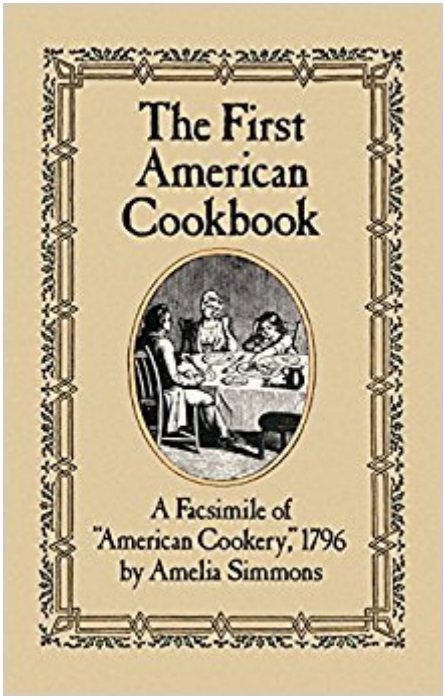
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The First American Cookbook: A Facsimile Of "American Cookery," 1796



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Synopsis

This facsimile of the first American-written cookbook published in the United States is not only a first in cookbook literature, but a historic document. It reveals the rich variety of food Colonial Americans enjoyed, their tastes, cooking and eating habits, even their colorful language.Author Amelia Simmons worked as a domestic in Colonial America and gathered her cookery expertise from firsthand experience. Her book points out the best ways of judging the quality of meats, poultry, fish, vegetables, etc., and presents the best methods of preparing and cooking them. In choosing fish, poultry, and other meats, the author wisely advises, "their smell denotes their goodness." Her sound suggestions for choosing the freshest and most tender onions, potatoes, parsnips, carrots, asparagus, lettuce, cabbage, beans, and other vegetables are as timely today as they were nearly 200 years ago.Here are the first uniquely American recipes using corn meal Ã¢â ¬â • Indian pudding, "Johnny cake," and Indian slapjacks Ã¢â ¬â • as well as the first recipes for pumpkin pudding, winter squash pudding, and for brewing spruce beer. The words "cookie" and "slaw" made their first published appearance in this book. You'll also find the first recommended use of pearlash (the forerunner of baking powder) to lighten dough, as well as recommendations for seasoning stuffing and roasting beef, mutton, veal, and lamb Ã¢â ¬â • even how to dress a turtle.Along with authentic recipes for colonial favorites, a Glossary includes definitions of antiquated cooking terms: pannikin, wallop, frumenty, emptins, and more. And Mary Tolford Wilson's informative Introductory Essay provides the culinary historical background needed to appreciate this important book fully.Anyone who uses and collects cookbooks will want to have The First American Cookbook. Cultural historians, Americana buffs, and gourmets will find this rare edition filled with interesting recipes and rich in early American flavor.

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Customer Reviews

This facsimile of the first American-written cookbook published in the United States is not only a first in cookbook literature, but a historic document. It reveals the rich variety of food Colonial Americans enjoyed, their tastes, cooking and eating habits, even their colorful language.Author Amelia Simmons worked as a domestic in Colonial America and gathered her cookery expertise from firsthand experience. Her book points out the best ways of judging the quality of meats, poultry, fish, vegetables, etc., and presents the best methods of preparing and cooking them. In choosing fish, poultry, and other meats, the author wisely advises, "their smell denotes their goodness." Her sound suggestions for choosing the freshest and most tender onions, potatoes, parsnips, carrots, asparagus, lettuce, cabbage, beans, and other vegetables are as timely today as they were nearly 200 years ago.Here are the first uniquely American recipes using corn mealÃ¢â ¬â •Indian pudding, "Johnny cake," and Indian slapjacksÃ¢â ¬â •as well as the first recipes for pumpkin pudding, winter squash pudding, and for brewing spruce beer. The words "cookie" and "slaw" made their first published appearance in this book. You'll also find the first recommended use of pearlash (the forerunner of baking powder) to lighten dough, as well as recommendations for seasoning stuffing and roasting beef, mutton, veal, and lambÃ¢â ¬â •even how to dress a turtle.Along with authentic recipes for colonial favorites, a Glossary includes definitions of antiquated cooking terms: pannikin, wallop, frumenty, emptins, and more. And Mary Tolford Wilson's informative Introductory Essay provides the culinary historical background needed to appreciate this important book fully.Anyone who uses and collects cookbooks will want to have The First American Cookbook. Cultural historians, Americana buffs, and gourmets will find this rare edition filled with interesting recipes and rich in early American flavor.

The only biographical information known about Amelia Simmons were from the cover and title pages of her cookbook that list her as "Amelia Simmons, An American Orphan

Interesting.

What fun reading this 'historical' cookbook. Don't know how anyone was able to make a recipe to

detail. Lots of fats in these recipes! Very interesting.

This cookbook is like reading a history book from the American kitchen. If you enjoy cooking & you enjoy history, you will enjoy reading this cookbook!

Very interesting , and not only for Food History geeks . It is a lot of fun to make these recipes ..in a modern version to be sure .

Although I took a star off because from a literary standpoint, this second edition was poorly organized, for a person interested in the evolution of cuisine this is a great single evening read. It is quite shorter than I expected, but the discussion of ingredients, methods and ingredients gives an important perspective on the evolution of our foods. There are multiple variants of things like doughs and puddings and recipes using them, including a method of creating a meat pie that I saw echoed, surprisingly, in a tripes dish on Julia Child's 1970s show, The French Chef. There are a few things to learn from a 215 year old book.The typographic standards are those of the early 1800s, yes, but maligning the formal 'f' used for 's' (interestingly misused in the cookbook itself, but correctly in the foreword) doesn't seem right when reading it "of the time"-- it's a bit like reading Dostoyevsky in the original and complaining about all the weird characters. It's the way it was done, and doesn't detract in my mind.I enjoyed it. Since we depend mostly on cookbooks to understand the cuisine of a period, it's a good way to understand some of common usage at the turn to the 19th century, and also to see why Careme's and Escoffier' formalism and simplifications were so important to "classic" and modern cooking.

I'm so happy to have this wonderful book to add to my cookbook collection. It's really a history book and I'm enjoying getting to know Amelia Simmons through her writing. It's also so much fun to compare today's recipes to hers. I'd recommend this for anyone who loves cooking and loves American history!

We enjoyed browsing through the book looking at the various recipes. We have only tried one and it came out good. I am pleased with the choice of this book.

Most people probably bought this book because they like cookbooks and/or cooking. Not me. I was interested in reading the recipes, but honestly, I liked the fact that it was a part of history. It's also

not an easy book to read. It’s written using the old fashioned "s" that looks like an "f". Rather confusing if you aren’t used to it. I’ve seen enough old gravestones with the same writing, so it didn’t bother me too much. Some of the words I wasn’t that familiar with so it’s a good thing there is a glossary included. The book also makes you realize how difficult cooking was back before 1800. Not an easy task back then. A fascinating slice of life in historical times, especially for a history buff like me.

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