



The Art of Simple Food II: Recipes, Flavor, and Inspiration from the New Kitchen Garden

By Alice Waters

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Alice Waters, the iconic food luminary, presents 200 new recipes that share her passion for the many delicious varieties of vegetables, fruits, and herbs that you can cultivate in your own kitchen garden or find at your local farmers' market.

A beautiful vegetable-focused book, *The Art of Simple Food II* showcases flavor as inspiration and embodies Alice's vision for eating what grows in the earth all year long. She shares her understanding of the whole plant, demystifying the process of growing and cooking your own food, and reveals the vital links between taste, cooking, gardening, and taking care of the land. Along the way, she inspires you to feed yourself deliciously through the seasons. From Rocket Salad with Babcock Peaches and Basil to Moroccan Asparagus and Spring Vegetable Ragout to Chicken with 40 Cloves of Garlic, Alice shares recipes that celebrate the ingredients she loves: tender leaf lettuces, fresh green beans, stone fruits in the height of summer, and so much more. Advice for growing your own fruits and vegetables abounds in the book—whether you are planting a garden in your backyard or on your front porch or fire escape. It is gleaned from her close relationships with local, sustainable farmers.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

ALICE WATERS is the owner of Chez Panisse Restaurant and Café in Berkeley, California. She founded the Edible Schoolyard Project and has received the French Legion of Honor and three James Beard Awards. Her most recent books are the *New York Times* bestsellers *40 Years of Chez Panisse* and *The Art of Simple Food*, as well as *In the Green Kitchen* and *The Edible Schoolyard: A Universal Idea*.

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From the introduction, *My Kitchen Garden*:

I started my kitchen garden because I was longing for mesclun, that very particular French salad made of distinctive sweet and bitter greens and herbs. I had been daunted by the thought of growing food, but then, driven by the desire for that flavor from Nice, I turned my backyard into a salad garden for the restaurant. My success surprised and delighted me. I was so excited to have my yard filled with the lettuces I loved.

You do not need a large backyard to start a garden. There are many other underused locations waiting just for you: balconies and windowsills, rooftops, vacant lots—and schoolyards! Tragically, supermarkets have numbed us with the convenience of the same mass-produced fruits and vegetables year-round—to the point that most of us consider a garden unnecessary. Growing a few lettuces or tomatoes is pleasurable, but it is so much more than that—for the future of the planet, it is a necessity that we become caretakers of the land. Fortunately, this is easy to do—and affordable, too.

We have been thoroughly indoctrinated from childhood to think that we can't grow our own food—or cook, for that matter—because it is too much work and takes too much time, that the climate is not right, or that there isn't enough room. But that is not so. When I was very young, my family had a victory garden in our New Jersey backyard, and we were not alone. With Eleanor Roosevelt leading the charge with her garden on the White House lawn, more than twenty million victory gardens were planted during World War II, and they produced more than nine million tons of fresh vegetables. I find it incredibly inspiring that the White House now has a kitchen garden again, after too many years—especially now, when so many of us want to grow beautiful edible plants instead of lawns.

The lettuce garden in my backyard moved to a farm long ago, but my kitchen garden continues to grow. The grassy area of my tiny yard gets smaller and smaller every year. But I couldn't live without my beds of lettuces! Herbs are planted throughout; I depend on them daily. I let rocket reseed itself all over the garden to eat young in salads, with its flowers sprinkled over, or wilted in pasta sauce when it matures. In summer, I grow cherry tomatoes and beans. In fall and winter, I have plots of chicories, kales, and chard. There is plenty of fruit, too—a dwarf apple and a large Gravenstein, a small Meyer lemon, a kumquat, a Fuyu persimmon, a bay tree, and a small thicket of raspberry canes. I tuck edible plants in among the roses, and they are as beautiful as their neighboring flowers. I have a couple of chairs and a small table, and a little grill is set up nearby so I can cook and eat right in the garden. I love to watch the ebb and flow of growth: tiny sprouts as they push up from the soil, blue borage flowers reaching out to bees and birds, the burgeoning harvest as it ripens. I feel connected to the whole cycle of life.

My own path to gardening has been through taste. I am forever falling in love with the fantastic range of varieties available for almost every food plant. Learning to discern these subtleties of texture and

flavor—learning to distinguish an Elberta peach from a Sun Crest—is a thrill for me. Using hand-selected produce that is still full of life and vitality, just picked from the vine or pulled from the ground, is what makes cooking not just good, but irresistible.

Gardening has also taught me empathy for farmers and farm workers and respect for the hard work they do growing our food and taking care of the land. It makes us all remember that food is precious, and we are dependent on the land for our survival. It is all about the land. That's the reason I wanted to write this book. One of my most powerful gardening experiences has been watching the children at The Edible Schoolyard, a kitchen garden planted at Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School, a public school in Berkeley, California. Every time I see them measuring the vegetable beds for their math class, or harvesting ancient grains out in the garden for a history class, or stealing a taste of a ripe mulberry, I am reminded that there is nothing more transformational than the experience of being in nature. We have been separated from it, but as soon as we dig our hands into the soil and start watching things grow, we fall in love effortlessly—we realize we are a part of nature. I have seen this transformation happen in a school full of teenagers; I have seen it happen at the Homeless Garden Project in Santa Cruz; I have seen it happen with inmates in a jail. This connection to and respect for nature can be awakened in all of us.

The chapters of this book are filled with the experience of extraordinary farmers and cooks that I have met over the past forty years. It is with their collective knowledge that we have tried to demystify gardening, by providing recipes for cultivation and offering the most enticing dishes we make from our harvest. Each recipe celebrates the flavor of the delicious varieties of fruits and vegetables we have discovered in the fields of our farmer-gastronomes, heritage varieties that have been lost in the industrial farms in this country. Carlo Petrini, the founder of Slow Food International, has said that cooks need to be gardeners and gardeners need to be gastronomes in order to ensure the sustainability of our food system. Thomas Jefferson, our country's most celebrated farmer-gastronome, is an inspiring example. The garden was the passion of his life. He had an adventurous palate and a profound respect for agrarian values. He planned his garden for the pleasures of the table and combed the world for interesting and tasty plants to grow. I love knowing that he sowed a thimbleful of lettuce seeds every week to ensure there was fresh salad on the table every night. Today Monticello is more than a landmark; it is a national treasury of heirloom seeds, a place of enduring values, where the roots of our democracy still thrive.

Tending the soil, planting, and growing food in this way has had a long and important history in this country. If we let ourselves, we can easily return to this tradition. And what a revolutionary idea: That we can preserve the land by nurturing the vital link between taste, cooking, and gardening! It can be as simple as putting a seed in the ground and watching it grow.

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The Art of Simple Food II: Recipes, Flavor, and Inspiration from the New Kitchen Garden can be one of your beginner books that are good idea. All of us recommend that straight away because this reserve has good vocabulary that may increase your knowledge in terminology, easy to understand, bit entertaining but delivering the information. The article author giving his/her effort to get every word into pleasure arrangement in writing The Art of Simple Food II: Recipes, Flavor, and Inspiration from the New Kitchen Garden nevertheless doesn't forget the main position, giving the reader the hottest as well as based confirm resource details that maybe you can be among it. This great information could drawn you into brand new stage of crucial contemplating.

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