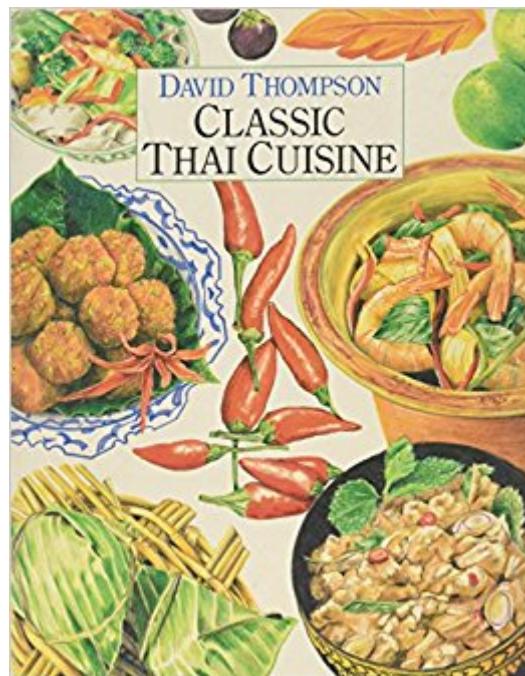


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# Classic Thai Cuisine



## **Synopsis**

A celebration of the Thai people and their cuisine, this unusual approach to Thai cooking discusses the important role history and culture have played in the development of Thai food. Emphasizes light and healthy dishes. Includes advice on buying ingredients, storage, and substitutes. Full-color illus.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

The contrasting tastes and textures of dry, wet, sour, sweet, hot, mild, crisp, and soft, which comprise Thai dishes, have given this cuisine an increasing popularity in the U.S. Thompson presents classic recipes in three main sections, with appetizers given a separate chapter, followed by snacks and noodles and finally main dishes and desserts. There is very little repetition; each unique recipe contains new and useful background about ingredients, a history of the dish, serving suggestions, and a lively watercolor illustration. Both the English name and the authentic name are given for each dish. The glossary is quite complete, with lengthy explanations about selection, freshness, substitutions, and preparation. This flexible cuisine with its wonderful balance of flavors and textures is well served by the format presented here, useful for both beginner and the more experienced cook. Iva Freeman

I bought this cookbook about a year ago because my bf and I love Thai food but we don't have that much experience cooking it. I bought this book because wasn't sure how much we might use his big book (bf cooks almost exclusively from magazines and hadn't used the HUGE WS Thai cookbook I bought him). If you are interested in learning how to cook very good Thai food but would like some

recipes beyond what you get at your local Thai restaurant (many of those are in here too though), this is a great book. We have made at least half a dozen recipes and all came out AMAZING. I couldn't believe how well the Thai beef salad came out, and the omelette recipe was great too. One word of caution, however, if you do not like seafood, this might not be a great cookbook for you (but then again, so won't most other Thai cookbooks...) since there are lots of recipes based around seafood. We haven't made too many of these seafood recipes. I am from the West Coast and so I don't really trust the quality of the seafood here in NYC, but the few shrimp recipes we made came out great. All in all, this is a great introductory Thai cookbook. As others have mentioned, there is good background information, and the recipes themselves are excellent. If you live in a place like NYC and have limited shelf space for books, this cookbook is well worth the very small amount of linear space it will take up on your bookcase shelf.

We have had a lot of fun spending a weekend hunting down ingredients in asia town, local vendors, and specialty food shops to make an Sunday night authentic Thai feast using this book. If this does not sound like your particular brand of leisure this book is not for you. The dishes are reminiscent of Taw Vigsittaboot's cooking at Thai X-ing in DC - to qualify that statement it is the highest complement I could give to a dish. The fact that this book has helped me relive some of that food euphoria keeps it on the top of the heap in our house despite the considerable effort needed to procure ingredients. A GREAT FIND! Thanks David!

As far as simply the recipes go this is an adequate recipe book. But knowing and appreciating David Thompson's writings I was hoping for some Thai anecdotes to accompany the recipes. Sadly there is nothing but the ingredients and instructions. I write this review in case someone else is considering the book for similar reasons. The book itself meets it's description.

I searched on line for cook books that touched on authentic Thai cuisine. David Thompson came up as someone who had experienced the culture thoroughly. I searched for a copy of Classic Thai cuisine on and found a cheap used copy. After receiving it and reading the recipes I found that the recipes are "Super" authentic. So much so that I don't know where to get some of the ingredients. When I do find a source...Oh boy, will I be doing some really authentic Thai cooking.

Good recipes, and easy to follow

This book is great and cheap. All of the recipes require a trip to a good Asian Market but otherwise you can get everything that is necessary to cook from this book.

Very happy with this purchase....no complaints.

This was my 8th Thai cookbook, when I thought it unlikely there was much else for me to learn. Little did I know! The book is laid out beautifully, with (mostly) one recipe to a page. There are no photographs, but the gorgeous illustrations by Helen Semmler more than make up for them. Each recipe is preceded with a short, instructive commentary. The recipes themselves ... if you are the type of person who, when in a new restaurant, will look for a dish you are not familiar with and smile broadly when told: "Oh, you wouldn't like that," then you MUST track down a copy of this book. There are more unusual and unique dishes, and new tastes, in this slim volume than in all the rest of my Thai cookbooks together. This is my textbook when I teach Thai cuisine. I used to feel like an impostor when Thai natives would sometimes take my class - not any more! I just lead off with "Nam Prik Kai Kem" (relish of salty duck eggs with fresh vegetables - it might take you several years to acquire a taste for it) to establish my credentials. Especially interesting are the primitive dishes, like Gaeng Som Pla Tua Fak Yaew (sour orange curry with snake beans), that date from before chilies were introduced to Thailand by the Portuguese. It is fascinating to make some of the historical dishes completely authentically -- without chilies and using only pepper for heat. One particular Royal Thai appetizer, Saeng Wa Gung Pao, aptly described by Mr. Thompson as: "the quintessence of good Thai food," is the single finest dish I have ever made - well worth the trouble of tracking down the ingredients. Royal Thai cuisine is not yet well known in America, which is a crying shame. One Royal Thai recipe that I haven't yet tried, Kao Chae (perfumed rice with garnishes) lists 61 ingredients! Mr. Thompson's more familiar dishes, like the Red, Green, and Mussaman curries, are also several cuts above the norm. No canned curry pastes here! However, that brings up another thought: this is not an everyday cookbook for production-line family meals. For all the accolades I'm heaping on it, I find I use the book infrequently. When I NEED to make a meal, I usually turn to canned pastes and something like Charmaine Solomon's book. When I choose to take an entire day to play in my kitchen, I reach for my mortar and pestle, and this book. A final note: has this David Thompson mixed up with the prolific writer of Westerns, so the link on this page to "an interview with David Thompson," if followed, will not teach you anything about Thai cuisine.

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