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# The Best Of Vietnamese & Thai Cooking: Favorite Recipes From Lemon Grass Restaurant And Cafes



## Synopsis

Light, Fresh, Exotic, and Delicious! Tangy, sweet, and savory traditional dipping sauces. Mouthwatering soups. Innovative stir-fries. The Best of Vietnamese & Thai Cooking offers just that – the very best! Weaving a fascinating memoir amidst her splendid recipes, Mai Pham recreates the almost magical reverence with which food was prepared and enjoyed in the Vietnam and Thailand of her childhood. Inside she discloses the secrets to preparing her personal favorites – delicious dishes such as: Firecracker Prawns & Minty Thai Chicken Salad Hot and Spicy Chicken with Lemon Grass & Spicy Red Beef Curry Crispy Spring Rolls & Eggplant and Broccoli in Ginger Spicy Thai Cucumber Salad & Rice Paper-Wrapped Salad Rolls Bangkok Beef with Basil & Lemon Grass Stir-Fried Jasmine Rice Vegetarian Pad Thai & Perfectly Roasted Peanuts & Thai Tea Evocative, lyrical, and eloquent, The Best of Vietnamese & Thai Cooking is more than a collection of great recipes – it's a pleasure to read.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As can be gathered from the reviews below, there is some disagreement as to whether the recipes in Mai Pham's cookbook represent "authentic" Thai and/or Vietnamese cooking. I'm neither Thai nor Vietnamese, but my guess would be that the recipes, which come largely from Pham's American restaurant, have been adapted somewhat to appeal to non-native palates (the spice level in the Thai recipes seems low, for example). Those looking for "authentic" Thai or Vietnamese recipes may want to look elsewhere. That having been said, I sometimes find the authenticity fetish a bit

much. If you read Pham's chapter introductions, you discover that she is a woman who has moved around a great deal, and her cooking has been influenced by multiple native traditions. Cooking in America is a real melting pot venture, and while this has led to some deserved ribbing from those whose countries have more developed palates, it has also led to a dynamic, creative treatment of food. I think Pham's work falls on the positive side of this dichotomy. To put it plainly, her recipes taste good, are well written and tested, and combine different cuisines with good results. Her recipes are not fusion, and are not ground-breaking in the way of those of say, Ming Tsai, but they are simple and tasty.

This is my favorite Thai cookbook, and I have about 6. I even went to Bangkok to take a cooking class, and still came back cooking some of the stuff in this book. The recipes are easy and authentic, and I've never been disappointed with the results from the recipes that I've used (more of the Thai than Vietnamese). Like all of the good Asian cookbooks, it has a section on ingredients with pictures to help you find them in your Asian grocer. I will say that these ingredients are often essential (always are when you are cooking SE Asian food)- do your best to find these at a market or an online supplier if you want a really authentic taste. The strengths of the book include the sauces (VERY easy and quick), the Vietnamese spring rolls, the curries, the "Goopy Ginger chicken" and some of the other stir fry dishes. The weakness: The Pad Thai is good- but not very authentic and much more labor intensive than how the Thai actually make it. I know some people just want to make Pad Thai, so in that case- look elsewhere. Otherwise, a lot of fun. Highly recommended.

All of the recipes in this book are excellent. I have the pleasure of knowing Mai Pham and I can tell you all, she is a first rate, authentic chef. She explains that her recipes are an amalgamation of Vietnamese (she is from Viet Nam), Thai (she grew up in Thailand) and Californian cuisine (where she currently resides and cooks). Her recipes are what she serves in her restaurants and I can tell you, it's a pure taste treat to dine in her restaurants. Please do not hold her to the strict guidelines of only Vietnamese cooking for that is not what she is all about. If you are Vietnamese, and you are looking for something authentic and not adventurous or creative, this book is not for you. However, if you are artistic, creative, fun-loving, good-food-loving and adventurous, BUY THIS BOOK! You'll be glad you did!

I have searched high and low for a book with authentic Vietnamese and Thai recipes, and Mai Pham's book is the best I have found! Her recipes are easy to follow and mouth watering! I also love

this book because of the touching stories she puts at the beginning of each chapter. That added a very personal touch and insight into the way the food should be prepared and eaten. Overall, a perfect book for lovers of Asian food!

If you like Asian food, you can't go wrong. The recipes are easy to follow and the food comes out great. One word of advise, go easy on the fish sauce! I'm a grad student and I don't have much time to cook. Even somebody with my lack of experience in the kitchen can turn out some pretty tasty dishes. I wish there were some more pictures but this is a cookbook that you will use in the kitchen not a coffee table book. Get yourself a copy and start eating well.

For many years, our family has been devoted patrons of Mai Pham's Lemon Grass Restaurant in Sacramento and most of our "special occasion" celebrations are held there. It is such a delight to be able to cook these same delicious dishes at home. The flavors are so complex and balanced, it is surprising to find how easy the recipes are to make. They truly reflect the specialties of the restaurant. Be sure to try the Thai green curry with chicken and the lamb chops with spicy peanut sauce (satay). Thank you, Mai Pham, for sharing your creations.

... what happened to authenticity (I am Vietnamese), and who stole all the pictures? There are two pages of photos, one of frequently-used spices/herbs/etc. and one of a few prepared dishes), and that's it. I just bought this book yesterday and, having read every recipe it contained, am a tad bit disappointed. As was earlier said by another reviewer, this is more creative than authentic, especially the desserts. oh, well.

When I first bought this book I thought it was great but since then I have purchased Into the Vietnamese Kitchen: Treasured Foodways, Modern Flavors which is much more detailed and authentic. This "lemongrass" book is good for an introduction to both THAI and Vietnamese cuisine but I find it leans more towards "Americanizing" its flavors and for someone like myself who is trying to learn Vietnamese cuisine for her husbands sake..isn't the best. I being Hispanic, like the recipes but my Asian husband said they lacked TRUE flavor..hence my second purchase, which is a big hit. I like the Thai recipes in this book but tend to turn to the before mentioned book for Vietnamese recipes.

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