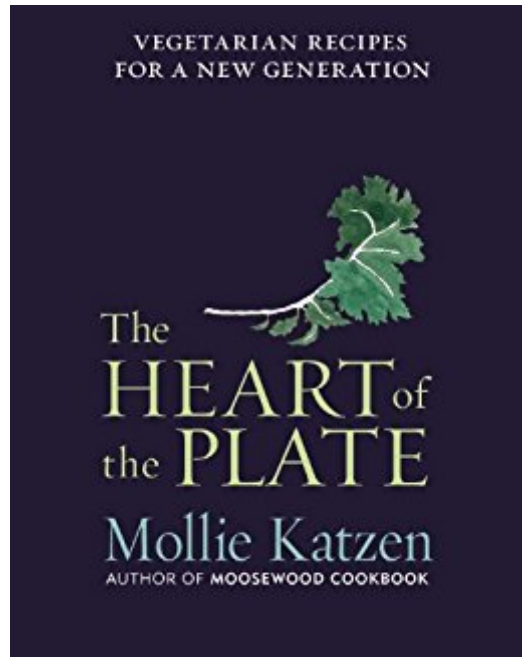


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The Heart Of The Plate: Vegetarian Recipes For A New Generation



Synopsis

With *The Moosewood Cookbook*, Mollie Katzen changed the way a generation cooked and brought vegetarian cuisine into the mainstream. In *The Heart of the Plate*, she completely reinvents the vegetarian repertoire, unveiling a collection of beautiful, healthful, and unfussy dishes — her absolutely most loved. Her new cuisine is light, sharp, simple, and modular; her inimitable voice is as personal, helpful, clear, and funny as ever. Whether it's a salad of kale and angel hair pasta with orange chili oil or a seasonal autumn lasagna, these dishes are celebrations of vegetables. They feature layered dishes that juxtapose colors and textures: orange rice with black beans, or tiny buttermilk corn cakes on a Peruvian potato stew. Suppers from the oven, like vegetable pizza and mushroom popover pie, are comforting but never stodgy. Burgers and savory pancakes — from eggplant Parmesan burgers to zucchini ricotta cloud cakes — make weeknight dinners fresh and exciting. *Optional Enhancements* allow cooks to customize every recipe. *The Heart of the Plate* is vibrantly illustrated with photographs and original watercolors by the author herself.

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Customer Reviews

This book was given to me for my review. *The Heart of the Plate* by Mollie Katzen is an excellent cookbook for both the comfort food, home cook and the gourmet. I am not vegan or vegetarian at this time, but it doesn't matter because the recipes are tasty for all palates. Katzen begins the cookbook with pantry tips and goes into the expected soups and salads. Her section on salads is especially thorough, and most of them are hearty enough to use as a main course. Katzen provides many tips and tricks on serving ideas and small add-ins to enhance the meals. I loved the section on Cozy Mashers because autumn is fast approaching (oh, please, God), and I simply love mashes as a side or even as a main dish. Her repertoire is extensive, from beans to root vegetables to avocados and more. After mashers, she covers grains, providing a lot of variety from many different countries (the Spiced Basmati Pilaf with Nuts and Raisins is lovely), and I am especially happy to see several new risotto recipes I have never tried. I could live off of risotto, if I did not have to watch the carbs. Some recipes are longer and more detailed, but others are quicker and easier. Her directions are detailed, but the reader needs to know that that does not always mean that the recipe is really difficult. I think Katzen has done a credible job of making sure the book is user friendly for all cooking levels. I am especially excited about some recipes in her Pasta and Asian Noodles section that take on "lasagna". While Katzen usually uses noodles, I can adapt these recipes to use eggplant or squash and still have a very yummy finished dish for my carb sensitive body. She has given me new ideas for adapting and combining ingredients.

The Heart of the Plate is almost like a best of cookbook from a very accomplished cook with a dedicated following. If I was to ever recommend a Mollie Katzen cookbook to anyone, this is the one to get. She's even included sixteen slightly altered recipes from four other cookbooks into this one. I love when cooks perfect recipes over time. All of the cookbook's recipes are vegetarian, and many are vegan. If they aren't vegan, often have alternative directions to make it so. Also included are suggested meal plans for both vegetarians and vegans, which have seasonal menus too. Personally I've never in my life used one of these suggested menus, but if you like them, here they are. Visually, *The Heart of the Plate* is a stylized cookbook full of fresh, modern recipes and photos. Yes, photos--real, color photos. It also has some simple illustrations of food; luckily they are eclipsed by the luscious photos. The font is real too, no more of that childish "hand-writing" that rubs me the wrong way. If you have shied away from Katzen's cookbooks in the past because of its immature & amateur look, please check this one out. You'll be pleasantly surprised. The reason I didn't give this cookbook 5 stars is that it excluded any nutritional information for the recipes. As the primary cook for my family, I value this sort of information because I want to know my meals have

enough protein, and want to avoid recipes with too many calories per serving. Unfortunately, omitting the nutritional details will just leave me--and other cooks--to figure it out for ourselves. Secondly, many recipes list times that it takes to prepare & cook; this cook book has skipped that also.

I find reviews most useful when I have an idea of where the reviewer is coming from, so here goes. I've been a vegetarian (not vegan) for more than 20 years, and Katzen's "Moosewood Cookbook" and "Enchanted Broccoli Forest" lived on my shelves for years; I finally gave them away recently when I realized I hadn't cooked out of them for more than 10 years (most vegetarians just don't cook like that any more). But I've admired Katzen's work since back in the days when she was one of the few vegetarian-cookbook writers around. I'm also very picky about cookbooks I buy - I find that they tend to take over my kitchen shelves if I'm not careful, and I rarely purchase them. That said - I bought this one, I waited until I had made several recipes from the book before writing a review, and I found deciding on a star ranking to be a dilemma. Here's how I saw it. Warning, this is a very long review! Overall: I agree with the reviewer who said that this book is not for the novice cook. More on this later. Layout: intro and general. The book begins with the now-standard discussion of equipment and ingredients; fortunately this section is short. Next is a section on how to assemble a vegetarian menu that might be of use for new vegetarians; I myself never look at menu suggestions so I can't comment on this one. Many, though unfortunately not all, recipes are illustrated with gorgeous color pictures (I expect those who saw black-and-white photos were people with pre-prints.) One warning about the photographs: they often illustrate three or four recipes at once, so if you want your meal to look like that, you'll be using lots of pots and pans, and you'll be cooking for a long time.

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