

15TH
ANNIVERSARY
EDITION

America's
TEST KITCHEN

THE COMPLETE
AMERICA'S
TEST KITCHEN
TV SHOW 2001
COOKBOOK 2015



EVERY RECIPE FROM
THE HIT TV SHOW WITH
PRODUCT RATINGS AND A
LOOK BEHIND THE SCENES

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AMERICA'S
TEST KITCHEN
TV SHOW
COOKBOOK
2001/2015**

BY THE EDITORS AT AMERICA'S TEST KITCHEN
PHOTOGRAPHY CARL TREMBLAY, KELLER + KELLER, AND DANIEL J. VAN ACKERE

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AMERICA'S TEST KITCHEN
17 Station Street, Brookline, MA 02445

THE COMPLETE AMERICA'S TEST KITCHEN TV SHOW COOKBOOK:
Every recipe from the hit TV show with product ratings and a look behind the scenes

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PREFACE

My first experience riding a horse ended badly. The animal in question was my own horse, a Morgan, who realized instantly that I had no idea how to control 1,200 pounds of horseflesh. So he did the natural thing, which was to lope at an easy pace up to a small embankment and then stop dead, sending me flying into space. The good news was that my 10-year-old bones bent rather than snapped. I dusted myself off and got back on.

Flying off of horses was a constant theme during my childhood. My most spectacular fall was precipitated by an act of such extreme stupidity that I could have won a Darwin Award. One summer, as an aspiring hippie in Oregon, I managed to rope-halter a horse I chanced upon while crossing a large pasture and then hopped on its back without the benefit of saddle or bridle. A furious gallop ended in a spectacular arc that, of course, brought me rather harshly back to terra firma, only inches away from a large boulder. One might say that I have lived a charmed life, at least if survival is the key criterion.

As the host of *America's Test Kitchen*, I know that we have had our share of stumbles in the early years but we have always gotten back on our feet to do another segment and another season. If practice makes perfect, or almost perfect, then we stuck to it and so did you. Hopefully, we can make a better claim than "We survived!" since we are now the most-watched cooking show on public television.

After well over 350 episodes, hundreds of recipes, and 15 years we thought it would be a good time to publish *The Complete America's Test Kitchen TV Show Cookbook*. We have included EVERY recipe (more than 1,100) from all 15 years as well as a comprehensive guide to our product tastings and equipment testings, organized by category for easy reference, including photos of each of the winners.

I am not as young as I was when I stood in front of the TV cameras for the first time (watching early episodes is something I avoid), which means that I had forgotten some of the died-and-gone-to-heaven highlights from our 15 years. So preparing this book was a true trip down memory lane. The list includes Skillet Lasagna (just 40 minutes from start to finish and better than the oven-baked version), Chicken and Dumplings, Pan-Seared Thick Cut Steaks (unusual oven/stovetop method), Poached Salmon with Herb and Caper Vinaigrette (so little liquid it's almost braised), Easier French Fries (started in cold, not hot, oil), Pasta with Weeknight Bolognese Sauce, Italian-Style Grilled Chicken, French Chicken in a Pot (incredibly flavorful, moist meat), Grilled Well-Done Hamburgers (still juicy and tender), Barbecued Pulled Pork (finished in the oven), Creamy Mashed Potatoes, Blueberry Muffins (with a blueberry swirl), Molasses Spice Cookies with Dark Rum Glaze, Chocolate-Chunk Oatmeal Cookies with Pecans and Dried Cherries, Triple-Chocolate Mousse Cake, Applesauce Snack Cake, and our to-die-for Coconut Layer Cake.

A while back, I rode horseback with a neighbor through high mountain pastures that were just a few minutes from our farm. It was a neighbor's property and I had never ventured up the steep embankment just off the road and up into the hidden fields above. We loped through the high timothy, the Indian paintbrushes, and the daisies, rear ends firmly set in our saddles, boot heels down, comfortable with our horses and the ride. I had discovered another country, a magic valley that was just out my back door after a dozen years of similar rides just a stone's throw away.

Cooking is like that ride. It takes years to get comfortable, to figure out what you are doing, and to be certain that you can overcome almost any eventuality, whether it be a woodchuck hole or a substitute ingredient. Years of accumulated experience—other rides and other recipes—are the bits and pieces that turn one from tentative to confident, from novice to professional.

The joy of cooking is that experience brings with it unexpected pleasure, moments when a recipe turns from everyday to transcendent. This book is a container of sorts; it holds all the steps, all the preparation that can take one from good cook to great cook, from putting food on the table to really enjoying the ride. One day, when you least expect it, you will be out and about and realize that you've found a whole new world, just around the corner.

