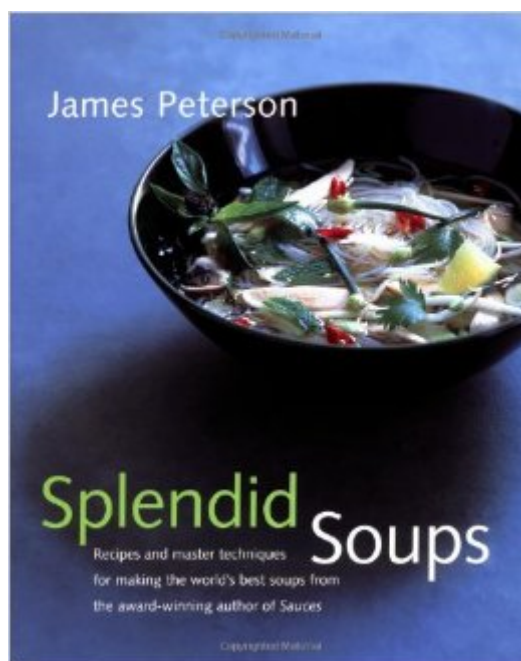


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Splendid Soups: Recipes And Master Techniques For Making The World's Best Soups



Synopsis

Praise for the fully revised and updated *Splendid Soups* "Jim Peterson's *Splendid Soups* is a comprehensive and mouthwatering atlas of the world of soup. It not only covers soups of all nationalities and every garnish, but provides a handy list of sources for every hard-to-find ingredient and kitchen tool, too. More importantly though, through his gargantuan world tour Jim empowers home cooks to strike out on their own and invent new soups. It just makes me want to get into the kitchen and start cooking!"
"SARA MOULTON, Host, The Food Network's *Cooking Live*; Executive Chef, *Gourmet* magazine; Food Editor, *Good Morning America*"
"We love James Peterson. *Splendid Soups* is a bountiful source of enticing ideas!"
"the moosewood collective Authors of the *Moosewood Restaurant Cookbooks*

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Customer Reviews

I was introduced to *Splendid Soups* in my second semester of culinary school - my chef told the class that "if you follow the directions, there's not a bad soup in the book"- and she was so right! You really don't need to be a chef to use this book - as all of my friends and family who I've given it to for gifts can attest! Very clear directions for each recipe, good discussions on when Peterson likes to serve each soup, great advice on how to play with each recipe to make it more your own (and great advice on "fixing the soup" if you aren't completely happy with the recipe exactly as followed) and even a wonderful section in the back with resources, patterns for improvising soups, and fundamental knowledge of how to make the fun extras, like flavored butters and croutons. I write for the *Dollar Stretcher* (a frugal living webzine) and I've recommended this book to thousands

of people, without reservation. If soup is part of your weekly menu (and for those of us trying to save money on food so we can buy more books, it is!) this is the first, last and best reference to have on your shelf. Many of the soups are very down-to-earth - try the wonderful French Onion (p.169) or White Bean and Vegetable Soup (p.197) or the Mushroom Veloute (p.163-164) if you want soups that freeze well and save tons of money from the grocery bill. There are also lovely soups for when company comes (like the Duck Consomme) and a whole section on Fruit Soups (which any child will love!). Perhaps my favorite thing of all about Splendid Soups, after the recipes, of course, is how Peterson tells you how he discovered each soup (hitchhiking to Paul Bocuse's restaurant for a meal that began with Foie Gras and Truffle Soup), mistakes he's made while preparing some (like buying a pumpkin too big for his oven)- you get to live vicariously through his background information. In all, a splendid book.

A hefty, comprehensive, door-stop of a book, this "soup-lopedia" includes every soup I'd ever had a hankering to make--"Sopa de Ajo"--Spanish-style garlic soup with an egg in it (I craved it after a trip to Madrid) and Dried Fruit Soup (which my Scandinavian grandmother made when I was growing up)--and every other broth-based dish under the sun. The histories of the soups and ingredients are so thorough and so fascinating that I felt like I was in a cooking class being taught by a wise, likeable teacher--and the photos of the soups were mouth-watering, and gave me serving suggestions. An A++ book--I'm giving it to several people for Christmas!

