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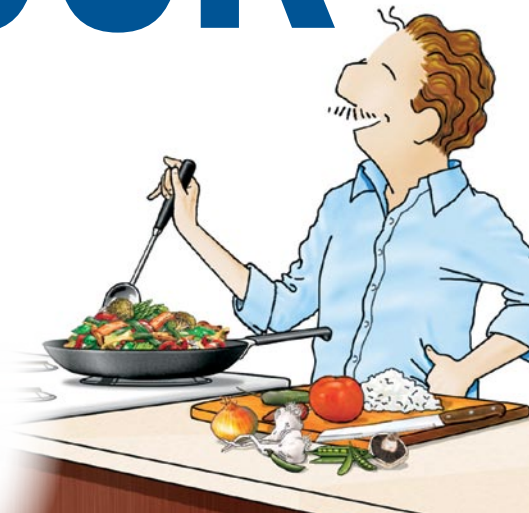
FAST AND EASY RECIPES!
300

QUICK MEALS COOKBOOK

2ND EDITION



Whip up easy and
delicious meals for
you and your family



Rhonda Lauret Parkinson

THE
EVERYTHING
Quick Meals Cookbook
2nd Edition

Dear Reader,

As a professional writer working from home, I never had a problem finding time to cook dinner. A flexible schedule meant I was free to whip up meals on the spur of the moment, making a quick trip to the neighborhood supermarket for supplies if needed.

That all changed when I took a part-time afternoon position. Faced with the challenge of driving home in rush hour traffic (picking up my son from child care on the way) and then quickly assembling dinner before we all headed out the door to sports, Scouts, or other activities, it became more and more tempting to rely on the corner fast-food restaurant for evening meals.

Clearly, my unstructured approach to meal preparation wasn't working. Over time, I developed several strategies to make this everyday task less stressful. Along with becoming better acquainted with my supermarket's offering of healthy convenience foods, I found that a little advance preparation on the weekend makes an enormous difference.

In this book, I hope to show you that it's easy to prepare quick and easy meals for your family every night of the week. I hope you enjoy the recipes as much as I've enjoyed making them up for you.

Rhonda Lauret Parkinson

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Whip up easy and delicious meals
for you and your family

Rhonda Lauret Parkinson

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Published by Adams Media, an F+W Publications Company
57 Littlefield Street, Avon, MA 02322. U.S.A.
www.adamsmedia.com

ISBN 10: 1-59869-605-X
ISBN 13: 978-1-59869-605-9
Printed in the United States of America.

J I H G F E D C B A

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
available from the publisher.

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my two favorite taste testers: my husband, Anthony, and son, Robert.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank everyone at Adams Media for their help and support throughout this project. In particular, I would like to thank my Project Editor, Kerry Smith, and Executive Editor, Brielle Matson. Special thanks to my agent Barb Doyen, for her guidance and encouragement. Finally, I would like to thank About.com, a part of the New York Times Company, for providing me with a forum for sharing my passion for all things food-related with an entire online community.

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Introduction

In today's busy world, it seems that no one has time to cook anymore. At the end of a busy workday, few people have the inclination to pour over recipe books trying to decide what to make for dinner, let alone to prepare and cook it. It's all too easy to join the growing trend of "fast-food families" who rely on the corner drive-through restaurant for their meals.

Why should you prepare home-cooked meals? For one thing, they're healthier. A steady diet of burgers, French fries, and other fast-food standbys has a high nutritional cost. Despite the best efforts of fast-food and family restaurant chains, the average takeout meal is loaded with excess fat, sodium, and calories. Enjoying the occasional Sunday breakfast or celebration dinner at a restaurant is one thing, but eating out regularly can wreak havoc with your waistline, and lead to long-term health problems.

Studies show that children of families that frequently eat fast-food dinners also tend to make poor food choices at home, favoring chips and soda over fresh fruit and vegetables. This can signal the start of a lifelong struggle with obesity and the health problems associated with being overweight.

Cooking at home saves money. True, it's easy to splurge when you're inspired to create a special meal on the spur of the moment; a trip to the farmer's market for organic vegetables, to the butcher for a special cut of meat, and finally to the supermarket for ingredients to make that special sauce all add up. But the meal's high price tag comes from making numerous one-time purchases, with no plans for using up excess ingredients or leftovers. Instead of discarding that unused half cup of canned herbed tomatoes, why not incorporate it into another meal? Planning in advance enables you to get the most for your food dollar.

Believe it or not, cooking at home saves time. Once you develop a regular routine—writing up a grocery list, taking a spare hour to do advance prep work on the weekend, and planning for leftovers—you'll find it's easy to quickly pull together a