

BOOK REVIEW

The Artful Palate: A cookbook benefiting the children of the Relief Nursery

Appropriately named, The Artful Palate is an attractive tome that blends contributed recipes and art into a cookbook published to raise funds for the Relief Nursery in Eugene, Oregon. The private, non-profit agency was established to prevent child abuse and neglect by providing services that address the needs of young children and their families. It focuses on preserving families by offering services, support, respite care, and crisis intervention.

The full-color art on the hardcover of the 8x9-inch book immediately captures your eye. A white cloth-covered table is laden with vegetables accented by a large glass vase of oranges. Behind the table, a heart-shaped red pepper wreath and a pair of red boots and a blue jacket hang on opposite sides of a simple coat rack nailed to the wall. The sun casts its reflection on the wall through a window. The picture is homey, artful, and scrumptious, characteristics of the recipes contained in The Artful Palate.

The format of the book makes finding the recipes easy. Each of the nine chapters has a separate table of contents with a full color cover sheet, some with original art created just for the book. An extensive index lists the recipes by name and by ingredients. The book is also easy to use, since it lies flat when open.

As for the recipes, in Starters and Sippers you'll find Chevre, Tomato and Red Onion Tart in a Cornmeal Crust, Smoked Salmon and Onion Cheesecake, Wild Mushroom Puff Pastry Straws, Sesame Citrus Shrimp, Frozen Peach Granitas, and Ginger Lemonade with Lemon Ice Cubes.

Rise and Shine features Asparagus Souffle, Mushroom Sausage Strudel, Pumpkin Pancakes with Maple Pecan Butter, Apple-Cider Biscuits, and Raspberry-Hazelnut Muffins. Lunch with the Girls offers Mixed Baby Greens with Blue Cheese and Grilled Pears, Salad Nicoise Sandwich, Crab Quiche with Mushroom Crust, Pear Soup with Fresh Ginger, and Corn and Butternut Squash Chowder with Goat Cheese Croutons.

Dress It Up provides recipes for a variety of sauces, dressings, marinades, and rubs, including Pioneer Blueberry Ketchup and Pear Horseradish Mustard. Among the recipes in On The Side, Lobster Mashed Potatoes and French Potato Bake stand out. The Main Event contains an interesting array of meat, poultry, seafood and vegetarian entrees including Stuffed Chicken Breasts with Pears, Apples, and Gouda Cheese, Sturgeon with Raspberry Garlic Sauce, Italian Stuffed Flank Steak (stuffed with roasted red peppers and prosciutto), Lemon-Herb Beef Pot Roast, and Sage Crusted Pork Chops with Parmesan Cheese.

Celebrating Children offers a variety of child-friendly recipes, Cream of the Crop provides recipes from local food professionals, and The Grande Finale ends the book on a sweet note.

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