



The Del Posto Cookbook

Mark Ladner , Mario Batali (Foreword)

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The definitive cookbook on refined Italian Cuisine by the celebrated chef at Mario Batali's and Lidia Bastianich's award-winning destination restaurant in New York City.

Mark Ladner, the Chef at Del Posto, redefines what excellent Italian Cooking in America can be. With a focus on regional Italian ingredients and tradition, Ladner has chosen recipes that bring together flavors from the old country, but in sophisticated new ways, like: Fried Calamari with Spicy Caper Butter Sauce; Red Wine Risotto with Carrot Puree, Monkfish Piccata, Veal Bracirole, and Ricotta-Chocolate Tortino. But what is special is that these recipes will really work in the home kitchen, unlike some ambitious cookbooks like this. And given Del Posto's origin and founders, the book includes recipes by Lidia Bastianich, and forewords by Mario Batali and Joe Bastianich. Plus, the award-winning sommelier at Del Posto offers advice on which Italian varietals to serve with what dishes. All this is complemented by photography that is inspired by 16th century still life paintings. As the *New York Times* said in their review: "The food bewilders and thrills."

The Del Posto Cookbook Details

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From Reader Review The Del Posto Cookbook for online ebook

Mary says

What the cookbook is/does well: clear, concise directions for authentic, complex Italian recipes

What the cookbook is not: 30 minute meals or recipes made with packaged, processed foods

Who this book is best suited for: the advanced home cook/lover of The Del Posto Restaurant

Three words to sum it up: Intimidating but impressive.

When I opened the mailing envelope and pulled out The Del Posto Cookbook by Chef Mark Ladner, I was struck by the cover. There is a photograph of a remarkable spread of greens and grains, pasta and pig's head. It reminded me of something I had seen before. Was I reminded of a retro-colored spread from a 1960's cookbook? A still life painting from the 17th century? As I flipped through the pages, the artwork unfolded in not only the photographs but the way each dish was plated.

While admiring the elegant plating and reading about the cookbook's upscale namesake (which I've never visited), I couldn't help but wonder—how on earth was I to make these recipes in my kitchen? The one with the glass top stove, periwinkle laminate countertops, and a handful of cooking gadgets.

Mario Batali wrote in his foreword, "Ladner's cooking is decidedly low-tech, which makes it quite simple to translate into the home kitchen." This didn't really jive with what I was seeing and reading. Low tech maybe, but I doubted the promise of easy translation when I looked at the pages-long recipes of 100 Layer Lasagne al Ragu Bolognese, Warm Cotechino with Lentils and Prosecco Zabaglione, and Veal Bracirole.

I doubted it so much, I flipped back to the introduction, written by Chef Ladner himself, in hopes he could shed a little light or explain how these recipes could possibly 'translate' to my kitchen. And he gave me an answer: "While the recipes may seem long and intimidating, we have worked tirelessly to cover every detail of their process so that you can successfully make our food in your kitchen."

The recipes within the Del Posto Cookbook do translate to any home kitchen. You just have to work for them, with the promise of a 5 star bite, or meal, or dessert at the end. I can attest to this because I tested Lidia [Bastianich]'s Jota with Smoky Pork and Braised Kale.

I was skeptical. Though I don't buy processed foods or even prepped airmailed meals, I am not one to devote a day of my life cooking one thing unless it's largely hands-off. This particular recipe looked the most appealing because it was one of the most accessible, it had ingredients that I had a hankering for, and it afforded me the opportunity to practice my newly acquired pork-smoking skills (more on that later). I went through the steps, I didn't take short cuts (namely, I fed my Weber grill with coals and wood chips for hours), and the end result? An incredibly dynamic, wholesome, I-can't-believe-I-just-cooked-that-in-my-kitchen dish. The cannellini bean soup (jota) was silky and smooth. How it got that much flavor with so few ingredients (carrots, onion, celery, water, bay leaves, olive oil) is beyond me. The pork. Oh, the pork. The lightly sweet, abundantly peppery rub meshed beautifully with the perfectly smoked, juicy shoulder. These two key players, coupled with braised kale, bacon, and sauerkraut were incredible.

It reminded me of home, of smoked pork and collard greens with vinegar. Yet it reminded of a place worlds away, too, for a reason I can't quite put my finger on. That pretty much sums up the theme of this cookbook in every way, from the moment I saw the photograph on the cover to studying the recipes within: it's freshly sophisticated with a hint of familiarity.

