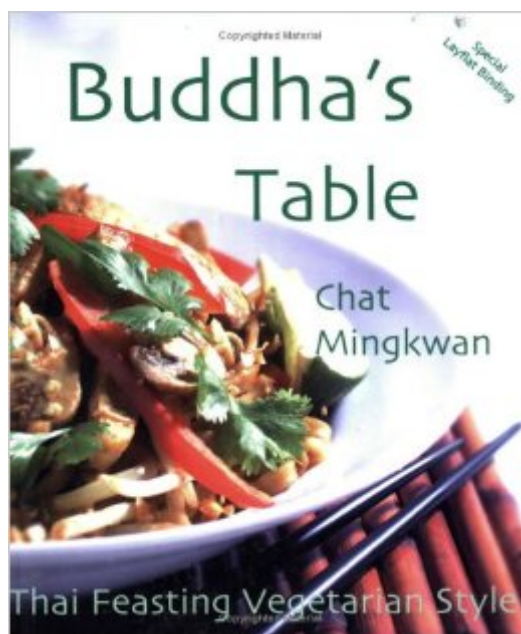


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Buddha's Table: Thai Feasting Vegetarian Style



Synopsis

For centuries, Thai vegetarian chefs have modified their meals to include only plant-based ingredients. This collection represents the most successful Thai recipes in terms of taste and execution for the home cook, adjusted to please healthy Western vegetarian tastes.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

`Budda's Table' by Chat Mingkwan looks like a typical `little cookbook' you commonly see published by Chronicle Books, some of which are decent and some of which are a waste of money compared to other titles available for a similar price. This book, published by a house with the incredibly modest name of `Book Publishing Company' out of Summertown, Tennessee, has lots to offer, even if it isn't published by Alfred A. Knopf, Harper Collins, or Artisan. Unlike the dominant cuisines of India, Thai cooking is not inherently vegetarian, and yet Buddhism, a religion with strong vegetarian tendencies is the most important religion in Thailand. This gives rise to the book's title and subtitle, `Thai Feasting Vegetarian Style'. This means that fish sauce, one of the most important Thai ingredients, has been removed from all recipes. This is probably about as dramatic as removing anchovies from all Italian dishes. Fortunately, the wealth of southeast Asian fermented bean pastes are up to filling in the gaps left by removing the famous `Nam Pla' from all recipes. This is not to say Chat Mingkwan has abandoned Thai traditional cooking. He begins his book with an excellent little guide to Thai ingredients which is no replacement for good references such as Bruce Cost's `Asian Ingredients', but it is an honest coverage of the field with a firm commitment to the belief that there

are a lot of Thai ingredients with which you cannot substitute and expect to achieve the right Thai taste. Foremost of these in my mind is galangal, a rhizome with some resemblance to ginger. But, based on the scientific names of the two plants, they are not closely related. They certainly do not belong to the same genus. Another unmistakable and unreplacable ingredient is tamarind.

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