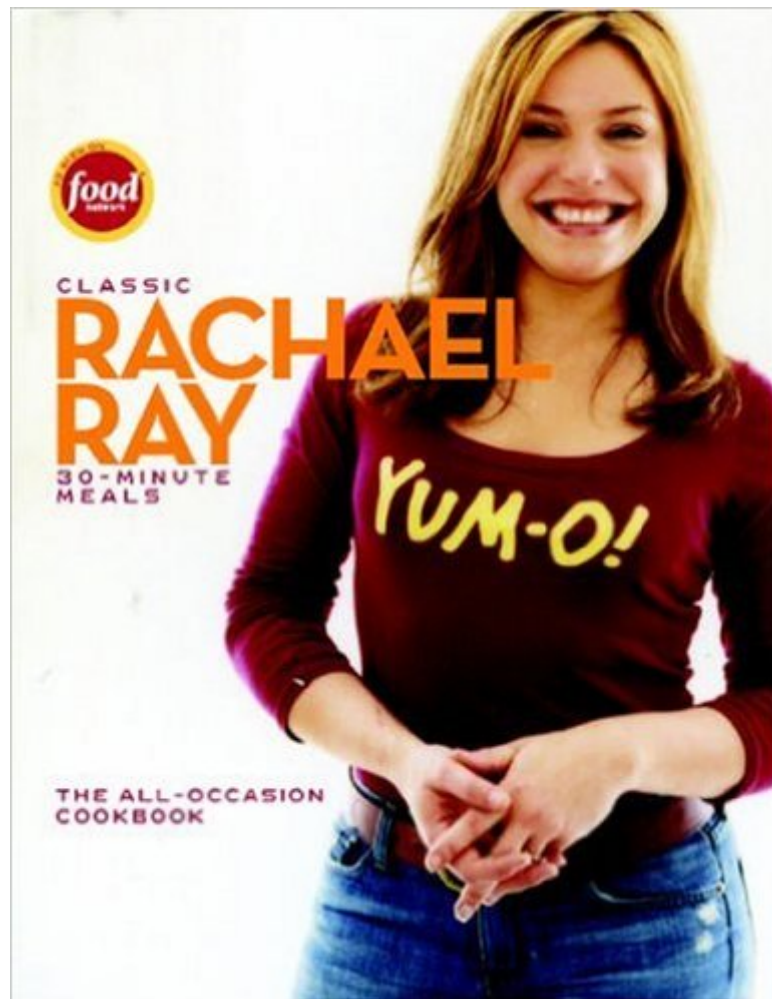


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# Classic 30-Minute Meals: The All-Occasion Cookbook



## Synopsis

An outstanding collection of Rachael Ray's best 30-Minute Meals, now in one volume. Features over 150 meals selected from 8 of Rachael's best-selling titles.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Classic 30 Minute Meals" is the latest offering from the prolific Rachael Ray. This is not a 'new' cookbook but a collection of some of her 'greatest hits' from her earlier books. If you have her original "30 Minute" books, then you won't need this one. However, if you want some of the best recipes and want to skip some of her "filler" material (repeats, variations on a theme), then this is the book for you. There are complete menus (which I really like) for everyday dinners, parties, datenights, and even kid chefs. As usual, these are standard Ray fare: pastas, tex-mex, burgers and lots o' chicken recipes. But overall, the menus are well balanced, easy to prepare and full of fresh ingredients. Although I am not crazy about "Rayspeak" (EVOO, Yum-O, etc.) I do like her ideas. Because I am a seasoned cook, I have been easily able to make her recipes in 30 minutes - but I realize that some of the ingredient lists are a bit much and the prep time will vary depending on your skills and tools. I respecially like the datenight menus as I am an empty nester and now it is just my hubby and myself. (The only complaint I have is that sometimes her portion sizes are rather large - there is no way that I can eat a half pound of meat! So, on occasion, I do have to adjust a bit.) I would recommend this to someone who wants to venture into Ray's world but doesn't want to buy the entire collection.

I enjoy Rachael Ray's cooking show because of its simplistic approach to cooking great food. Rachael is fun, very fun! But in contrast to her television program, her initial cookbooks were disappointing. Although her books had all her great recipes, I could never bring myself to buy them. They showed nothing of her personality in them. They lacked pictures and structure. Cooking and eating food is a sensual experience, and these books seemed boring; all of my senses were not stimulated - and I never bought them. So I will admit I need pictures and gloss to get me excited about cooking! Watching her gets me excited about trying new things that I would have thought were complicated otherwise. This new book brings those things together: visuals of the food and pictures of Rachael cooking and simple recipes to follow. Plus, she throws in fun little notes. It's a book that finally reflects Rachael and her cooking. It contains the best of her recipes in one fantastic book. If you've put off buying her book, this is the one to own.

This is a useful compilation of 30-minute meals from Rachael Ray. The book is nice and glossy, with a plentitude of pictures of Ms. Ray, from childhood to present that help to personalize the volume. As most readers know, she has had shows on television, featuring her cooking suggestions as well as a more recent talk show. But that is secondary. The primary task of any cookbook is to provide interesting and doable recipes. Let's take a look at what is within this book. First, and this is something important to me, there are lots of recipes! Often, in fact, two to a page. Second, there is quite a variety of recipes--from pizza (Puttanesca pizza) to other pasta dishes (Pasta al Forno) to meat dishes (e.g., maple-mustard pork chops with grilled apples) to vegetable dishes (Seared greens with red onion and vinegar) to deserts (Black-and-white ice cream sandwiches). And so on. Characteristics of her recipes include the liberal call for "evoo" (extra virgin olive oil). Also, she uses a wide array of herbs and spices that "spice up" the recipes nicely. A couple quick examples. . . . "My Sister Ria's Lazy Chicken." This features boneless chicken breasts, evoo, thinly sliced potatoes, thinly sliced onions, crushed tomatoes, small zucchini thinly sliced, and accompanying elements, such as a "couple glugs" (ugh) of white wine, Montreal steak seasoning, basil, oregano, and Italian cheese (shredded). Key point: These are easy to acquire ingredients. The instructions are straightforward; this is a 30-minute dish that will satisfy. I have made this for my family, who are often picky in their tastes, and the end result was appreciated by all. A simple dish for watching sporting events on TV. "Pigskin Potatoes." Ingredients: Potatoes, evoo, and Montreal steak seasoning. Get the oven heated up to 425 degrees. Slice the potatoes lengthwise into thin wedges. Toss the outcome with evoo, to coat. Then, sprinkle on seasonings to one's taste and put wedges

onto a cookie sheet. Finally, stick them in the oven until golden brown. Tasty munchies during a television session with football and other sporting events. And so on. . . . In short, this is, first, a nice introduction to the cooking style of Rachael Ray. Second, and more important, there are a lot of easy to make and tasty dishes presented in this volume. Not all are as easy, of course. But, in the end, this is a welcome addition to my library of cookbooks.

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