I never thought I'd make something quite this dynamic in my little kitchen with the glass top stove and the periwinkle countertops. But I did. And I think any cook, if able to give the time, will be blown away with what they can make at home with guidance from Chef Ladner.

Susan says

I won this book through Goodreads. I loved it. Such a beautiful book. Great recipes & ideas.

Scarlett says

I won this book through Goodreads to give an honest review.

This cookbook was written by a chef of the Del Posto restaurant in New York. The introduction explains the concept of the restaurant as well as it's creation and background.

Things I liked about it:

The cover was beautiful, as were the pictures within the book. Everything looked appetizing, and the pictures of the actual restaurant looked exciting.

Each recipe came with a detailed description of any special tool required to make it, and it sometimes offered an alternative tool that might be more common in a normal kitchen.

At the back there was an allergen guide that covered almost every possible food allergy (nuts, soy, gluten, eggs, shellfish, etc.) for each recipe so the reader can quickly consult a list to decide what they can or can't have. This would be faster than going recipe by recipe individually.

Many of the recipes have origin stories and wine pairings.

Things I didn't like:

Not all of the recipes are set up in the traditional step by step format. This could be difficult for novice cooks. These recipes were also based on the what the restaurant creates. This means they are small "tasting" dishes, often made with ingredients not used on a normal basis. It's definitely not something I would pull out for a normal weekly family dinner, maybe just special occasions.

Although the pictures were beautiful I was sad there wasn't more of them. A lot of the recipes did not include pictures of the finished product which could create confusion.

Overall I enjoyed this book, but I don't think it is for everyone.

McKenzie says

I won this book from Goodreads for an honest review. This book is beautifully photographed, but the recipes are rather complicated and presented in a nontraditional format. Overall, it's a cookbook I would look at but not actually use.

Christine Zibas says

"like going to an Italian Nonna's house for supper, if Nonna's house were a grand palazzo"

This is not your everyday cookbook. Instead, it's a glossy coffee table spectacular with recipes that you pour over to select (most likely) just one to show off your mad skills for guests at your fanciest party or holiday table. That doesn't make it any less of a contribution than that everyday workhorse of a cookbook you normally employ; indeed, it's more like going to that once-in-a-lifetime restaurant.

You want to really cook gourmet food at home? It's possible with books like The Del Posto Cookbook, but don't expect it to be easy...or inexpensive. Even the author, Chef Mark Ladner, suggests his recipes can be "long and intimidating." Many of the recipes contain ingredients like truffles or lobster. The fresh pasta dough alone requires 15 large egg yolks. Even a simple *assaggi* (akin to an *amuse bouche*) like Veal Tartar and Potato Chip Clubs requires creating a black truffle vinaigrette, making russet potato chips with caper salt from scratch, and the veal tartar has eight ingredients on its own (just one third of this recipe). You've been warned.

What's great about this cookbook? Well, the recipes, but also the information on supplies like truffles, olive oil varietals, balsamic vinegar, and cheese. There are also plenty of great wine selections for many of the dishes. And I enjoyed this suggestion for wine pairing, "if it grows together, it goes together." (In other words, choose wines that come from the same region in which the dish was created or made popular.)

What are some of the dishes I'd be most likely to make? These were appealing (and manageable): either version of the Primavera salad -- one for Spring (of course), but also one for Autumn; spaghetti with Dungeness crab; and winter squash cappellacci with brown butter (perfect for the season now). While the sweeter side of the recipe offerings didn't provide much I'd make, the honey gelato and ricotta-chocolate tortino were appealing.

Many of the *dolci* (sweets) started out good (for example, the slow-roasted nectarines on grilled lemon pound cake), but then added a bizarre twist (with basil gelato) or had a rogue ingredient (for example, the chocolate crostata features eggplant). That may be to your taste, but not mine.

All in all, however, I found the cookbook to be a lavish treat for the eyes and palate. And unlike much of the contemporary high-end gourmet cooking these days, there's an emphasis on slow cooking with great ingredients, instead of featuring culinary tricks that use liquid nitrogen or special powders and feature foams or immersions. These are things I might enjoy at a special restaurant on a night out, but not trying to recreate at home (even if possible at all).

This means that with The Del Posto Cookbook, home cooks can find their culinary wonderland. It requires a commitment of time and money, but your (and your guests') taste buds will thank you later.

Thanks to Grand Central Life & Style Books and Good Reads for allowing me to enjoy this stunning book.
