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Menus For Chez Panisse



Synopsis

Chez Panisse, a small restaurant in Berkeley, California, opened its doors in the summer of 1971. For forty years, the restaurant and its founder, legendary chef Alice Waters, has had a profound influence on food, farming, cooking, and dining around the world. In the beginning, Waters saw the beauty and aesthetic of fine printing as a way to communicate at the outset of the diners' experience the care and attention given to the preparation of their dinner. Berkeley-based artist Patricia Curtan began hand printing menus for the restaurant during its early years, while employed as a cook in the Chez Panisse kitchen. Curtan's menus, works of art in their own right, capture the unique spirit of the famous restaurant with letterpress and linoleum-block prints on beautiful paper. In *Menus for Chez Panisse*, Curtan presents four decades of menus including dinners for special guests such as Julia Child, Hillary Clinton, Mikhail Baryshnikov, and James Beard with notes about the menus, the artwork, the occasions, and, of course, the food.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I wonder if this book would be so absorbing for someone who hasn't been to Chez Panisse. Just like every carefully planned meal, the menus in this book are little works of art. And if you've eaten at Chez Panisse, as have I on only a few occasions, these beautifully rendered menus are little memory capsules. Reading through the book, the warm hustle and bustle of the restaurant come back to life, along with the smells and lovely fabric of the place. It is a pleasure to offer a positive review of the book, but I'd also recommend a visit to the restaurant if you're ever in Berkeley at lunch or, better yet, dinner.

I read about this book in David Lebowitz's blog, and immediately ordered a copy for myself since I'm interested in food, graphics, letter press printing, and for that matter, all things done well. An elegant, tasty book, with very high production values, and what a great gift for birthdays or holidays, no more struggling to come up with a surprise for that special friend ... or yourself.

Beautifully crafted and designed book that chronicles the wonderful union of the visual arts with the art of food. Kudos for Chez Panisse's support of the arts. Also nice to see now the art of Patricia Curtan has evolved over the years.

This book had such beautiful linoleum prints that it made me want to take it up as a hobby. And the menus are simple and elegant. So it is good for getting ideas for dinner parties, as well as seeing how graphic design makes a huge difference in presenting material.

This is a beautiful book although it does not contain recipes it is a lovely book of artwork. I have it on my kitchen counter and it's always looked at and appreciated by our guests. Alice Waters is an icon and it's fun to have her book in our home.

I've had this book for about a year now and wanted to express how thoroughly impressed I am with it. As a cook, book lover and creative person I am always looking for inspiration. This book has it all. What I am most grateful for is the fantastic treatment that Princeton Press gave the book. It is a joy to hold in the hand and flip through the pages. The paper is heavy, the cover is three dimensional, the printing is perfect. All the artwork jumps off the page. The layout is perfect - not crammed in like so many books nowadays. The writing is sparse but on point. I have never been to Chez Panisse, as I live in the mountains a thousand miles away. But I have enjoyed Alice Waters' cookbooks, and found inspiration there. I like to make up my own menus for fancy dinner parties, but they are not on the same level of what Patricia does. This book has made me rethink the whole process, and dream of doing offset printing. At the end she describes her process and shows some photos of work as it is progressed. I wish she would do a whole book just on this. It looks like such a labor of love. Very time consuming !! can't imagine any cook, artist, printer or book lover not being thrilled with this. Renews my hope that all is not lost in our modern world.

A beautiful treasure of the art and letterpress of Patricia Curtan. So glad I purchased this book.

Each menu is accompanied by notes about the menu and the artwork. There is a lovely section in the back of the book about The Process Patricia uses, equally enchanting. I'd give this book 10 stars if it was possible.

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