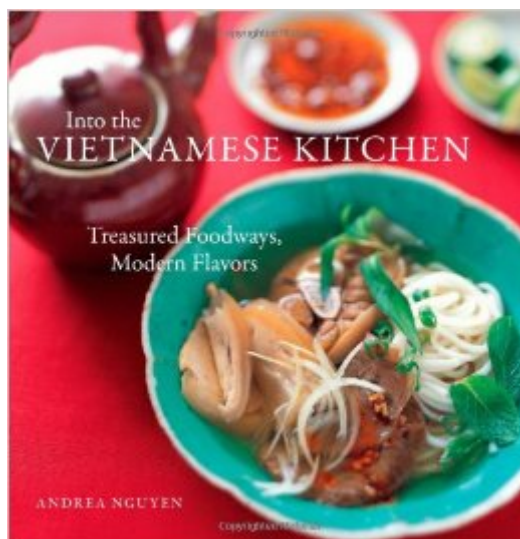


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# Into The Vietnamese Kitchen: Treasured Foodways, Modern Flavors



## Synopsis

An intimate collection of the finest Vietnamese recipes. When author Andrea Nguyen's family was airlifted out of Saigon in 1975, one of the few belongings that her mother hurriedly packed for the journey was her small orange notebook of recipes. Thirty years later, Nguyen has written her own intimate collection of recipes, *INTO THE VIETNAMESE KITCHEN*, an ambitious debut cookbook that chronicles the food traditions of her native country. Robustly flavored yet delicate, sophisticated yet simple, the recipes include steamy pho noodle soups infused with the aromas of fresh herbs and lime; rich clay-pot preparations of catfish, chicken, and pork; classic bánh mì sandwiches; and an array of Vietnamese charcuterie. Nguyen helps readers shop for essential ingredients, master core cooking techniques, and prepare and serve satisfying meals, whether for two on a weeknight or 12 on a weekend.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Being a Vietnam-born Vietnamese American, I know and love Vietnamese food. When my family moved to America, it became a struggle to find ingredients and recreate the traditional Vietnamese dishes. Because I learned how to cook in America, I am more used to the American equipment, measurement, ingredients, etc. This is why I have always tried to look for Vietnamese recipes and cookbooks that are written in a way that a Vietnamese American cook like me can understand. This book does just that. Everything is written in clear English, American cookbook style. It gives wonderful instructions on how to prepare dishes, identify and buy ingredients, use equipments, etc. -

all tailored to the modern American kitchen. The level of details is simply amazing. However, the taste of the dishes remains authentic Vietnamese. Take a look at any recipe, such as the popular Pho, and you will realize that Andrea Nguyen does not compromise Vietnamese flavors. But she also knows how to guide you, step by step, to achieve that flavor with things you can find in America. I also find the stories and introductions interesting, and true to Vietnamese traditions. They are similar to the stories I have heard in Vietnam. I have an American husband, and we love to read these stories together, so that he can understand more about Vietnamese society. He also loves the dishes that I have prepared from the cookbook. This is by far the most comprehensive, well-written, thorough, authentic Vietnamese cookbook I have ever seen. If you want to know more about Vietnamese cuisine, it is a must-have!

I own several Vietnamese cookbooks but I must say that this is the most comprehensive and detailed Vietnamese cookbook to date. Ms. Andrea Nguyen ventures into uncharted Vietnamese culinary territory by covering recipes from charcuterie to specialty noodles, and even desserts and pastries (which a lot of Vietnamese cookbooks lack). What is particularly noteworthy is that each recipe is exceptionally detailed and thorough; you can read and imagine yourself performing each particular step with Ms. Nguyen. Another factor that I think sets this book apart from the rest is that this is more conventional and up-to-date, making it feasible for the average American housecook to execute the recipes. What I particularly appreciate are the follow-up notes that Ms. Nguyen adds to the end of most of the recipes which give hints and additional information. But aside from the literal aspect, the major question is: are the recipes delicious? I have to say that, of course, each taste palette is different and seasoning is to one's own but all the recipes that I have tried came out scrumptious and mouth-watering! A must have for anyone who wants to learn Vietnamese cuisine.

This book is great for beginners because it's very detailed and comprehensive. It has informative background information about Vietnamese culinary culture. Other Vietnamese cookbooks (i.e. Andre Nguyen's "Quick & Easy Vietnamese Home Cooking For Everyone, Diana My Tran's "The Vietnamese Cookbook") are also good for beginners because the recipes have been simplified, but they do not have detailed explanations of the ingredients and they do not include a wealth of information about the Vietnamese cuisine. On the other hand, this book is different because it guides the beginners through everything from selecting the best rice brands to selecting the best fish sauce brands. If you want a good understanding of the Vietnamese cuisine, then this book is a must. Then, you can add other Vietnamese cookbooks to your collection later. The author has a

wealth of knowledge about Vietnamese cooking, and she sprinkles her pearls of wisdom throughout this book. If you're serious about cooking Vietnamese food, then you have to buy this book and Mai Pham's "Pleasures of the Vietnamese Table". The reasons I like this book are:1) "Guide To Ingredients" at the back of the book. The names of the ingredients are both in English & Vietnamese so that you can read labels on jars/bottles/packages that have been written in Vietnamese. Detailed descriptions of all the common ingredients used in Vietnamese cooking are included, including how best to use them and which brands are the best. There is a great section about the difference between rice papers that are made from 100% rice flour and rice papers that are made from a combination of rice flour and tapioca flour. This author tells you which type of rice paper is better...very helpful information. Other Vietnamese cookbooks do not give their readers advice on how to select rice paper, which is an important Vietnamese ingredient. This author knows the difference between yellow rock sugar and white rock sugar, and she makes sure her readers do not make the mistake of buying white rock sugar because they're usually sold side by side on store shelves. Other Vietnamese cookbooks do not take pains to differentiate between these two types of rock sugar; this is important information to have. This author offers so many useful advices such as these. This book has the most detailed and helpful "Guide To Ingredients" of all the Vietnamese cookbooks out there, and I should know because I own several Vietnamese cookbooks.2) "Note" sections at the end of recipes that give more instructions on how to store food or how to turn the recipe(s) into vegetarian dishes. It also gives advice about how to select, use, and prepare certain ingredients such as chestnuts.3) This book is beautifully presented in color and is very organized. It's easy to follow and understand. Too bad not every recipe is accompanied by a photograph to encourage readers to try making the recipe, but this is a minor issue, I suppose. I think only 50% of the recipes are accompanied by a photo.4) Good pork steamed buns recipe ("banh bao").5) The charcuterie chapter so you can make your favorite Vietnamese cold cuts at home and modify the amount of fat you want in your cold cuts.If I were you, I would buy this book before buying other Vietnamese cookbooks later on. After buying this book, I would buy Mai Pham's "Pleasures of the Vietnamese Table", which has fantastic and authentic recipes. Even though I'm recommending that you buy this book before buying Mai Pham's "Pleasures of the Vietnamese Table", Mai Pham's "Pleasures of the Vietnamese Table" is still my favorite Vietnamese cookbook on the market today. The recipes in Mai Pham's "Pleasures of the Vietnamese Table" are more authentic because they are based on those of street vendors and home cooks in Vietnam. This book is geared toward the American kitchens and adjustments to the recipes are made accordingly (i.e. ingredient substitutions for convenience). The only reason I'm recommending that you buy this book before

buying Mai Pham's "Pleasures of the Vietnamese Table" is that this book has a great "Guide To Ingredients", which all beginners really need. One negative thing about this book is that its binding is not at all durable, and readers will have to baby this book if they want the pages to remain intact.

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