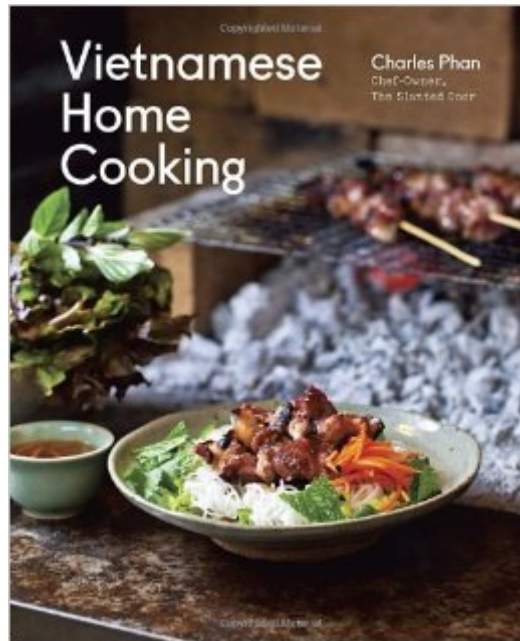


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# Vietnamese Home Cooking



## Synopsis

In his eagerly awaited first cookbook, award-winning chef Charles Phan from San Francisco's Slanted Door restaurant introduces traditional Vietnamese cooking to home cooks by focusing on fundamental techniques and ingredients. When Charles Phan opened his now-legendary restaurant, The Slanted Door, in 1995, he introduced American diners to a new world of Vietnamese food: robustly flavored, subtly nuanced, authentic yet influenced by local ingredients, and, ultimately, entirely approachable. In this same spirit of tradition and innovation, Phan presents a landmark collection based on the premise that with an understanding of its central techniques and fundamental ingredients, Vietnamese home cooking can be as attainable and understandable as American, French, or Italian. With solid instruction and encouraging guidance, perfectly crispy imperial rolls, tender steamed dumplings, delicately flavored whole fish, and meaty lemongrass beef stew are all deliciously close at hand. Abundant photography detailing techniques and equipment, and vibrant shots taken on location in Vietnam, make for equal parts elucidation and inspiration. And with master recipes for stocks and sauces, a photographic guide to ingredients, and tips on choosing a wok and seasoning a clay pot, this definitive reference will finally secure Vietnamese food in the home cook's repertoire. Infused with the author's stories and experiences, from his early days as a refugee to his current culinary success, Vietnamese Home Cooking is a personal and accessible guide to real Vietnamese cuisine from one of its leading voices.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If you feel a bit overwhelmed when you venture into an Asian market and would like to change that

feeling, this book will be immensely helpful to you. The book is overflowing with information, and I love a cookbook written to include such helpful insight, instruction and coaching. I am a sponge for new cooking techniques and new ingredients. I was born in the U. S. and my first language is English. I'm of Polish decent. I've been interested in Asian cooking for about four years now. I cook all kinds of dishes, but we really love fresh fish, oriental greens and the unique flavors found in Asian recipes. We love the simplicity of the dishes and we love the contrasts of salty, sweet, tangy and good Texas jasmine rice. Our winter garden is currently full--really full--of Asian greens and veggies. And with that said: I think this is a great cookbook. I've used it over and over again--in just the short few months I've owned it. So, while I can't speak for someone born in Vietnam and relocated here and I can't speak for someone who has a Vietnamese Grandmother on which to rely, I can speak for a majority of those looking at this review and wondering whether to buy this book or not: You will learn a lot from this cookbook, and you will be happy you bought it (or proud you gave it as a present). Use it as a reference book; use it for its recipes; enjoy the pictures; delight in the way the author coaxes all of your senses to blossom; take it with you to your favorite Asian grocery store and smile a lot and nod your head while you refer to it as you search out ingredients, (yes, take it with you instead of just a grocery list and spread the word.) The author went at this cookbook venture with the intent to teach.

As a Vietnamese-American cook, 2nd generation Vietnamese, and American food writer based in Houston, I had high hopes for this cookbook. I was hoping for a collection of recipes about the dishes I grew up eating, the dishes from the streets of Vietnam, and it succeeds on certain levels. Phan includes a lot of background information, like how to differentiate between different types of dry noodles, clay pots, how to season a wok, etc. I like how he prefaces each recipe with a small intro, giving context to each recipe. There beautiful photos and some very helpful step-by-step instructions for making noodles and filleting fish. The photos at the beginning of the book begin to capture the spirit on the streets of Vietnam, though cursorily. However, with the exception of a few recipes like "Banh Beo," or "Banh Cuon," "Bun Bo Hue," and "Pho," for whatever reason, Phan and his editors chose to omit the Vietnamese names of most dishes. For instance, the recipe "Catfish in Clay Pot" is one of our national and most recognized dishes. Why not include its actual name: "Ca Kho To?" Pork and Shimp Spring Rolls should likewise have the name "Goi Cuon;" Hot and Sour Shrimp Soup should also be "Canh Chua Tom," Grilled Pork Chops with Sweet Lemongrass Marinade should be "Suon Nuong Xa," and so forth. The naming convention of the recipes seems very arbitrary. He also includes a lot of Chinese/Cantonese dishes, which reflects his own personal

heritage, explaining that Chinese ingredients have infiltrated daily Vietnamese cooking. However, I find that the inclusion of those dishes sends a mixed message. This is Vietnamese-Chinese cooking, not just Vietnamese home cooking, as the title suggests.

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