Christopher Kimball

Founder and editor, *Cook's Illustrated* and *Cook's Country*
Host, *America's Test Kitchen* and *Cook's Country from America's Test Kitchen*

WELCOME TO AMERICA'S TEST KITCHEN

This book has been tested, written, and edited by the folks at America's Test Kitchen, a very real 2,500-square-foot kitchen located just outside of Boston. It is the home of *Cook's Illustrated* and *Cook's Country* magazines and is the Monday-through-Friday destination for more than four dozen test cooks, editors, food scientists, tasters, and cookware specialists. Our mission is to test recipes over and over again until we understand how and why they work and until we arrive at the "best" version.

Our television show highlights the best recipes developed in the test kitchen during the past year—those recipes that our test kitchen staff makes at home time and time again. These recipes are accompanied by our most exhaustive equipment tests and our most interesting food tastings.

Christopher Kimball, the founder and editor of *Cook's Illustrated* magazine, is host of the show and asks the questions you might ask. It's the job of our chefs, Julia Collin Davison, Bridget Lancaster, Becky Hays, Bryan Roof, and Dan Souza to demonstrate our recipes. The chefs show Chris what works and what doesn't, and they explain why. In the process, they discuss (and show you) the best examples from our development process as well as the worst.

Adam Ried, our equipment expert, and Lisa McManus, our gadget guru, share the highlights from our detailed testing process in equipment corner segments. They bring with them our favorite (and least favorite) gadgets and tools. Jack Bishop is our ingredient expert. He has Chris taste our favorite (and least favorite) brands of common food products. Chris may not always enjoy these exercises (hot sauce isn't exactly as fun to taste as mozzarella or dark chocolate), but he usually learns something as Jack explains what makes one brand superior to another.

Although just 10 cooks and editors appear on the television show, another 50 people worked to make the show a reality. Executive Producer Melissa Baldino conceived and developed each episode with help from Co-Executive Producer Stephanie Stender and Associate Producer Kaitlin Hammond. Debby Paddock assisted with all the photo research. Guy Crosby, our science expert, researched the science behind the recipes. Along with the on-air crew, executive chefs Erin McMurrer and Keith Dresser helped plan and organize the 26 television episodes shot in May 2014 and ran the "back kitchen," where all the food that appeared on camera originated. Hannah Crowley, Kate Shannon, and Lauren Savoie organized the tasting and equipment segments.

During filming, chefs Morgan Bolling, Aaron Furmanek, Andrea Geary, Andrew Janjigian, Cecelia Jenkins, Lan Lam, Suzannah McFerran, Ashley Moore, Christie Morrison, Chris O'Connor, Diane Unger, and Cristin Walsh cooked all the food needed on set. Interns Jared Hughes, Abby Miller, Amy Siblik, and Robin Swayze worked on-set developing recipes for our magazines and books. Assistant Test Kitchen

Director Leah Rovner and Senior Kitchen Assistants Michelle Blodget and Alexxa Grattan were charged with making sure all the ingredients and kitchen equipment we needed were on hand. Kitchen assistants Maria Elena Delgado, Ena Gudiel, Eliot Carduff, and Jason Roman also worked long hours. Chefs Daniel Cellucci, Danielle DeSiato-Hallman, Sara Mayer, Sebastian Nava, Stephanie Pixley, Russell Selander, Meaghen Walsh, and Anne Wolf helped coordinate the efforts of the kitchen with the television set by readying props, equipment, and food. Shannon Hatch, Kate Zebrowski, and Christine Gordon led all tours of the test kitchen during filming.

Special thanks to director and editor Herb Sevush and director of photography Jan Maliszewski.

We also appreciate the hard work of the video production team, including Stephen Hussar, Michael McEachern, Peter Dingle, Roger Macie, Gilles Morin, Brenda Coffey, Ken Fraser, Joe Christofori, James Hirsch, Bob Hirsch, Jeremy Bond, Eric Joslin, Cara McCabe, Phoebe Melnick, Wes Palmer, and Matt Stavropoulos. Thanks also to Nick Dakoulas, the second unit videographer.

We also would like to thank Nancy Bocchino, Bara Levin, and Victoria Yuen at WGBH Station Relations, and the team at American Public Television that presents the show: Cynthia Fenneman, Chris Funkhouser, Judy Barlow, and Tom Davison. Thanks also for production support from Elena Battista Malcolm and DGA Productions, Boston, and Zebra Productions, New York.

