. The First Family pays for their own groceries, so when a former first lady shows up and dines with the FLOTUS and they want fresh dover sole - cost \$120 for two portions - the first family pays for it. The book shows some breakfast orders from overnight guests (Lee Iacocca, Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg), a self-typed job recommendation letter from George HW and Barbara Bush, and menu cards, including those for Putin (2001), the President of Spain (1997) and the State Governors (1997). Nelson Mandela's event featured Halibut with Sesame Crust, Bibb Endive & Watercress; Boris Yeltsin's served Rack of Lamb; the Emperor of Japan's had breast of quail; and the celebration for the signing of a Palestinian and Israeli Interim Agreement featured broiled salmon with black peppercorn and ginger potato and celeriac puree; mesclun salad with leeks and beets, and black raspberry sorbet. After Page 242, the recipes and chef-notes begin, along with the menu cards for the dinner and luxurious photos. There are starters, main courses, and one dessert. The recipe for Artichoke and Leek Soup from the Vladimir Putin lunch is there, as is the Chanterelle Mushroom Soup from the 2004 Holiday Dinner (I once watched him prepare this soup and sweat the vegetable at the Miami Culinary Institute and Miami Book Fair. He loves koshering salt and the use of chicken stock as a foundation for nearly everything) The 2004 Holiday Dinner recipes also include a Warm Tamale Salad with Avocado, Tomato, and Black Bean and Citrus Dressing. The recipe for Grilled Shitake Mushrooms from the Silvio Berlusconi luncheon is included, as are the Ragout of Lobster in Riesling Sauce for Gerhard Schroeder, and the Pheasant Soup with Tiny Raviolis (pheasant breast and ricotta) for the National Medal of Arts Dinner. Other unique recipes include the grilled Salmon Fillet "Mignon" for Tony Blair's dinner; the Florida Yellowtail Snapper and Sauteed Leeks with Saffron Corn sauce for President Mubarak's luncheon; and the Herb-Crusted Lamb Chops for the 2002 Christmas Dinner. The book closes with a recipe for a warm flourless chocolate torte with raspberry sauce and

almond tuile. A picture of it graces the cover jacket of this book. Why did they use a simple dessert for the cover when the book is filled with so many elegant entrees from famous celebratory meals? There is a story behind the torte that epitomizes White House dining.. It was February 2003, over a weekend, when the Bush family was away at Camp David and the kitchen staff was off. Chef Moeller got a call; the butler reported that the family was headed back, the Space Shuttle Columbia had met a tragic end. Moeller gathered up some groceries to prepare some meals, and on his own made this flourless torte for dessert for 18. The POTUS And FLOTUS and their guests were floored by its taste and kvelled over it. It was a simple dessert that brought some joy and comfort to people on a tragic day.

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