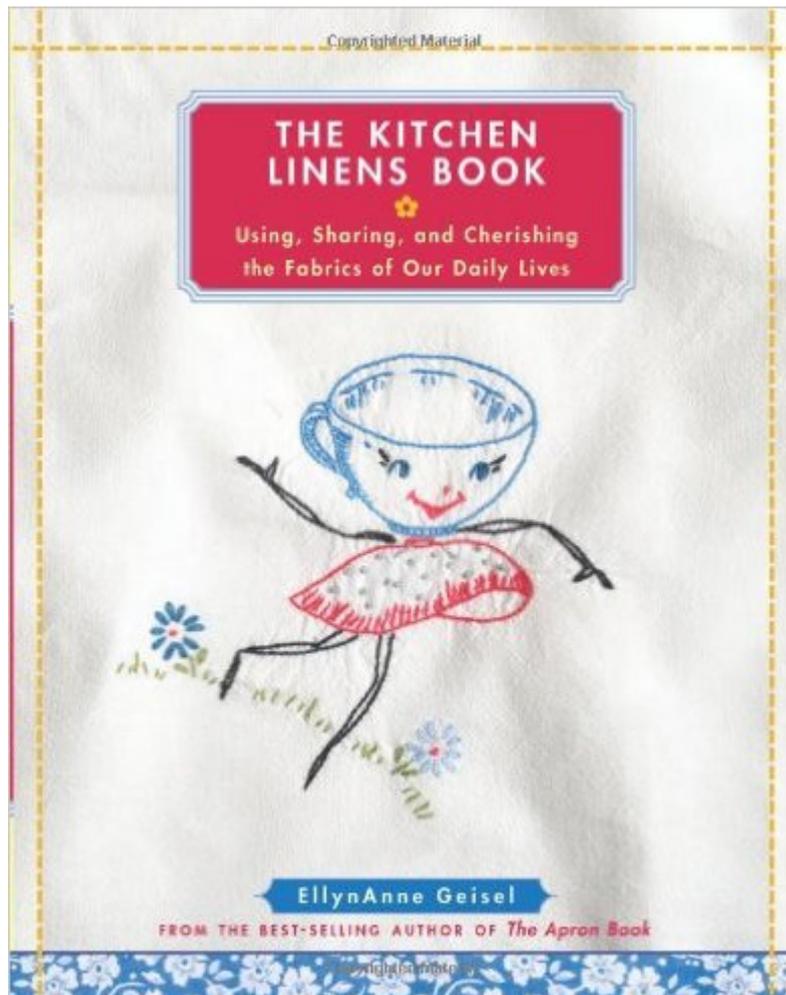


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# The Kitchen Linens Book: Using, Sharing, And Cherishing The Fabrics Of Our Daily Lives



## Synopsis

Gather 'round! The endearing follow-up to *The Apron Book* is now served. EllynAnne Geisel graces us with her new treasure, *The Kitchen Linens Book*. It's a lovely treat. Family kitchens are where our days begin and end. And one constant is threaded among the people, the stories, and the moments: America's kitchen linens. If only these prized pieces could talk. *The Kitchen Linens Book* invites women of all ages to visit with the past. In this book, Geisel gives us an up-close look at tablecloths, dishtowels, and napkins with details and histories as fine as the stories themselves. Embroidered or hemstitched, linens or oilcloths--these are the fabrics and the memories of our mothers and grandmothers. And each one has an endearing story and a vivid history.\*The book features over 20 projects and 8 recipes.\* The book includes a classic Butterick transfer pattern for a vintage kitchen towel motif, circa 1945.\* Rich photography highlighting every detail accompanies stories passed from generation to generation.\* EllynAnne's passion for finding and saving linens from flea markets, estate sales, and antique stores will inspire you to dig through your own closets and cupboards.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*The Kitchen Linens Book* is a tribute to the past - to the women who made, used and loved their linens. EllynAnne encourages her readers to embrace the memories these linens hold, appreciate their handiwork, and "go green by going vintage." This is a beautiful book, worthy of sitting on anyone's coffee table. Don't, however, gloss over the stories in light of the stunning photography -

they are a must read. Being from the South myself, I have to tip my bonnet to EllynAnn. I felt like I was sitting in her kitchen and listening to her tell stories of her family (and others). The writing is so warm and friendly, you almost forget you are reading a book and not in her company. Additionally, I love the stories written by other women that she has woven throughout the pages. There are also tips, tricks, recipes and craft suggestion. But the heart and soul of this book, in my opinion, are the testimonies she gives about her tablecloths, napkins, dishtowels, aprons and more. Every word she writes drips with her love and admiration of the times in which the linens were made, the hard work that went into making them, and the lives their previous owners led. To be fair, there was a disappointment. There were suggestions and ideas that she mention (like layering her linens) that sound amazing, but I could not picture how to do it (and I desperately want to know so I can recreate it) but there were no images of how this was done. It seems, considering how many lovely pictures this book contains, that there would be more pictures of the ideas she discusses. Nevertheless, I adore this book. I am encouraged to pick up a little embroidery of my own. Maybe, a few generations from now, some woman will use my tea towel and honor my life the way EllynAnne has done for generations past. This book is delightful and a must-have for your book collection.

