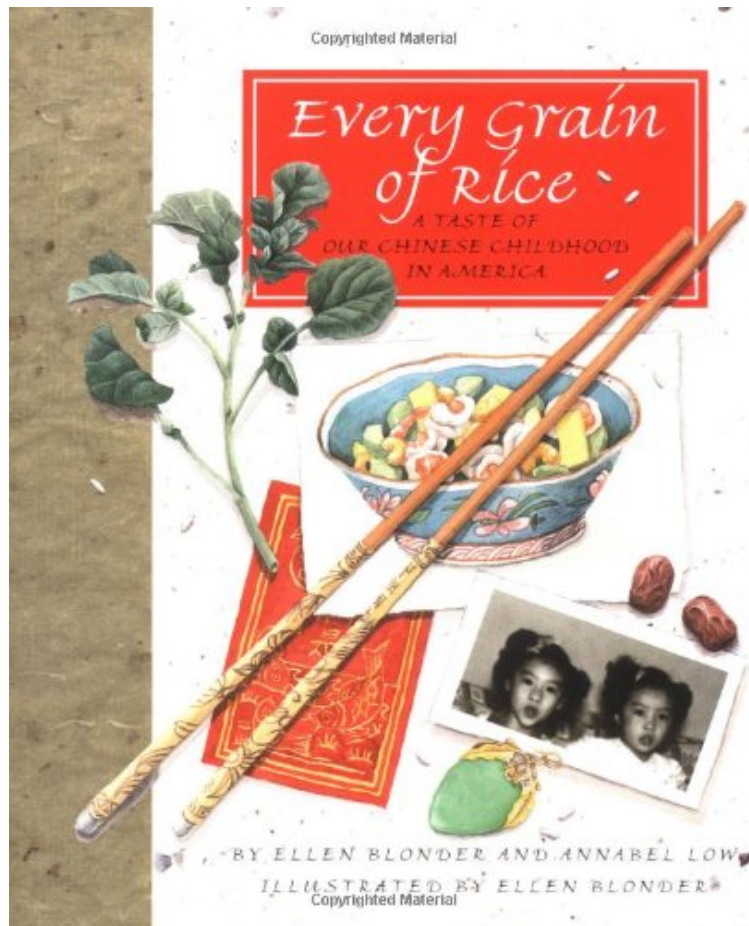


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Every Grain of Rice: A Taste of Our Chinese Childhood in America

Ellen Leong Blonder, Annabel Low
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Ellen Leong Blonder, Annabel Low : Every Grain of Rice: A Taste of Our Chinese Childhood in America
before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Every Grain of Rice: A Taste of Our Chinese Childhood in America:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Have bought copies for everyone I know who would like to cook Chinese.
By Gen of North Coast Gardening
This is a beautiful and touching cookbook. The authors realized in midlife that their Aunties, Parents, and Grandparents were passing on and that they, the next generation, were ill-equipped to pass on the traditions and share the skills of making the food they remembered from when they were growing up. So they set about remedying the situation by cooking with their relatives until they could recreate the recipes and understand the philosophy behind much of the food that has meaning to them. I am not Chinese, but I grew up in a Chinese area of San Francisco and so have many of the same fondnesses for Chinese cooking, and this book is the first one I have found (and I have MANY Chinese cookbooks!) that has a Tomato Beef Chow Main recipe (and an excellent one, I might add - exactly what I remember from the local restaurants I ate at as a kid). If you have ever tried

to make wontons and failed, try this book. If you enjoy cookbooks which combine short, personal stories with the recipes to give the recipes a context and a meaning, then buy this book. The illustrations add so much to the amazing recipes, too. This makes an excellent gift for anyone missing Chinese home cooking, or for anyone who has a weakness for dim sum. The authors also have a book on cooking dim sum which is excellent as well. I prefer this one mostly because I prefer cooking meals to dim sum type foods and because I have such fond memories of so many of these foods, but I found both books easy to follow and both have produced truly excellent results on the first tries. HIGHLY Recommended. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Love it! By Genovese I'm from the Bay Area, and this book is full of great recipes and stories of what I grew up with. A must for anyone who wants to make and enjoy those great dishes. The book has very easy to follow recipe instructions. This is the standard cookbook in my household. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. GREAT Book About Chinese American History and the Art of Cooking with Great Illustrations By addict I have an autographed copy of both of Ellen Blonder's cook books. DIM SUM is the other one. Both are treasured for their history and the wonderful illustrations. I purchased this one for a friend who wants to give the book to her family members. As a member of the Chinese American Council of Sacramento, I attended two book discussions here in Sacramento, plus a cooking demonstration at the original Tower Books on Broadway in Sacramento. Not that I would make any scrumptious dishes from the books, but the experience was wonderful. Regrettably, Annabel Low, Ellen Blonder's aunt, passed away. This book, along with DIM SUM, is a winner!