DCS by Fisher & Paykel, SieMatic, Kohler, Diamond Crystal Salt, Cooking.com, and Wente Vineyards helped underwrite the show, and we thank them for their support. We also thank Michael Burton, Anne Traficante, Ann Naya, and Kate Zebrowski for handling underwriter relations and Deborah Broide for managing publicity.

Meat was provided by Kinnealey Meats of Brockton, Massachusetts. Fish was supplied by Ian Davison of Constitution Seafoods of Boston, Massachusetts. Live plants and garden items for the show were furnished by Mahoney's Garden Center of Brighton, Massachusetts. Aprons for Christopher Kimball were made by Nicole Romano and staff aprons were made by Crooked Brook.

Navigating this E-Book

This eBook includes a [Table of Contents](#) that allows you to jump to any chapter. And each chapter has its own table of contents with links to every recipe in the chapter.

We have also created a [Recipe Index](#) that lists all the recipes in the book, divided by chapter, in one place. You can access the Recipe Index from the Table of Contents. (It also appears at the end of the book just before the main index.) Each title in the Recipe Index is a link that will take you directly to that recipe.

This cookbook is filled with sidebars; throughout the book there are links to this material where appropriate.

Most eBook reading devices also offer a search function that allows you to type in exactly what you are looking for. Please read the documentation for your particular eBook reader for more information on its search function and any other navigational features it may offer.

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CLASSIC CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP

✓ **WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:** Classic chicken noodle soup is one of *the* all-time comfort foods. We eat it to nurse a cold or pair it with a simple sandwich for a satisfying meal. But making chicken noodle soup from scratch can take all day. We wanted a simple recipe but we wanted to make it the old-fashioned way—starting with a whole chicken—rather than cheating with store-bought broth.

We began by cutting the chicken into small pieces that could be browned in batches. To develop additional flavor, we sweated the browned pieces in a covered pot with an onion, then simmered them for less than half an hour. Now we had a stock that just needed some salt and bay leaves to round out its flavor. We reserved some of the skimmed fat from the stock to sauté aromatics and carrots for the soup, and we added in tender chicken breast pieces that had already been poached in our stock. For extra flavor, we cooked the egg noodles right in the soup pot so they could absorb rich, meaty flavor from the stock. With a final sprinkling of chopped parsley, our chicken noodle soup was complete—rich, homemade broth, moist pieces of chicken, tender vegetables, and perfectly cooked noodles.

Classic Chicken Noodle Soup

SERVES 6 TO 8

Make sure to reserve the chicken breast pieces until step 2; they should not be browned. If you use a cleaver, you will be able to cut up the chicken parts quickly. A chef's knife or kitchen shears will also work. Be sure to reserve 2 tablespoons of chicken fat for sautéing the aromatics in step 4; however, if you prefer not to use chicken fat, vegetable oil can be substituted.

STOCK

- 1** tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1** (4-pound) whole chicken, breast removed, split, and reserved; remaining chicken cut into 2-inch pieces (see note)
- 1** medium onion, chopped medium
- 2** quarts boiling water
- 2** teaspoons table salt
- 2** bay leaves

SOUP

- 2** tablespoons chicken fat, reserved from making stock, or vegetable oil (see note)
- 1** medium onion, chopped medium
- 1** large carrot, peeled and sliced $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick
- 1** celery rib, sliced $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon dried thyme
- 3** ounces egg noodles (about 2 cups)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup minced fresh parsley leaves
- Table salt and ground black pepper

1. FOR THE STOCK: Heat the oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add half of the chicken pieces and cook until lightly browned, about 5 minutes per side. Transfer the cooked chicken to a bowl and repeat with the remaining chicken pieces; transfer to the bowl with the first batch. Add the onion and cook, stirring frequently, until the onion is translucent, 3 to 5 minutes. Return the chicken pieces to the pot. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook until the chicken releases its juices, about 20 minutes.

2. Increase the heat to high; add the boiling water, reserved chicken breast pieces, salt, and bay leaves. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer until the flavors have blended, about 20 minutes.

3. Remove the breast pieces from the pot. When cool, remove the skin and bones from the breast pieces and discard. Shred the meat with your fingers or two forks and set aside. Strain the stock through a fine-mesh strainer into a container, pressing on the solids to extract as much liquid as possible; discard the solids. Allow the liquid to settle about 5 minutes and skim off the fat; reserve 2 tablespoons, if desired (see note). (The shredded chicken, strained stock, and fat can be refrigerated in separate airtight containers for up to 2 days.)

