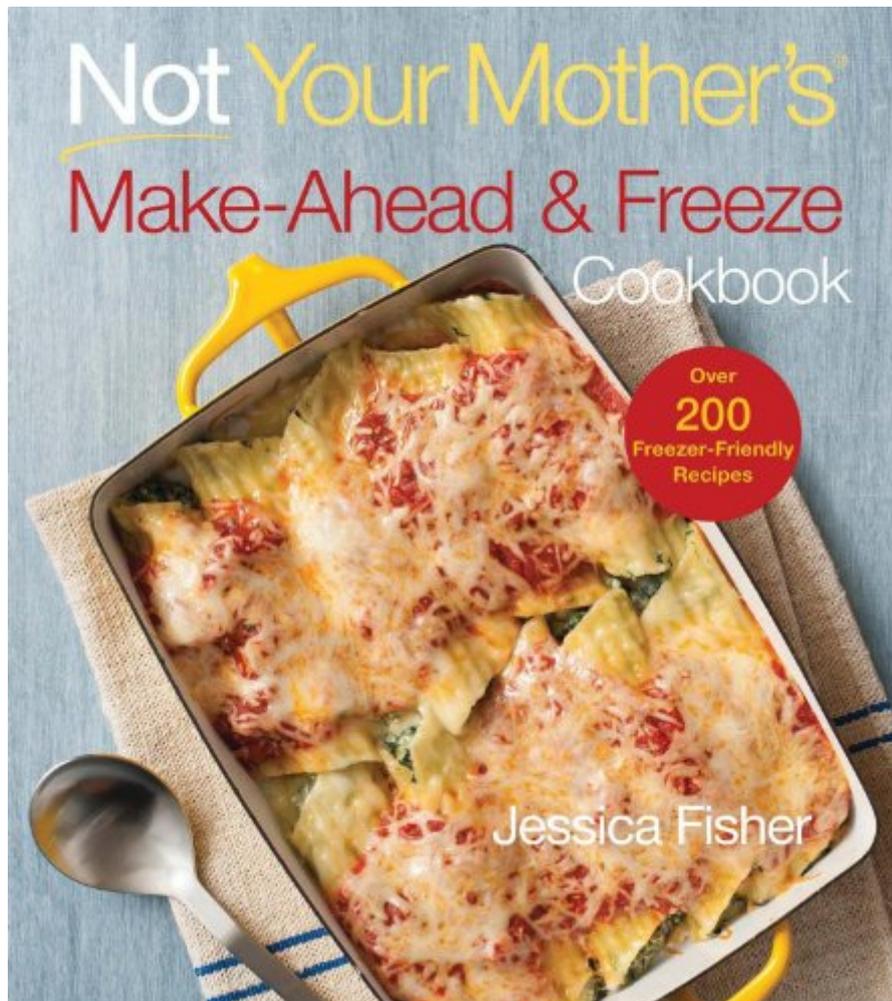


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Not Your Mother's Make-Ahead And Freeze Cookbook (NYM Series)



Synopsis

Our mothers' and grandmothers' put up food in the freezer to economize on time and money. In a recessionary environment and in a world of dual-job families, there's even more reason to do so today. But we don't have the same tastes as our moms. We eat a wider range of foods, drawing on a variety of ethnic and global cuisines, we include more produce and grains in our diets, and we use fewer processed and fatty foods. Jessica Fisher's *Not Your Mother's Make-Ahead and Freeze Cookbook* is the perfect guide for economical home cooks with any or all of these new tastes in foods that take well to freezing. Competing books on freezing sell strongly and steadily. Typically, they are based on a very specific plan—cooking for a family of four for a month ahead in an afternoon of work in the kitchen, for example. They offer orderly plans with decent, if largely unimaginative, food. *Not Your Mother's Make-Ahead and Freeze Cookbook* offers two advantages over these books. First, Fisher lays out lots of easy-to-follow guidelines for diverse families with varying needs and desires, taking into account how long you want to spend in the kitchen—there are 2-hour, 4-hour, and daylong plans—as well as how far out ahead you want to cook for, the size of your household, the size of your freezer, your budget, and even your taste for one-dish meals versus multi-course meals. The emphasis is on facilitating flexibility without sacrificing clarity and ease-of-use. Second, Fisher's 200 recipes deliver flavorful and healthy food in abundance. She takes readers beyond mom's beef-pork-chicken triumvirate, with lots of ideas for lamb, fish, shellfish, and vegetarian main courses. There are homey and family-friendly dishes, like Cheddar Cheese Soup with Zucchini, Broccoli, and Carrots, or Crumb-Topped Cod Fillets, fancy dishes for company, like Seasoned Steak with Gorgonzola Herb Butter, and lots of globally inspired creations like Salsa Verde Beef, Red Lentil Dahl, and Hoisin-Glazed Salmon. While the emphasis is on dinner, there are breakfast and brunch recipes, too, and plenty of ideas for breads, quick breads, and desserts that freeze well. Ample sidebars address such matters as finding good freezer bags and containers, labeling frozen food, whether to invest in a new freezer, and how to thaw safely. The author's story—cooking for a family of eight, including six home-schooled children under ten, and serving as the creator and writer of the popular blogs *Life as Mom* and *Good Cheap Eats*—fits the topic and the book perfectly. Fisher is a woman who knows all about budgeting time and money efficiently, at the same time serving up delicious food with warmth, love, and an appreciation for the pleasures of the table.

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Customer Reviews

The best part of the book is the first 64 pages, where the author discusses the concept of batch cooking for freezer meals that are healthier and less expensive than take out, fast food and going out for dinner. My initial impression of the book was that it was going to be a very structured menu, shopping, prepping, preparing, storing and heating instruction for a specified period. While there is a lot of structure, there is also a great deal of flexibility. You can take a few hours and prepare dinners for a week (her advice is to make double, even triple, batches of everything since it saves time and money, to use later), or take a whole day and make 25 dinners or more. She even has a section that helps you create your own make ahead and freeze plan to take into consideration your own family's likes, tastes and regional/seasonal offerings. She has plans for breakfasts and meatless options also. I think the idea is to "build" a revolving supply of meals that you continually replenish when the mood (or sale!) strikes. You can start big or small, it's up to you. The author gives you shopping lists and even lists the appliances and storage containers you will need, so not much is left to chance. She also avoids the use of pre-packaged spice mixes and sauce bases, preferring to batch cook her own so as to keep artificial ingredients and preservatives out. The recipes are pretty standard fare, nothing really exotic, but there are over 200 (mostly main dish) to choose from and the ones

I've tried have been quite good. What I would liked to have included is the nutritional information for each recipe. Since the author has a large family, her recipes usually feed 8, which will require a little interpolating and planning for fewer mouths to feed.

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