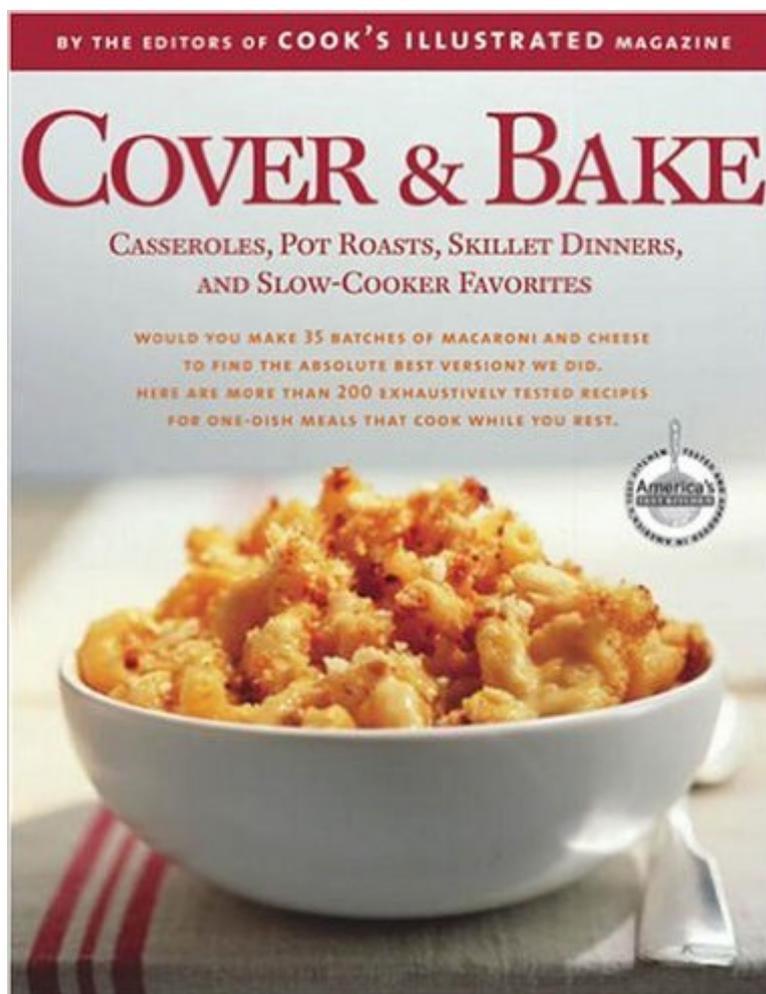


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Cover & Bake (Best Recipe)



Synopsis

This cookbook presents more than 200 one-dish recipes, including such traditional favorites as lasagna, pot roast, chicken pot pie, and baked macaroni and cheese.

Book Information

Hardcover: 338 pages

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Customer Reviews

I own all 12 volumes of the "Best Recipe" cookbook series as well as all other volumes issued by Cook's Illustrated. I purchased all of them as they were issued. When the fourth volume in the Best Recipe series, "American Classics", was issued, their began to emerge complaints concerning Cook's repeating recipes from volume to volume. The tacit accusation was that Cook's was dishonestly repackaging already published material for additional profits. The review by Hoc Stercus, below, seems to be levelling this same accusation at the current volume, "Cover and Bake". I would like to put this notion to rest once and for all. Each of the issued volumes (as does "Cover and Bake") has presented a plethora of new recipes and useful culinary information. They have also included pertinent recipes (and other information) tested and presented in previous volumes in the series, as they should. For example the best recipes for stove-top and baked macaroni and cheese were presented way back in the first volume of the series. Since the subject of "Cover and Bake" is just these sorts of recipes, would it be fair of Cook's Illustrated to omit these classic casserole recipes and refer the reader to a previous volume? This would be the height of dishonesty and profit grubbing. Or do you think perhaps that Cook's, for the sake of novelty, should offer a recipe for mac & cheese other rthan the best the've developed to date? When I want the best

