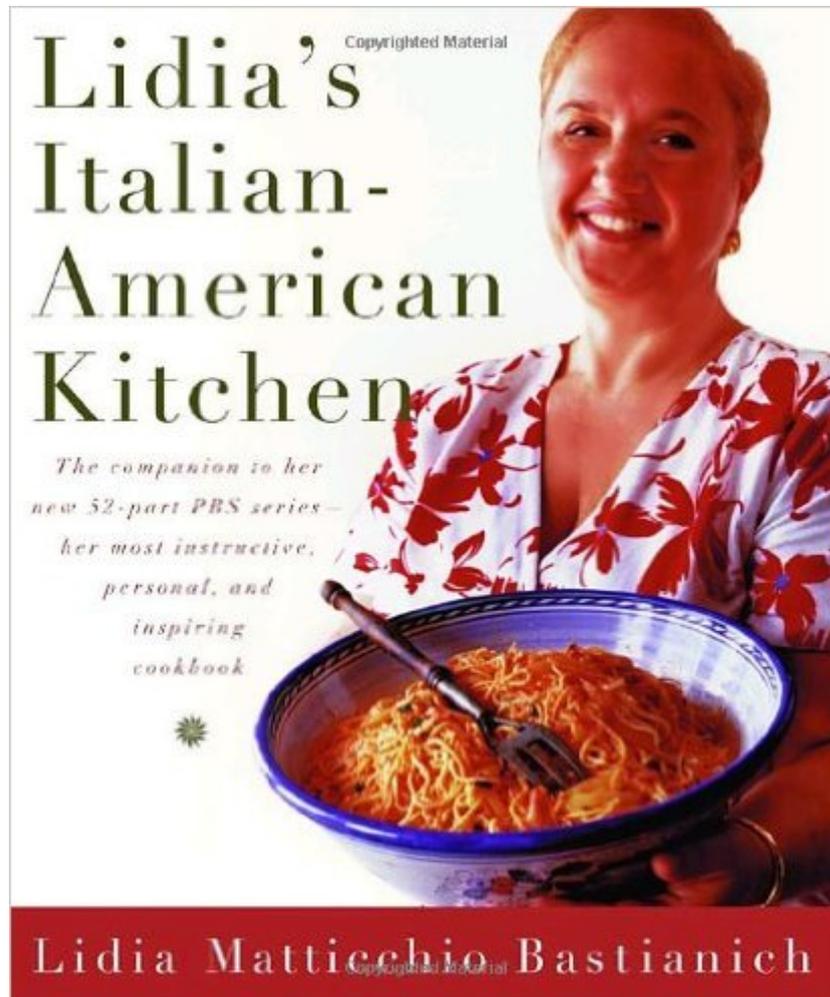


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# Lidia's Italian-American Kitchen



## Synopsis

Lidia Bastianich, loved by millions of Americans for her good Italian cooking, gives us her most instructive and personal cookbook yet. Focusing on the Italian-American kitchen—the cooking she encountered when she first came to America as a young adolescent—she pays homage to this cuisine of adaptation born of necessity. • But she transforms it subtly with her light, discriminating touch, using the authentic ingredients, not accessible to the early immigrants, which are all so readily available today. The aromatic flavors of fine Italian olive oil, imported Parmigiano-Reggiano and Gorgonzola dolce latte, fresh basil, oregano, and rosemary, sun-sweetened San Marzano tomatoes, prosciutto, and pancetta permeate the dishes she makes in her Italian-American kitchen today. And they will transform for you this time-honored cuisine, as you cook with Lidia, learning from her the many secret, sensuous touches that make her food superlative. You'll find recipes for Scampi alla Buonavita (the garlicky shrimp that became so popular when Lidia served the dish at her first restaurant, Buonavita), Clams Casino (with roasted peppers and good American bacon), Caesar Salad (shaved Parmigiano makes the difference), baked cannelloni (with roasted pork and mortadella), and lasagna (blanketed in her special Italian-American Meat Sauce). But just as Lidia introduced new Italian regional dishes to her appreciative clientele in Queens in the seventies, so she dazzles us now with pasta dishes such as Bucatini with Chanterelles, Spring Peas, and Prosciutto, and Long Fusilli with Mussels, Saffron, and Zucchini. And she is a master at teaching us how to make our own ravioli, featherlight gnocchi, and genuine Neapolitan pizza. The key to her delectable fish and meat cooking is the aromatic vegetables that so often form an integral part of the dish—sole with oregano, vidalias, and tomatoes; tenderloin with potatoes, peppers, and onions; sausages with bitter broccoli. Try her version of scallopine with sautéed lemon slices, garlic slivers, capers, and green olives—you'll be hooked. Soups are Lidia's specialty, particularly hearty bean and pasta soups—meals in themselves. And you can top off a Lidia feast with traditional Italian-American favorites, such as a perfect Zabaglione or cannoli, or one of her own creations—Lemon Delight or Roasted Pears and Grapes. Laced with stories about her experiences in America and her discoveries as a cook, this enchanting book is both a pleasure to read and a joy to cook from.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 464 pages