4. FOR THE SOUP: Heat the reserved chicken fat in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add the onion, carrot, and celery and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the thyme and reserved stock and simmer until the vegetables are tender, 10 to 15 minutes.

5. Add the noodles and reserved shredded chicken and cook until just tender, 5 to 8 minutes. Stir in the parsley, season with salt and pepper to taste, and serve.



HEARTY CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP

HEARTY CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP

✓ **WHY THIS RECIPE WORKS:** Sometimes we prefer a simple bowl of chicken soup—a brothy soup modestly enriched with chicken, noodles, and vegetables. Other times, a heartier version of chicken noodle soup is what we crave—one chock-full of chicken, noodles, and vegetables—a true meal in a bowl. We also wanted to find a way to produce such a soup without relying on a whole chicken for the stock.

We began by jump-starting the flavor of our soup with a mixture of store-bought chicken broth and water, but the broth-and-water base had a distinctly flat flavor. A few pounds of chicken parts created a wonderfully rich stock, but the method—browning the parts and then simmering them—was just too fussy for what we wanted here. Instead, we turned to a somewhat unlikely but more convenient substitute—store-bought ground chicken. Ground chicken offers more surface area and exponentially more flavor, providing a great-tasting stock when sautéed with aromatics and then simmered with the broth and water. All the stock needed was some body and thickening, which we got from a little cornstarch. With our broth down, we were ready to add the chicken (breasts that had been poached in the stock until just cooked through and then shredded), vegetables, and noodles. Along with onion, celery, and carrots, we further enriched the soup with potato and Swiss chard. Our streamlined hearty chicken noodle soup was now rich and satisfying.

Hearty Chicken Noodle Soup

SERVES 4 TO 6

When skimming the fat off the stock, we prefer to leave a little bit on the surface to enhance the soup's flavor.

STOCK

- 1** tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1** pound ground chicken
- 1** small onion, chopped medium
- 1** medium carrot, peeled and chopped medium
- 1** celery rib, chopped medium
- 2** quarts low-sodium chicken broth
- 4** cups water
- 2** bay leaves
- 2** teaspoons table salt
- 2** (12-ounce) bone-in, skin-on chicken breast halves, cut in half crosswise

SOUP

- ¼** cup cold water
- 3** tablespoons cornstarch
- 1** small onion, halved and sliced thin
- 2** medium carrots, peeled, halved lengthwise, and cut crosswise into ¾-inch pieces
- 1** medium celery rib, halved lengthwise and cut crosswise into ½-inch pieces
- 1** medium russet potato (about 8 ounces), peeled and cut into ¾-inch cubes
- 1½** ounces egg noodles (about 1 cup)
- 4–6** Swiss chard leaves, ribs removed, torn into 1-inch pieces (about 2 cups; optional)
- 1** tablespoon minced fresh parsley leaves
- Table salt and ground black pepper

1. FOR THE STOCK: Heat the oil in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add the ground chicken, onion, carrot, and celery. Cook, stirring frequently, until the chicken is no longer pink, 5 to 10 minutes (do not brown the chicken).

2. Reduce the heat to medium-low. Add the broth, water, bay leaves, salt, and chicken breasts; cover and cook for 30 minutes. Remove the lid, increase the heat to high, and bring to a boil. (If the liquid is already boiling when the lid is removed, remove the chicken breasts immediately and continue with the recipe.) Transfer the chicken breasts to a large plate and set aside. Continue to cook the stock for 20 minutes, adjusting the heat to maintain a gentle boil. Strain the stock through a fine-mesh strainer into a container, pressing on the solids to extract as much liquid as possible; discard the solids. Allow the liquid to settle about 5 minutes and skim off the fat (see note). (The strained stock can be refrigerated in an airtight container for up to 2 days or frozen for up to 3 months. The chicken breasts can be stored in a zipper-lock bag with the air squeezed out.)

3. FOR THE SOUP: Return the stock to a Dutch oven set over medium-high heat. In a small bowl, combine the water and cornstarch until a smooth slurry forms; stir into the stock and bring to a gentle boil. Add the onion, carrots, celery, and potato and cook until the potato pieces are almost tender, 10 to 15 minutes, adjusting the heat as necessary to maintain a gentle boil. Add the egg noodles and continue to cook until all the vegetables and noodles are tender, about 5 minutes longer.

4. Meanwhile, remove the skin and bones from the reserved cooked chicken and discard. Shred the meat with your fingers or two forks. Add the shredded chicken, Swiss chard (if using), and parsley to the soup and cook until heated through, about 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste and serve.