I am a self-described soup addict. I make soups at least once a week year round, even when the weather in my hometown is well above 100 degrees! This book is an excellent book, great for someone who has spent a lot of time making soups and is willing to put the time and effort into getting the ingredients, and doing the chopping and cooking that is required. It has nearly every soup imaginable in it and is great for coming up with great ideas for your own new recipes. However, the reason I can't give it 5 stars is that, as others have mentioned before, it does not go into intimate detail in the instructions, it includes some hard-to-find or largely unfamiliar ingredients, and some of the recipes are difficult. If you are a beginner, you should probably stay away from this book. If you are soup obsessed like me, this book is well worth buying and will become an invaluable source of information for you.

First of all I have to say that I am spanish and I am not writing in my mother tongue. So I have to apologise in advance for my poor English skills. When I read a review I like to know who write it in

order to guess what he expected to find in the book and what sort of judgment he is going to give us. I am a Spanish Food Engineer. I am not a professional chef but, I dare say, I am an advanced amateur cook. I read the cookbooks from cover to cover at least twice. I underline it and even I compare the recipes with other books. I don't want a compilation of recipes that I left in my shelves for checking a recipe from time to time. What I expected to find in this book was: 1-A classification of soups. 2-A correct description of the techniques for cooking the soups. 3-A collection of really splendid soups. I don't mind how many recipes the book has, but I mind the quality of each recipe. I want a perfect recipe for each soup. Whether I like or not the soup, once I have cooked it, it depends on my personal taste. So with this in mind, here is my review.

1-The book is organized by ingredients (meat soups, fish soups, vegetable soups...). It makes easier to find a recipe if you have some ingredients in the refrigerator and you want to know what to do with them. But it should be arranged by technique as the book "Professional Chef" (CIA) does (consommés, hearty broths, cream soups, puree soups and bisques). You can't remember all the recipes but you can remember the techniques. This is the most didactic way of organizing the book if you want to read it from cover to cover.

2-The general description of the techniques are omitted. The author goes straight to the description of the preparation of each recipe. What is good if you want a compilation of recipes, but it isn't very useful if you really want to learn how to cook soups at your will. By the other hand, the description of the preparation of the recipes are detailed and correct. Neither it is "over-detailed" nor ambiguous.

3-At first sight, the number of recipes seems to be huge. But once you have read some chapters you will realise that some recipes are almost the same. Organizing the book by ingredients it's easy to repeat recipes because you only need to change an ingredient. For example, "Miso Soup" and "Miso soup with egg plant", the first one appears in the chapter of broths and the second one appears in the chapter of vegetables. But both are the same. Another example "Puree of Artichoke", "Puree of Asparagus", "Puree of Cauliflower"...etc. The number of recipes has been falsely increased.

4-I can't say the recipes don't work, but I can't say the recipes are excellent. In some cases I am sure the recipe is wrong. As I said I am Spanish, and I can't assure that Gazpacho doesn't contain neither chicken broth nor lime. I understand the author wants to transform/interpret some exotic/ethnic soups. But the changes should not become the dish into another thing. Another example is the Bisque. He uses vegetable puree to thicken the soup. By definition a Bisque is a soup that only contains crustaceans and the vegetables are only used to give a subtle taste and it should not distort the crustacean taste. I wouldn't say that from the 400 soups all of them are "splendid". On the contrary, only a few ones are good (but not excellent). He should be more concentrated on the quality rather than in the quantity.

5-There are few photographs (8 pages). The "soups" showed by

these photos has got so many solids and so few liquid that you would need a fork and a knife for eating it. So it isn't soups, because you don't use a spoon for eating it. 6-The style of writing is a bit arrogant. I agree with other review. He uses a lot the word "I". I think he is too worry about demonstrating that he has cooked each soup, because he repeat many times "Each time I cook it..." "I like to eat it.." "I can't image a summer without it.." and so on. I don't think he has cooked all the recipes, or at least, I don't think he cook the soups with frequency he try to show. The book contains 400 recipes, really do you think that he eats so often all them during the 365 days of the year?. On the other hand, he is too precise with very tiny details (add the parsley just 1 minute before serving, for example) but he is too loose with other matters. Does he pretend to be exquisite? an epicurean? 7-This book has got some good points. The chapter of ethnic soups is excellent. He describes some ethnic and exotic ingredients and also incorporate soups from Thailand, Vietnam, Korea, Japan, China, India Morocco, Mexico etc... After reading the book you will be able to prepare a soup freely just watching what you have got in the refrigerator. All in all, I doesn't believe it's a masterpiece as other reviewers does. The recipes aren't totally perfect and if you are purist the book will disappoint you. But if you aren't a purist, if you doesn't look for the perfect soup, and if you only want to find a recipe and cook it from time to time, this is your book.

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