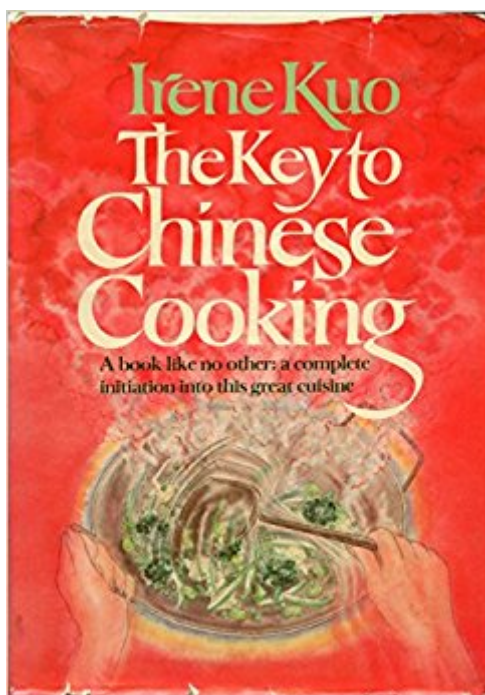


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# The Key To Chinese Cooking



## Synopsis

Illus. throughout. 6 1/8 x 9 1/4. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 532 pages

Publisher: Knopf; 1st edition (September 12, 1977)

Language: English

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Shipping Weight: 2.6 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 85 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #198,690 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #60 in Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Asian Cooking > Chinese #2131 in Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Regional & International

## Customer Reviews

This book taught me to cook. Not just to cook Chinese food, but to cook any kind of food. I have been using this book since I was 13 years old and I still use it all the time at 51. I have even purchased a 3rd copy that I refuse to use until my current copy has completely disintegrated. I just don't want to take the chance that one day I won't have a usable copy. I wish there was more information on Irene Kuo on the internet. I wish I could explain to her and her family what an impact this book has had on my life. This is how I learned to use a knife, to steam, to stir fry and to braise. Sure there are other great Chinese cookbooks. I strongly recommend anything by Fuchsia Dunlop. However, this book covers all the basic techniques and if you take the time to read the opening chapters you will have all the skills needed to follow any Chinese recipe. You'll even be able to change and adopt the basic recipes for a variety of ingredients.

I own many Asian cookbooks and I try a few recipes to "test the cookbook" before deciding whether it's a keeper. My pet peeve is when cookbook authors write cookbooks simply to sell cookbooks. They have to create new and innovative recipes just to fill and sell a new cookbook without being inspired, because all of their best recipes already appeared in previous editions. You end up with recipes like abalone braised in lotus leaves with an almond lychee reduction. Crazy! The book becomes filled with useless recipes with one or two good ones. This book is different- it has some

basic great recipes that a person would want to make regularly, and they are delicious! Of the hundreds of cookbooks I own, I have only been inspired to write a review about two of them and this is the only 5- star I gave. So far, the recipes I made are great, specifically the 1-2-3-4-5 Spareribs and the Chengdu Chicken.

I got my first copy of this book shortly after the first publication was released. I think it is the best English language Chinese cook book available. I have been using it for over 35 years. My original copy is beat up and is covered with soy sauce stains, The backing broke and the book was falling apart, but I spent some time fixing it with fiberglass mesh and construction adhesive, It is just now very worn, but serviceable. I bought a back up book from a couple of years ago, so I am OK. This copy was bought for a dear friend who was interested in the white cut chicken recipe. That recipe takes a factory chicken and makes into a thing to die for. Try it, you won't regret it. I'm a conservative guy and he's a liberal. I hope he can get beyond the politics and make good use of this book.

Having been lucky enough to purchase this thru at (what I consider) a reasonable price, I cannot praise this fabulous book enough. Irene Kuo wrote the finest book on Chinese cuisine I've ever had the pleasure to read and cook from. Especially wonderful recipes shine through in this comprehensive volume, such as Phoenix Dragon Chicken, Sweet and Sour Cured Garlic, Scallion Smoked Flounder, Stir Fried Curry Beef and my favorite, Szechuan Eggplants. A prime reason why this book continues to inspire 36 years after its initial publication is its honesty-nothing too overt, fancy or outlandish; just terrific Cantonese and other regional foods. This volume should never have gone out of print. I am lucky to add this to my cookbook library. Thank you, Mrs. Kuo.

Just as a disclaimer, I have the 1978 uk edition so I don't know if these things were present in the newer edition.\* Some ingredients use alternative names that most people (at least me) are not familiar with such as chinese cabbage(bok choy), celery cabbage (napa cabbage)\* Sherry, one of the main seasonings used in the book, is the popular western alternative to rice wine but rice wine should be fairly easy to obtain nowadays\* Some of the english names for dishes do not use the more common variant seen nowadays.\* IT'S OUT OF PRINT!Aside from these things I think this book is fantastic. The techniques remind me of my Chinese parents', right down to the almost excessive use of starch water and parboiling of vegetables. I highly doubt that I will ever feel the need to get another Chinese cookbook.

Some people want photos, I thought the line drawings were just as helpful. Maybe because there are lots of cooking demos online, video trumps photos every time. The book is very informative, I enjoy reading a little more each time I use a recipe. You will probably add more chili and garlic to the sauces, tastes have changed since the 1970's. The fundamentals are there, just adjust to taste. I wasn't sure what to expect. Mine is used, but in great condition as the seller described it would be. The hardback is similar to my hardback Mastering the Art of French Cooking; very good quality.

I've been looking for the ideal Chinese cookbook for years and this is as good as gets. I've just made my second meal from this book and I like it more and more each time I try a recipe. This is really one of the few books that addresses the foundations of Chinese techniques and give you a good introduction to theory and practice. And ...the food is good! Just not a nice recreation of Chinese restaurant food but what you would eat in China. I don't think that I will ever have to buy another Chinese cookbook.

a very good selection of older chinese restaurant foods you rarely find today with excellent directions for preparingg

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