Publisher: Knopf; 1 edition (October 23, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 037541150X

ISBN-13: 978-0375411502

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 1.4 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.7 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (130 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #96,957 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #97 in [Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Italian Cooking](#) #320 in [Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Regional & International > European](#)

## Customer Reviews

Wow, what a great Italian cookbook, the best I have seen-ever. The directions are fantastic, if you follow everything she says you will make the most unbelievable tasting dishes, you almost feel high from the flavors you can create with this book. You will not want to, nor will you have to go out to dinner. There are tons of recipes that I have always wanted to make - chicken scaprellio, fried mozzarella, calzones, every scallopine dish ever, grilled and marinated calamari. All these and so much more are in this book. So far (in the past week) I have tried; Calzones, Gnocchi, Tomato sauce, Ravioli with spinach, Chicken scallopine with peppers, mushroom and tomato, Chicken breast in a light lemon-herb sauce (was like an oregano), stuffed artichokes. Every dish was like a dream, I can't wait until I can prepare new recipes. Nothing is too heavy, the oil amounts are perfect, not too rich, or too weak. Can't say enough good things about it, just buy it and you will see!

Every so often a cookbook comes along with recipes that not only inspire the reader, but also provide such logical yet intuitive preparations that he or she can envision the final product. As an Italian American who has taken up the heritage of reproducing my grandmother's great dishes, this book not only has recipes that I remember from my childhood, but many that I still make today. Sunday Pasta Dinner with pork in the gravy? It's there. Bracciole and meatballs--the best I've ever made. I just finished a bowl of Pasta e Fagiolo-- my grandmother's recipe--and it's in this book. To sum up: forget writing out all those family recipes to pass on to your children. Buy them the book and annotate it personally. You can't do better than this.

Everyone knows that Lidia Bastianich knows Italian cuisine, but is this new cookbook of hers something you would want to have in your Italian cookbook collection? This cookbook was created from her popular television show, and in it Lidia shares the type of recipes she first found when

arriving in America as a young woman. The recipes are pretty typical of basic Italian American cuisine, and you will find such standards as "Rigatoni alla Boscaiola", and "Bistecca alla Pizzaiola" throughout the book. I did not find any recipe in this book that I have not heard of before, although some were prepared a little differently than I am used to. Almost all of these recipes would be right at home on my Italian Mother-In-Law's kitchen table, and could easily be reproduced by a cook with minimal experience. Peppered throughout the book are instructions with photographs of some basic kitchen skills that a novice cook would find very helpful. The photographs, although not plentiful enough for my taste are very attractive and will cause you to start planning your next Italian meal. Something I did find in this book was that all ingredients listed would be available to everyone which was not so in Lidia's previous books. In my opinion, although I did not find anything new or unique in Lidia's new book, if you enjoy Italian American food than this is one of the best references you will find available at this time.

I am an Italian American who grew up helping my mother cook. While I was a professional chef for many years and have maintained my interest in food after I moved on to a non-cooking career, I lost my touch with the foods of my youth. Lidia has given all my childhood memories back to me and then some. The recipes are authentic because they turn out perfectly and they taste like I remember them. Best of all is their utter simplicity. Lidia's talent comes from combining a few very fresh ingredients using proper technique into a mouth watering dish. Anyone who has seen the show knows the passion that Lidia has for food. Just watching her enjoy the dish she has prepared can make you hungry. Well, this passion spills over to the book in every recipe and in every description or cooks note in the book. If you love Italian American food and want to get as close to authentic as you can get, then buy this book.

If you've ever been to Felidia and seen and spoken even a brief hello to Lidia Bastianich you'll know you need to own ALL of her books. This wonderful third book of hers brings you back to your days (in my case Forest Hills, Queens) when stuffed mushrooms, baked clams, and lasagna were heaven on earth to you and wonderful weekly as well as weekend feasts. Just reading the recipes and you know they will turn out exactly the way they should. Follow them to Italian enchantment. Read all about Lidia and her life. It, like her recipes are down to earth and passionate. Beside food, Lidia extols all the wonders of family gathering, working together, making life delicious. You can just picture her on the wagon going to market when she was little. She was imbued with the wonders of food, its delights, and preparation from the time she was very young so it is no wonder all of her

recipes are so enjoyable and accurate you don't know which to start with first. Start with the first one and just go on until you have made the last one. You will have not only read and followed an entire book, you will have made it a permanent part of your life. Thank you Lidia. I anxiously await the next one.

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