LibraryThing Book Review - The Kitchen Linens Book by EllynAnne Geisel  
Note to readers: This book was received as part of the Early Reviewer's Group on LibraryThing. My thanks to LT and the publishers for a copy of the book. This review can also be found on LT. This book is a celebration of the everyday textiles which are taken for granted, used, abused and often thrown out. Interspersed with memories from a range of people, a few recipes and ideas for using vintage linens, this is a sweetly nostalgic trip through the author's collection, and by extension, lifestyle. If you find the thought of entertaining friends with afternoon tea, dished up on a table dressed with hand-embroidered tablecloths and linen napkins, whilst wearing a 1950's apron completely alien, this is not the book for you. However, if you are interested in a celebration of an area of handwork that is often overlooked then this may well be of interest. This is not a serious text on textile history or sociology however. The author gives a range of ideas for making use of vintage linens of all kinds, and many memories are shared of these pieces being used and loved over generations. One minor quibble - the author describes Scottish Terriers as being an English-bred dog. I think an entire nation of Scots may be offended by that one!

I was fortunate to find this book for far less than the cover price and bought it initially because of the

laundry tips for vintage linens in the back (though this, rather uselessly, refers to a product for which absolutely no sourcing information is given). There are some good things in this book - it is replete with vintage linens to some extent, and there are some good informational pages in relation to how to identify different types of vintage linens. There's also a single-use reproduction vintage pattern sheet in the back, which is a nice inclusion. Peppered throughout the book are accounts of other women and how linens connected them to their families and past. However, I found the book incredibly frustrating. First of all, whoever did the layout really needs to go back to school - there are constantly instances throughout the book where you're reading something from the author's hand, which is then interrupted mid-sentence with a one or two-page spread by someone else, only to continue - again mid-sentence of course - several pages later. Since the book is written almost like a long essay, this becomes almost infuriatingly interruptive. What I found equally annoying is the author's constant referral to a plethora of parties she hosts and attends - ranging from the informal get-togethers with friends to what, by her accounts, are occasions/events of high-society hobnobbing - yet there are no pictures of them anywhere in the book! Not a single picture of the author attending or hosting a party where one could actually see the supposed juxtaposition of linens she keeps claiming are her specialty. There are only 2 pictures in the entire book that show her standing next to a table and neither is particularly inspiring or remarkable - especially not the one at the end which was evidently taken during some kind of home renovations she mentions because it basically looks like a tablecloth on a big cardboard box or card table with a mishmash of plates that are anything but interesting or nice. She also talks about her collections as though speaking to someone who is familiar with her stash. She writes lovingly of items she cherishes - but then no pictures of them are included. And while there are some nice vintage photographs of what one assumes are family members of hers or pictures of her own past, there are no descriptions, no dates - really a misstep in my opinion. Another thing that I found both ridiculous and irritating is her continuous referral to "European" family members - as though bestowing some sort of aristocratic cache, when one must wonder whether she's simply unwilling to admit to German relatives or otherwise is making up said ancestry to give herself more panache. Overall, what I enjoyed most about the book were the accounts of people other than the author herself - some heart-warming stories about a cloth embroidered by a mother that has long since passed away but which still evokes emotion; a lovely account of a wedding anniversary that brought together the linens and china of years and years of collecting. I think the book does have some interesting/beautiful linens in them, but since the book isn't just about collecting them but purports to speak about how linens weave in and out of our lives, families and past, I feel that there should've been more pictures of

how these linens are/were used. The book ends up more like a personal scrapbook that the author was able to get published on account of the success she's had with previous books, rather than based on merit. I'm glad I got this book for \$5 plus tax because any more than that would've seemed like a waste to me.

EllynAnne Geisel is an expert in the appreciation of vintage fabric and this new book is a great treasure. The Kitchen Linens Book, brings new life back to our old beautiful kitchen items.

EllynAnne creates a style and art form, with color and texture from antique designs, that will send you hunting for old linens to spice up the elegance in your home. Her recipes will inspire you entertain with a fresh 1950's style and class, from picnics and tailgates to High Tea and Garden Parties. This book will make a lovely gift for a girlfriend, mother, sister, daughter: creating connections through the memories and the fabric of our lives we cherish. This book is a must have, if you love entertaining, very HIP.

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