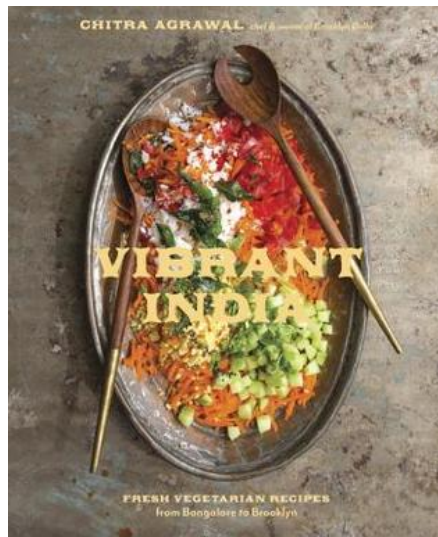




Vibrant India: Fresh Vegetarian Recipes from Bangalore to Brooklyn

Chitra Agrawal

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From the acclaimed chef and owner of Brooklyn Delhi, a debut cookbook focused on the celebrated vegetarian fare of South India.

Lifelong vegetarian and chef Chitra Agrawal takes you on an epicurean journey to her mother's hometown of Bangalore and back to Brooklyn, where she adapts her family's South Indian recipes for home cooks. This particular style of Indian home cooking, often called the -yoga diet, - is light and fresh, yet satisfying and rich in bold and complex flavors. Grains, legumes, fresh produce, coconut, and yogurt--along with herbs, citrus, chiles, and spices--form the cornerstone of this delectable cuisine, rooted in vegetarian customs and honed over centuries for optimum taste and nutrition.

From the classic savory crepe dosa, filled with lemony turmeric potatoes and cilantro coconut chutney, to new creations like coconut polenta topped with spring vegetables 'upma- and homemade yogurt, the recipes in *Vibrant India* are simple to prepare and a true celebration of color and flavor on a plate. Chitra weaves together the historical context behind the region's cuisine and how she brought some of these age-old traditions to life thousands of miles away in Brooklyn during the city's exciting food renaissance.

Relying on her experience as a culinary instructor, Chitra introduces the essential Indian cooking techniques, tips, and ingredients you'll need to prepare a full range of recipes from quick vegetable stir fries (corn, basil, and leeks flavored with butter, cumin, and black pepper), salads (citrus red cabbage and fennel slaw with black mustard seeds, curry leaves, and chile), yogurt raitas (shredded beets and coconut in yogurt), and chutneys and pickles (preserved Meyer lemon in chile brine) to hearty stews (aromatic black eyed peas, lentils, and greens), coconut curries (summer squash in an herby coconut yogurt sauce), and fragrant rice dishes (lime dill rice with pistachios). Rounding out the book is an array of addictive snacks (popcorn topped with curry leaf butter), creative desserts (banana, coconut, and cardamom ice cream), and refreshing drinks (chile watermelon juice with mint). Chitra provides numerous substitutions to accommodate produce seasonality, ingredient availability, and personal tastes. The majority of recipes are gluten-free and vegan or can be easily modified to adhere to those dietary restrictions.

Whether you are a vegetarian or just looking for ways to incorporate more vegetarian recipes into your repertoire, *Vibrant India* is a practical guide for bringing delicious Indian home cooking to your table on a regular basis.

Vibrant India: Fresh Vegetarian Recipes from Bangalore to Brooklyn Details

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Author : Chitra Agrawal

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Brooklyn Chitra Agrawal**

From Reader Review Vibrant India: Fresh Vegetarian Recipes from Bangalore to Brooklyn for online ebook

DelAnne Frazee says

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Reviewer: DelAnne

Rating: 5 Stars

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Whether you are a vegetarian or just looking for ways to incorporate more vegetarian recipes into your repertoire, Vibrant India is a practical guide for bringing delicious Indian home cooking to your table on a regular basis.

If you enjoy vibrant; colorful dishes that are as appealing to the eye as it is to the taste buds Then check out Chitra Agrawal's "Vibrant India - Fresh Vegetarian Recipes from Bangalore to Brooklyn". The vegan recipis show that the lack of meat and dairy does not mean lack of flavor. Check it out today.

My rating of "Vibrant India - Fresh Vegetarian Recipes from Bangalore to Brooklyn" is 5 out of 5 stars.

