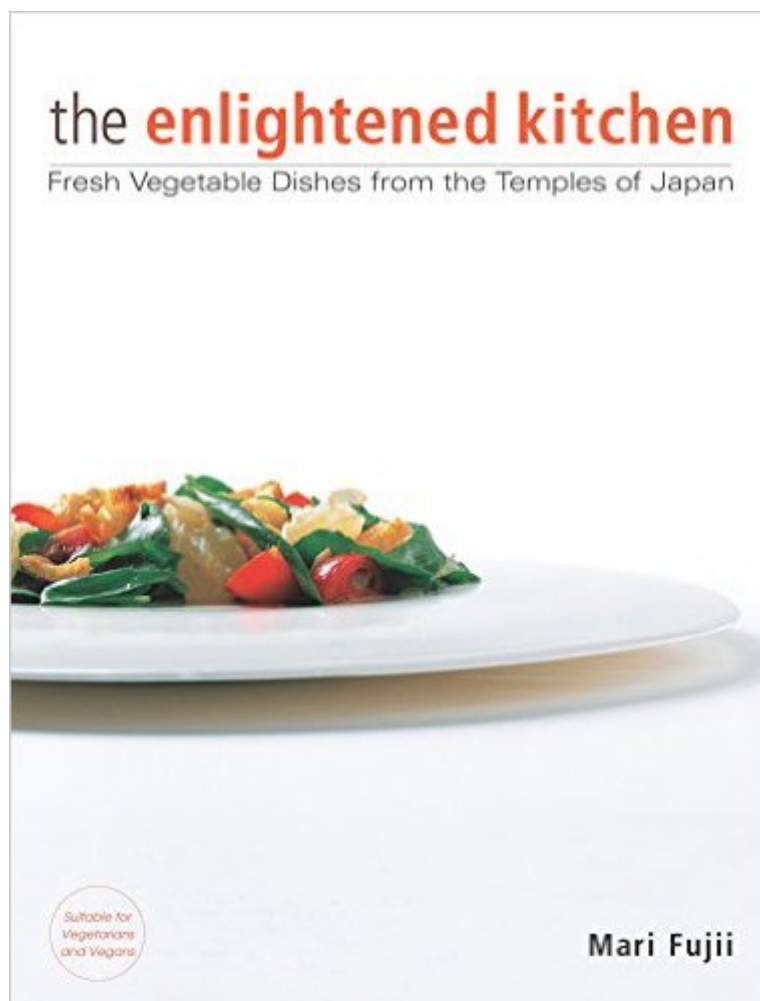


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The Enlightened Kitchen: Fresh Vegetable Dishes From The Temples Of Japan



Synopsis

Nourish body and soul with simple, delicious food from Japan's temples. The Enlightened Kitchen introduces readers to shojin ryori, the traditional vegetarian cooking of Japan's Buddhist temples. Shojin food, with its emphasis on fresh, seasonal vegetables, staples such as seaweed, grains and tofu, and natural flavorings rather than chemical additives, is a highly nutritious and delicious alternative to the many unhealthy eating habits of Western society. In addition to its health benefits, the preparation and eating of shojin food in Buddhist temples has great spiritual significance. After spending their days in rigorous selfdiscipline, the monks welcome mealtimes as a soothing respite, both for those preparing the food with loving care and for those eating it with relaxed enjoyment. Stunning color photographs accompany more than sixty recipes for soups, salads, tofu and bean dishes, vegetables, rice and desserts. The author, Mari Fujii, married to a Buddhist monk and an expert in shojin food for more than twenty years, presents an array of recipes including: Carrot and Mushroom Soymilk Soup, Steamed Pumpkin and Tofu, Beans and Eggplant with Sesame Dressing, Ginger Rice and Banana Tempura. Her step-by-step instructions are easy to follow, and she has made an effort to use ingredients that are readily available in most good supermarkets. Fujii includes a guide to basic cooking techniques used in the preparation of shojin food, an extensive glossary of ingredients and equipment, and fascinating background information on the history and philosophy of shojin ryori. Perfect for vegans, vegetarians and anyone interested in healthful eating, the dishes from The Enlightened Kitchen will warm our hearts, sustain our souls, and fortify us inside and out.

Book Information

Hardcover: 112 pages

Publisher: Kodansha USA; Reprint edition (September 21, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1568364369

ISBN-13: 978-1568364360

Product Dimensions: 10 x 0.6 x 7.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviewsÂ (20 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #788,875 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #216 inÂ Books > Cookbooks,

Food & Wine > Asian Cooking > Japanese #752 inÂ Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Cooking by Ingredient > Vegetables #964 inÂ Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Special Diet >

Customer Reviews

Buddhism being a religion of reincarnation, one of the precepts of cloistered monks is to harm "nothing that flees when chased." After all, that might just be your brother or wife from a past life sizzling in your cookpot. However, even those pursuing enlightenment must eat, and even monks like their food to be varied and tasty, so the spiritually pure tradition of "Shojin Ryori" was born. Shojin Ryori is a vegan cuisine still served today in the temples of Japan, based on seasonal vegetables that can be grown by the monks. Eating food that follows the flow of nature is considered best for the body and soul, and seasoning is kept light so that the natural flavor of the fresh vegetables can be preserved. Author Mari Fujii learned the arts of shojin ryori from her husband Sotetsu, who was the Tenzo, or temple cook, during his ten years as a monk. Now a priest at a temple in Kamakura, Sotetsu and Fujii teach shojin ryori to all who wish to learn. With "The Enlightened Kitchen," they have brought this wisdom to a wider audience, allowing all to partake of the healthy, natural and delicious style of cooking. In seven sections, including soups, salads, tofu/beans, vegetables, potatoes/rice/grains, and deserts, Fujii has selected easy-to-make dishes using seasonal vegetables that should be easy to find in any grocery store. The recipes are delightfully simple, and you will be amazed that such great food can come from such little effort. She stays with traditional Japanese vegetables, as well as occasionally incorporating rarities such as avocado and celery to mix things up. The base for most of the sauces is sake, miso paste, sesame oil, rice vinegar and lemon.

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