



All About Braising: The Art of Uncomplicated Cooking

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The art of braising comes down to us from the earliest days of cooking, when ingredients were enclosed in a heavy pot and buried in the hot embers of a dying fire until tender and bathed in a deliciously concentrated sauce. Today, braising remains as popular and as uncomplicated as ever. Molly Stevens's *All About Braising* is a comprehensive guide to this versatile way of cooking, written to instruct a cook at any level. Everything you need to know is here, including:

a thorough explanation of the principles of good braising with helpful advice on the best cuts of meat, the right choice of fish and vegetables, and the right pots,
125 reliable, easy-to-follow recipes for meat, poultry, seafood, and vegetables, ranging from quick-braised weeknight dishes to slow-cooked weekend braises,
planning tips to highlight the fact that braised foods taste just as good, if not even better, as leftovers,
a variety of enlightened wine suggestions for any size pocketbook with each recipe.

All About Braising: The Art of Uncomplicated Cooking Details

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Nicole says

I was rather nonplussed when I was first given this book for my birthday. Not only are there not as many pictures as I usually like in my cookbooks, but, really, braising? A whole cookbook about braising? When am I going to want to braise something as opposed to the myriad other things I could be doing to food? Turns out, quite often.

This is hands down one of the most useful cookbooks I've been given in a while. Though there are not a lot of vegetarian recipes, each recipe usually includes enough vegetables to make an entire meal. Within each category of meat, Molly Stevens gives an wide breadth of flavors to choose from. Everything I've made from here has been tasty and satisfying, with the exception of the stuffed chicken with bacon (I think that's still better roasted, unless you have a tendency to dry out your birds with that method).

Stevens' ingredients are mostly of the everyday, well-stocked pantry variety that makes for easy grocery shopping and meal planning. The straightforward recipes and clear directions make this at most an intermediate-level cookbook that I feel most people comfortable in a kitchen could cook from with ease and comfort. Most everything pairs with a plainly cooked grain on the side to absorb the sauce, and there are wine recommendations with each recipe if you want to go down that alleyway. Good for both family meals and dinner parties, I wouldn't hesitate to recommend this book to any carnivore who enjoys cooking.

Ben says

While the book bills itself as "The Art of Uncomplicated Cooking", most of the recipes I've tried are reasonably complex. That being said, while one recipe I tried came out bland and underdone (based on the cooking time), other recipes have come out quite well.

Lauren says

This is my favorite cookbook ever. If you don't have this cookbook, you need to run out and buy it now. It is perfect for the cold weather we are having now. Braised dishes are great on a cold night. I mean, what could be better than a big, warm bowl of braised pork with cherry peppers and chorizo over creamy mashed potatoes when it is cold and nasty outside? I have never made anything out of here that I didn't like. Trust me. Go buy this book. You won't regret it.

Stephen says

This is the best book on braising I have ever read or ever expect to read. Some people are good cooks, some good teachers and a few good writers. Molly Stevens is all three, which is both unfair to the rest of us and a great blessing. I have been braising for fifty years and yet learned many techniques and some altogether new

recipes from this excellent book. The instructions are sensible and easy to follow. The breadth of coverage is impressive. And the excursions on how to buy particular cuts of meat and other ingredients are invaluable. It is easiest to praise writing which shares the reviewer's biases and prejudices; hers and mine are largely coincident: cooking from scratch, buying local, the importance of fresh ingredients. This book belongs on the shelf of every serious carnivorous cook.

Marc says

My best cookbook purchase in years. Great recipes with clear instructions but also useful tips on purchasing braising pans, meat cuts, you name it. A wide range of recipes from classic roasts to ribs, seafood and more.

I was inspired to find a book like this when my wife insisted on some roast beef and I balked at the over-boiled version she was used to. This turned a dish I dreaded to make (and eat) into something we all eagerly look forward to.

Highly recommend it. I've had it for about a year now and used many recipes. Haven't found one I don't like but my favorites are
Zinfandel pot roast with glazed carrots and sage and
Neapolitan Beef ragu

Veronique says

Plenty of delicious go-to recipes in this cookbook! Tried and true.

Pam says

Wonderful book!

There are six chapters: The Principles of Roasting, Beef & Lamb, Pork, Chicken & Poultry, Fish & Shellfish, and Vegetables & Fruit.

The first chapter discusses everything you wanted to know about roasting, from pans, to oven temperature, thermometers and more. Very informative.

The second chapter covers beef and lamb. I don't know how heavily I will use this since I usually buy the cheaper cuts of beef that are more inclined to be braised, which by the way, after spending just one evening curled up with this book, I immediately went on Amazon and ordered, All About Braising: The Art of Uncomplicated Cooking because if it was even half as good as this book, I needed it.

Third chapter – Pork. Every kind of pork you would ever want to roast, from tenderloin, to loin, to ham, and sausages. Along with the pork are various sauces and rubs and other accompaniments. I personally have first on my list the basic sear-roasted pork tenderloin with a quick vermouth pan sauce.

Fourth chapter – chicken & poultry. This right here is gold. I have every intention of trying every single one of these recipes, even the goose if I can find one. It starts with basic roast chicken, skillet roasted chicken, butterflied roast chicken, chicken pieces, basic sear-roasted chicken breasts, turkey, duck...and more. Lots more. These are techniques and recipes to master. One of the riffs on the basic roasted chicken is to serve the chicken with a green salad with a vinaigrette made from the pan drippings. What a great idea!!!