Amazon Link: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01GYQ116U/...>

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GoodReads Link: <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/3...>

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T.L. Haddix says

Vibrant India

I have a confession to make – I’ve never been to an Indian restaurant. I’ve never eaten Indian food prepared by someone else. I just never had the opportunity to have that experience in the places we’ve lived. Regardless of that horrible oversight, I’m fascinated by the cuisine. But there’s so much to learn, where in the world to start?

Vibrant India would be a good place, a very good place.

Not only does this book humanize its author in a way that makes readers connect to her on a personal level, it’s approachable and down-to-earth, written with common-sense instructions that should make sense to all but the new cook who’s barely able to boil water. There are so many recipes in this book that I want to try, I don’t know where I’ll begin. Make no mistake, I will make some of these – and I’ll feel fairly confident when I do because I’ll have well-written instructions and guidance right there beside me.

The book itself is stunning, and my only complaint is that I’d like to see more pictures of the dishes. Even with that being said, as much as I love pictures in cookbooks, I can forgive that here because the content is so worth reading.

I would highly recommend this book to anyone eager to learn about Indian cuisine and at a loss as to where to start. Also, I think there’s enough content here that even chefs more experienced in cooking international cuisine would find it a worthwhile read. 4.5 out of 5.

I received this book from the Blogging for Books program in exchange for this review.

JenLovesBooks says

I absolutely adore this cook book. It is gorgeous, and of course with great recipes within. I first got taken in with the beautiful cover and it's vibrant colors, then with all the family photos and Chitra's story.

I loved the drawings in this book, and the added pictures of India, along with the dedication photo of Chitra's parents. There were also photos throughout of her childhood and of her time between Bangalore and Brooklyn. I loved all that detail added for the reader before delving into the recipes.

"For as long as I can remember, my family has taken part in the "sport" of picking vegetable and fruits. I snapped the shot below of my grandmother, great aunt, mother, and father surrounding an unassuming guava vendor as they scrutinized his stock looking for the perfect fruit. This has been a familiar scene for me all my life, and one that has shaped the style of Indian home cooking I prepare-reliant on fresh produce and ingredients."

There was an intro right on the inside of the cover pertaining to South Indian home cooking and I thought it was a nice addition to introduce us to that world. And how it invited everyone to try out and enjoy these yummy meals.

"Whether you are a vegetarian, vegan, a fan of Indian food, or just looking for ways to incorporate more healthy recipes into your repertoire, Vibrant India is a practical guide for bringing delicious Indian home cooking to your table."

The best part, of course, are the meals and sides in Vibrant India! Many had photos to go with the recipe. From Lemon Peanut Rice to Roasted Kabocha Squash & Coconut Milk Soup, others such as a Festival Trail Mix and a Mango & Coconut Milkshake. It is definitely a cookbook that I will have with me for a very long time as I LOVE all that it has to offer.

I received this copy from Crown Publishing/Penguin Random in exchange for an honest review. All opinions are my own.

Mollie says

Vibrant India is vibrantly written. The author enables the reader to feel at home in the cuisines of South India. Her love of the country and its food translates into a rapport with the ingredients and the cooking process. The author has devoted herself to enabling the reader to feel at home in the midst of the often unusual ingredients of the cuisine. At more than one point, I had to stop reading..I was salivating, immersed in the possibility of tasting the dish I had just read about.

On the down side, lentils and I are not in the best terms. The author points out early on that lentils are a mainstay of South Indian cooking. Even so, I found the variety of recipes vast enough to keep me in the kitchen for quite some time.

Highlights for me were the Radish and Kale Yogurt Raitas, the surprising Turmeric Almond Milk and vegetable dishes such as Stir Fried Corn with Basil and Leeks. Not to mention Hotel Scrambled Eggs. I could go on and on.

This cookbook is a keeper.

Amanda Rogozinski says

Pros: Mouthwatering pictures and phrasing to inspire trying new things. Authentic recipes. Step by step instructions catering to a cook new to Indian cooking, including what indian-specific ingredients are and where to find them. Extensive list of recipes that also pair well together. I am entirely pleased! I don't see a single recipe I would not want to try and I love the fresh choices of ingredients. This book gives me ideas for things I eat anyways (like corn, lentils, and cabbage) but with full-bodied new flavors.

Cons: Unless you usually cook Indian food you will have to buy quite a few new ingredients for your pantry.

