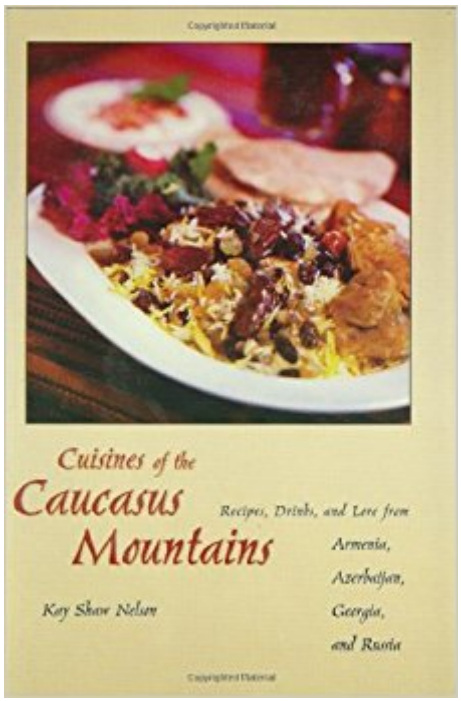
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Cuisines Of The Caucasus Mountains: Recipes, Drinks, And Lore From Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, And Russia



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Synopsis

Caucasians are noted for a creative and masterful cuisine that cooks evolved over the years by using fragrant herbs and spices and tart flavors such as lemons and sour plums. With healthful yet delectable ingredients like pomegranates, saffron, rose water, honey, olive oil, yogurt, onions, garlic, fresh and dried fruits, and a variety of nuts, these 184 authentic recipes provide many delicious options. The literary excerpts, legends, and lore sprinkled throughout the book will also enchant the reader-chef on this culinary journey to one of the world's most famous mountain ranges. Because of its geographical and ethnic diversity, the colorful and vibrant cookery of the Caucasus, interwoven with the history and invasion of conquest, the influence of religious affiliation, and the effects of political and social orientation or allegiance, represents a mixture of tastes. We find distinct culinary influences from the Greeks, Romans, Persians, Arabs, Turks, and Central Asians as they passed through or occupied the area, and there are also some Slavic or Russian contributions. Today, the region's cuisine is perhaps best described as a joyful mÃƒÂ©lange of Persian, Turkish, Greek, and Mediterranean dishes, with many innovations and improvements. --from the author's introduction

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Customer Reviews

Kay Shaw Nelson is the author of seventeen cookbooks, including All Along the Rhine (Hippocrene, 2001) and The Scottish-Irish Pub & Hearth Cookbook (Hippocrene, 1999). Her articles have appeared in such publications as Gourmet, Woman's Day, House & Garden, Family Circle, Cuisine, and The Washington Post. She is also a culinary historian, food and travel columnist for The

Scottish Banner, and a contributor to Washington Woman. She resides in Bethesda, Maryland.

Obviously there aren't thousands, hundreds, or even a hand full of options. So, when I went on the hunt for chechen and that region food to make for a friend of mine, who is first generation American, I was surprised with how little information there was for free or even cookbook wise. So, this was a pleasant surprise. I only wanted the recipes so reading the book itself outside of the recipes is something I can't comment on.However, the recipes were simple and most of the stuff was relatively easy for me to find. Some recipes are basic and some are more advance like any cookbook.I would love lots and lots of pictures. But, that is just my personal preference in a cookbook.Reviewed: Kindle Version.

A Georgian family that I had met had brought over some of their native food to thank me for helping them out in a business situation. That evening, friends and I tried it, and we just loved it. What's so wonderful about the food of the region is that it's like a combination of foods from the middle east, Europe, Russia, and Asia.Of course, I wanted to find a cookbook, and this was one of the few (maybe the only one) available on .The great thing about this book is that it is much more than just a cookbook. It is a journal about the author's travels to Caucasus region. So every recipe has a story behind it, so, if you're looking for a just a listing of recipes, this book might be disappointing. In fact, I read it cover to cover, which is something you don't usually do with your typical cookbook.Since it's a cookbook first, I've tried some of the recipes. If you're a vegan, there are a lot of good ones, especially a listing of several types of pilafs. If you're used to the standard rice pilafs offered in the US, you'd be surprised at what you can make. And how spicy some of them are. I've actually made it a part of my usual diet.As I am not a vegan, the lamb pilaf was a hit for me. I am addicted.To be honest, I've probably only tried about 1% of the recipes. I haven't even hit the dessert section yet. But the ones I've tried are already staples of my diet, mainly because I truly enjoy the flavors that are stars of the spices in these recipes.This is one great book, you are not a cook, and you are just interested in some of the cultural history of the area. The author, Kay Shaw Nelson, graduated with a degree in Russian studies, and is a political journalist, so her knowledge makes the cookbook that much more interesting. Oh, one more reason to love the book for me. The author is a fellow alumnus of Syracuse University. Go Orange!

In the acknowledgements, the author thanks two editors and her daughter for editorial assistance. I shudder to think what the first draft looks like if this is the triply edited version. I'm not as

well-informed as some reviewers, but even I found some significant errors and poor editorial choices.The "Lak Winter Stew" and the "Russian Cabbage Soup" are on facing pages which makes it very easy to determine that they are nearly identical (same ingredients except the Lak dish calls for butter while the Russian dish calls for vegetable oil *or* butter and the Lak dish calls for a large stalk of celery while the Russian dish calls for a medium one). If you're attempting to survey cuisines as varied as those of this region, don't waste space with duplicate recipes! I suspect the entire on-site research for this book occurred during the single press junket she mentions in the introduction.Also she says lobio (a mainstay bean in Georgian cooking) are red kidney beans, not small red beans. I cannot, however, accuse her of large scale mistranslation as the local names for most dishes and ingredients are completely omitted.I purchased this because I am fascinated with Georgian cooking and wanted to learn more about the surrounding region. I was also looking forward to the travelogue that accompanies recipes in many of my favorite cookbooks. There are better surveys of the region (I would recommend the chapter on this region from _Flatbreads and Flavors_ (Alford and Duguid)) and frankly the prose, while occasionally evocative, is ornate and poorly edited. I'll leave you with this quote:"Even before the domestication of animals. . . .early man relied on milk from his goats, sheep, or camels (p73)"

A

What a great looking book. My mouth watered as I looked at the cover.Kay Shaw Nelson is a student of Russian studies - thereby someone who really did research in the countries that this book covers and not just a compiler of other people's information. She even gives some reviews of places to eat in-country! She did a nice job of including literary references and short stories about some of the dishes. I'm no chef and I was able to make most of the items with ease. The tasks are easy to follow and replacements for some ingredients not easily found outside of the Caucasus are included.Caucasus food has great flavor and uses herbs and spices masterfully. It is healthy and tasty. There are many vegetarian options as well.Some of my favorites: page 165 rice-filled tomatoes, page 203 lavash (this actually tasted like lavash!), page 256 tan, page 42 cucumber-yogart dip, page 79 green beans and eggs.

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