Fifth chapter – fish and shellfish. Another chapter that I'll be spending a lot of time with, with choices like: herb-roasted shrimp with pancetta, basic sear-roasted salmon fillets with arugula-pistachio pesto, and quick-roasted scallops with sriracha and lime are at the top of my list.

Chapter six is vegetables and fruit. Again, I'll be spending a lot of time here. Mustard-crusting roast potatoes is first on my list, and goose-fat-potatoes with rosemary are another reason to find a goose! I am intrigued by the slow-roasted grapes and maple-roasted apples with candied nuts just screams fall.

Seriously, I can not say enough good things about this big (573 pages), beautiful book.

Sam Weaver says

I've decided to include cookbooks on a separate shelf. Honestly, who reads a cookbook cover to cover? I will base my ratings solely on the recipes, which might cause a fluctuation in ratings from time to time. The first book is *All About Braising*.

Recipes attempted:

Sausages and Plums Braised in Red Wine *****

There are two key elements to a successful braise: 1) Juicy Meat and 2) Savory Sauce. This had them both. The plums were a perfect complement to the sweet Italian sausages. It was a quick meal with simple steps. It is already added to our dinner rotation.

David says

One of the finest cookbooks I have ever used. Recipes always work, and the discussions of theory and technique are first rate.

Barbara says

I purchased this book with my first set of enamel-covered cast iron dutch ovens. In the ensuing year I have made many of these recipes over and over, especially the braised short ribs and the roasted potatoes. I have yet to follow a recipe in this book and have it fail. Most have come out amazingly tasty and to raving reviews from my family and myself. The other lovely thing is that this cookbook teaches a method, not just recipes. Using the author's advice, I have made many dishes of my own based on her recipes and preparation methods. This style of cooking is very low and slow with a fair amount of prep work for the dishes, but once everything is in the oven I just go about my day and let the braising work its magic. These have been some of the best suppers I've had, hands down. This book is comprehensive in scope, but so easy to understand and follow. Everything is explained without any fuss or muss, as though a good friend were teaching you in their kitchen. If you buy one book on braising, this is definitely the one!

Cathy says

Ok, mostly I talk about fiction books *but* I want to take this moment to say, how much this book means to me. Over the holidays I received a Dutch Oven as a present. Unfortunately, I didn't have many recipes that required a Dutch Oven.

My recipe books have been a little like dating. I'll check them out but some were duds, too high maintenance or just so not my type. Bleh.

This book though? Is the one. I love it so much I want to marry it.

Ok, this doesn't say much about the book, but I can say without a doubt, if you are someone who considers Pop Tarts a fancy breakfast, you can braise with this book. It's AMAZING! Easy and delicious. I've yet to be disappointed by anything I cook.

Brenda Clark Thomas says

Lots of interesting facts besides great recipes.

Sarah says

I will be "reading" this book forever - she has a great discussion of the braising process: from choosing a pot, the browning, the aromatics, etc. Plus the vegetable section is extensive... braised leeks, braised cabbage - its all gorgeous!

James says

I'm a sucker for big flavor and slow cooking. This is got it all. Our favorites: short ribs braised in porter ale

with maple-rosemary glaze; sirloin pork chops braised with hot cherry peppers; country-style ribs braised with chipotle, roasted tomatoes, & red peppers; Moroccan spice-rubbed lamb shoulder chops; braised endive with Prosciutto. My god, this book is delicious.

Riona says

This is one of my absolute favorite cookbooks, especially in the colder months when all you want is to have something hot simmering on the stove or in the oven. Braises just scream "comfort food" to me, and almost every culture has braised dishes in their cuisine. There's great international representation here - Chinese red-cooked pork belly, French coq au vin, Vietnamese braised scallops, Italian ragus, Moroccan tagines, German sauerbraten, Mexican bisteces rancheros, Hungarian cabbage rolls, American pot roast... the list just goes on.

I've made a number of recipes from this book and so far everything has been fantastic. I won't be satisfied, though, until I cook everything in it. Here's a list of what I've tried:

Escarole Braised with Cannellini Beans (p. 53) - 4 stars - this was a great simple side dish, and the red pepper flakes add a nice kick.

Creamy Braised Brussels Sprouts (p.65) - 5 stars - I love brussels sprouts, and adding cream just makes anything better. This was really quick too.

Braised Leeks with Bacon & Thyme (p. 86) - 5 stars - Soooo good. I had hoped to have some leftovers to make the tart variation on the next page, but we ate them all. Next time I'll have to make a quadruple recipe, seriously.

Braised Halibut Steaks with Creamy Leeks (p. 99) - 4.5 stars - I made this with salmon steaks instead of halibut, but it was still great. Very rich, though.

Short Ribs Braised in Porter Ale with Maple-Rosemary Glaze (p. 247) - 5 stars - Perfect balance between sweet and savory, and the meat just fell off the bone.

Braised Pork Chops & Creamy Cabbage (p. 339) - 4 stars - The first thing I ever made from this book! Quite heavy, but really good.

There are dozens more recipes in here I'm dying to try, so I'll do my best to keep this review updated.