Fried Green Tomatoes with Flank Steak. Pan-Fried Prawns in Ketchup Sauce. "Stand Back"; Chicken. Turkey Jook. Sticky Rice with Sausage and Taro Root. These are the foods that say "family"; and "homer"; to Ellen Blonder and Annabel Low. In *Every Grain of Rice* they have collected more than 120 outstanding recipes for the delicious homestyle and special occasion dishes they remember so vividly from their childhoods but have rarely found in conventional Chinese cookbooks. Studded with recollections from their years as part of an extended Chinese-American family and with Ellen Blonder's exquisite watercolor drawings, it is a remarkable debut from two major new talents on the culinary scene. An aunt and niece who are separated in age by only 16 days, Annabel and Ellen were raised virtually as sisters, dividing their time between Ellen's family farm and the renowned cafe where Annabel's father was chef/proprietor. From him, and from their mothers, aunts, and uncles, Ellen and Annabel learned to make such satisfying everyday fare as Steamed Minced Pork, Wonton Soup, and Uncle Bill's Chow Mein, as well as more elaborate dishes as Sweet-and-Sour Whole Fish and festive bamboo-leaf-wrapped Jeng. Special occasions and family gatherings were marked by steaming trays of dim sum and pork-filled Bao, Low Hop Joer's glistening Soy Sauce Chicken, and the magnificent Boned Stuffed Duck. In chapters ranging from "Comfort in a Bowl"; on soups and jooks to "Fish and Seafood"; and "Bearing Gifts"; which features foods for holidays and family celebrations, the authors cover the range of traditional Chinese cooking as it was prepared in their childhood homes. The more than 120 recipes and variations offer careful explanations of unfamiliar techniques along with suggestions for replacing hard-to-find ingredients and lowering the fat count of many dishes, and each recipe and story is illustrated with Ellen's delightful watercolor paintings. With a comprehensive glossary of ingredients and detailed listing of equipment and techniques, *Every Grain of Rice* is a perfect introduction to the art of Chinese cooking and a moving celebration of food and family.

.com There's something of a warning for all readers in this book: blend too well with the American melting pot and you may lose the way things tasted when you were a child. Such was almost the case with Ellen Blonder and Annabel Low, who grew up together in Chinese families in California. "For all the time we spent helping in the kitchen while we were growing up," Blonder writes, "we missed the next step of mastering the recipes on our own; we lost our connection to the old ways of cooking. We can teach our daughters how to deal with corporations, but we couldn't pass down the simplest technique for dealing with taro root." While compiling a collection of favorite family recipes meant as a wedding gift, Blonder and Low realized there was a deep hole in their heritage: when push came to shove, they really didn't know how their parents had prepared a lot of their favorite foods. Fortunately for their families and any other families that open and use this book, their rediscovery developed into a gem of a book. Blonder's illustrations alone are worth the price of the book. The reminiscences open up a chapter of American immigrant history too often hidden, and the recipes and careful instructions for assembling the dishes bring the special foods of a particular village in China to anyone's table. There may well be better Chinese cookbooks on the market, but *Every Grain of Rice* is special for the implied invitation to sit down and eat with the two authors, their families, and all their ancestors stretching back in time to the place where the recipes were originally developed. Invitations like that don't show up every day. The experience may turn readers back to their own favorite foods, and their own heritage, and encourage them to save what they can while the information is still available. That, in and of itself, is a very special sauce to add to any dish. --Schuyler Ingle From Publishers Weekly Low and Blonder, aunt and niece born within 16 days of each other, offer glimpses of their Chinese-American childhood in California in this utterly charming and strikingly illustrated (by Blonder) cookbook. Recipes are for home-style foods but are sometimes complex, like the one for

Savory Jeng, a glutinous rice mixture cooked in carefully folded bamboo leaves. Both Green Loofah Squash with Prawns and Long Beans with Ground Pork in Lettuce Packets make use of more exotic vegetables. Chinese New Year's Cake with mashed yams and brown sugar is described as being similar to "a soft caramel." More familiar Chinese-American favorites like Fried Rice and Vegetarian Chow Mein are not neglected either. Even stronger than the recipes are the anecdotes provided by both authors, which are personal without being too sentimental: Low remembers her imposing and impressive father, Low Hop Joe, proprietor of the Hong Kong Cafe in Sacramento, and Blonder reflects on the Chinese tradition of never accepting a compliment. This book is both appetizing and engaging. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Blending together favorite Chinese recipes with personal recollections from the two authors, this beautifully written book celebrates the way food ties one Chinese American family together. Over 80 authentic recipes, covering everything from Tomato Beef Chow Mein to Chinese New Year's Cake, are woven together with short reflective essays on topics such as Jeng and Dim Sum. Suggestions of sample menus are provided as well as a helpful glossary of Chinese food techniques and food terms. The delicate color illustrations by Blonder are a delightful addition. Certain to charm and delight readers, even noncooks, this is highly recommended for all libraries. ?John Charles, Scottsdale P.L., Ariz. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.