recipe for fried chicken, I would be disappointed if it did not appear in the volume "American Classics" simply because it was published at an earlier date in the first book in the series. I expect such classic recipes to appear in all of the volumes to which they are appropriate. There is inevitably some overlap in volume coverage (e. g., mac & cheese is a casserole and an American classic and a pasta dish. It should and does appear in all of those volumes). It is a matter of convenience and honesty that Cook's does not force the reader to purchase additional volumes just in order to acquire all of the recipes in a given area of the individual cook's interest. If one does have all or many of the volumes in the series, should you really have to use detective work in order to determine in which of the 12 volumes the best recipe for brownies might be? It should be in every volume in which the recipe is appropriate. Thankfully it is. As an avid home cook and having been associated with professional cooking, in one form or another, for over thirty years, I cannot recommend this cookbook (or any other in "The Best Recipe" series) too highly. Though my library contains well over 1,000 cookbooks, the cookbooks in "The Best Recipe" series are the ones I most highly recommend. I have by now cooked hundreds of recipes from the volumes in this series and have never met with any thing but absolute success. The instructions and testing information for each recipe are so thorough and detailed, that even in areas where you might differ on matters of purely subjective taste (degree of spiciness for example), you'll know precisely the adjustments that need to be made without fear of jeopardizing the outcome of the recipe as a whole. Anthony Bourdain, in his excellent, but rigorous and highly professional new French bistro cookbook, "Les Halles, recommends only three "Source Materials" as further reading. One by Joel Robuchon, another by Paul Bocuse, but also "The Best Recipe-Cook's Illustrated". If you are interested in casseroles and other one pot dishes that are as easy to prepare as they can be, without compromising taste and having to resort to questionable and unnecessary prepackaged ingredients then do not hesitate to purchase this book. You will be well rewarded, not only because you'll have at your command the multi-tested best classic and neo-classic recipes possible, but also because of all the useful testing results for common supermarket items and kitchen equipment and appliances that you'll have at your disposal.

I love to cook. I love to eat good food. But, I have a job, a preschooler, an old house, elderly relatives that need my help...the list goes on. Life is too busy for all of us and we are all guilty of making poor food choices because of our lack of time. I'm not going to repeat the praise offered by other reviewers; I concur with all of it. The reason why people should buy this book (or give as a gift) is because each and every recipe has detailed instructions for making these dishes ahead of time and refrigerating or freezing them. Most of the dishes can be frozen for at least one month, many for

two or even three months. And, best of all, they taste great no matter when they eat them. This cookbook has made my busy life simpler. I love to share good food with my friends and family, and Cover & Bake makes that easy to do. I have relied on recipes from Cook's Illustrated for years and now, when I'm at a time in my life where time is scarce, I can continue to produce great food in a short period of time. Just a sampling of how I've been able to utilize this book: 1. Spend one day every month preparing 4-5 casseroles that go straight into the freezer. 2. Make one "fresh" casserole each week that is eaten right away. 3. Prepare the food for a party 2-3 days in advance so my final hours before the party are focused on cleaning up after my preschooler! 4. Share one casserole each week with elderly relatives; I can even make up individual sized portions easily. 5. Made a few casseroles for a friend's freezer while she was recuperating in the hospital. 6. Shared a few casseroles with a friend who was at home with her new baby. This is a great cookbook to have, and great cookbook to give away. I am excited by it.

The Cooks Illustrated web-site said that over 60% of the recipes in this book are new. I only have one other CI book, but I get the magazine (for a long time), and most of them are new to me. I am very happy with this cookbook. I have cooked from it several times a week since I received it 2 months ago. So far, I would like to make most of the recipes again. A few I didn't care for, but probably because they were not my tastes, not because they were bad recipes. The techniques used in this cookbook are great and can be used in your own recipes. For example, they suggest to only partially cook raw chicken in your sauce, etc., as opposed to adding diced cooked chicken, like so many casserole recipes require. The chicken tastes so much better this way. In addition to casserole recipes, there are great recipes for making meals all in one skillet, recipes for using in your slow cooker, and some great breakfast dishes. There is also a good chapter on side dishes. Another feature I appreciate is the "planning ahead" that accompanies most recipes. It tells you exactly what can be done ahead, and how to adjust the cooking time if you do. This is something they rarely discuss in their magazine, and I am happy they tackled this, because it will be very helpful for entertaining. There are recipes using meat, poultry and seafood. There are also quite a few good vegetarian recipes, like tamale pie, vegetable pot pie, sopa seca, plus side dishes and some of the breakfast casseroles. They say in the book that they made some of these recipes from scratch, and I believe it. There is some real creativity in here, while at the same time you are getting recipes for some old standards you would expect, like mac n' cheese and pot pies. If you like casserole type dishes, and/or if you like Cook's Illustrated recipes, I highly recommend this book. It is a new favorite of mine.

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