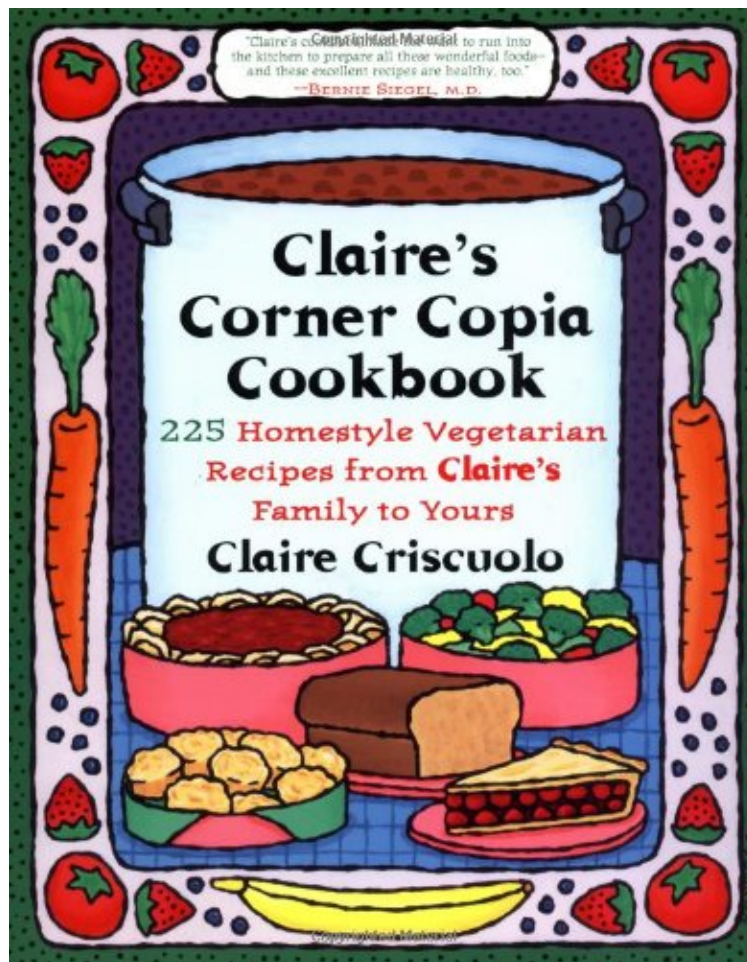


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Claire's Corner Copia Cookbook: 225 Homestyle Vegetarian Recipes from Claire's Family to Yours

Claire Criscuolo

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Claire Criscuolo founded Claire's Corner Copia in 1975, on the same New Haven corner where it stands today, and

where devotees of delectable vegetarian cuisine still flock. Now Claire's new cookbook enables cooks to re-create the same rich-tasting, low-fat, meatless meals in their own kitchens.

.com In 1975, Claire Criscuolo founded the vegetarian restaurant Claire's Corner Copia, in New Haven, Connecticut. The restaurant soon earned a reputation for simple but delicious home-style fare, prompting Criscuolo to write Claire's Corner Copia Cookbook, a compilation of the restaurant's 225 best recipes. Devotees of healthful vegetarian cooking that emphasizes whole grains, fresh produce, and seasonal specialties will welcome Criscuolo's book. Providing dishes organized by courses and food or meal categories such as sandwiches and breakfast, Criscuolo's book also reflects her Italian heritage, with its penchant for rich, vegetable-laced soups and hearty pasta entrees. Dishes like My Mother-in-Law's Special Holiday Soup, replete with beans, cauliflower, broccoli, escarole, and spinach, and Baked Rigatoni with Amalfitan Sauce, a marinara sauce-based dish, are savory examples of Criscuolo's Italian-influenced fare. Other cultures are represented by dishes such as Mexican Stuffed Peppers, made with a corn and rice filling; Hummus and Tomato on Wheat Bread, a particularly flavorful sandwich; and Szechuan-Style Eggplant. Criscuolo's baked specialties, including Cheddar Scones, Corn-Walnut Muffins, and Pumpkin-Walnut Pie, are of particular interest. Though the quest for healthy dishes occasionally leads Criscuolo to offer recipes featuring food substitutes or dubious low-fat products, most of her cooking is honest and tempting and should find its way to the everyday tables of all food lovers. -- Arthur Boehm From Kirkus sCriscuolo, owner since 1975 of a vegetarian restaurant in New Haven, Conn., has waited too long to put out this cookbook, and that is both compliment and criticism. Criscuolo herself notes in an introduction that while Middle Eastern and Mexican foods were mostly unknown when she began serving them, ``now they're on menus everywhere." Exactly--and they're in cookbooks everywhere, too. However, this collection does offer solid recipes for some vegetarian favorites, and Criscuolo takes a pleasant tone: friendly and never condescending (``A good store bought pastry is fine," she writes reassuringly in a recipe for escarole pie). While one chapter is devoted to Mexican specialties, the strongest influence here is Italian, thanks to Criscuolo's roots on New Haven's Wooster Street--an Italian-American neighborhood--and her mother, who ``always had a pot of soup going." Soups and baked goods are particularly strong. A chapter on the former includes myriad creative vegetable and bean soups, including a spicy pasta-and-bean soup with a porridge-like consistency. A section on breakfast provides several good muffin options, like surprisingly moist bran- apple muffins (Criscuolo does not eschew refined sugar and white flour, so the muffins have no heavy health-food feel). Occasionally, it becomes obvious that these recipes were developed in a restaurant and not in a home kitchen. When fried over medium- low heat in a scanty half cup of oil as instructed, the zesty batter for zucchini fritters turned mushy on the outside and remained raw on the inside. On an industrial stove, results would likely have been crispier. Nostalgia food for aging hippies and homesick Yalies. -- Copyright 1994, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.