Review copy courtesy of bloggingforbooks

Jackie B. - Death by Tsundoku says

Part cookbook-part Indian food manual-part memoir, Vibrant India gives the beginner Indian chef quite a lot to work with. Opening with a brief memoir, I really appreciated learning about Agrawal's journey both physically and mentally from a Southern Indian to an American entrepreneur Indian chef. Understanding her background is key to understanding the passion and patience Agrawal has put into this cookbook.

After the memoir section, Agrawal wastes no time educating the reader. My favorite part of this book is the How to Use This Book section. In it, the reader is given details about Indian ingredients, kitchen tools, techniques, and substitutes for all. Before anyone starts cooking, I strongly recommend reading this section in its entirety. Agrawal focuses on the flexibility of recipes, and is constantly addressing possible substitutes in her recipes. The recipes follow-- and they are abundant. All the recipes have English titles as well as their appropriate translations and are well detailed with techniques, tips, and potential substitutes. This means the cookbook is quite flexible.

That said, it's a lot of information to absorb. Honestly, I found the most success by taking the techniques I learned from this cookbook and applying them to simpler recipes in other cookbooks. I have been able to improve on the flavors in those recipes, but I am still struggling with some techniques. As I get more comfortable with an Indian kitchen, I will be returning to Vibrant India to dig deeper into Agrawal's recipes. What I would have loved to see was the "basic/original recipe", followed by detailed instructions for how to adapt this recipe for an American kitchen, a busy life, etc. It's hard to parse out everything at once in these recipes.

I received a copy of this book from NetGalley and Ten Speed Press in exchange for an honest review.

Fiona says

Received review copy from NetGalley and Ten Speed Press with a request that reviews shouldn't be posted until a week before the book is published. I'm respecting that (unlike others :)) so my review will follow in March 2017.

Not so smart! I forgot so here it is now -in July!

I found the concept of this book, bringing together the author's family, their history and their recipes "from Bangalore to Brooklyn", very appealing. The family story at the beginning is interesting and sets the scene for the wide range of often unusual vegetarian recipes that follows. The illustrations are excellent and I particularly enjoyed the exquisite artwork. None of these recipes are beyond a confident home cook and there were many I hadn't come across before such as Spicy Sweet Potato Buns and Pineapple and Peppers in Red Coconut Curry. My mouth waters just reading about them. I enjoyed the personal stories behind the recipes too. Overall, I found this a very satisfying and interesting recipe book, one that I'd love to share with friends.

Akhila says

Great vegetarian recipes. But what I really loved was the author's personal story from Bangalore to Brooklyn! So relatable and similar to my experience growing up. Great design too - very pretty.

Lara says

This book is beautiful, and the food looks really good, and brings me back to the days of eating dinner with my friend Zach's family from Kerala and crying because it was so spicy, but also they were tears of joy! I basically want to eat everything in this book, but I find it really intimidating.

It's one of those books where a large portion of the recipes include ingredients that are recipes in other parts of the book, and sometimes you would have to make like four other things before you could even make the thing you were trying to make in the first place! A lot of it just seems super complicated and time consuming. Also, I'm realizing that no matter how many times an item is included in other recipes, I'd rather you just repeat it on each recipe's actual page rather than directing me to several other sections. Flipping around in a print copy of a cookbook just seems ridiculous and I'm so over it!

Anyway, there are other things that seem like they'd be super easy to throw together, assuming you have all the ingredients, and there are several I am actually intending to try. It's certainly not a book I would buy because I just don't have the time or energy to make the majority of the recipes happen, but I may make note of one or two recipes that seem much more doable.

Still, this one is a pleasure to browse through and dream of having the motivation to cook like this on a regular basis!

Hannah says

This is an ok cook book. Maybe I am just overly critical at the moment because I liked the last cook book I reviewed so much, but for some reason this one did not work for me.

I absolutely love Indian cuisine; my partner and me are very well-known by the staff of the best Indian restaurants in my hometown as well as in his hometown. I love everything about it, but especially the vibrant spices and herbs used, the way it just smells so lovely and makes me happy. I also appreciate the way vegetarian cuisine seems widely respected and every restaurant offers a wide variety of choice. And lots of those parts are included in this cook book. But as it turns out, these vibrant herbs and spices are near

impossible for me to find in stores. And yes, like I said before, it cannot be the author's fault that I live in a small-ish German town. But it would have been helpful to get some pointers how I could maybe substitute some of the more 'out there' ingredients.

But there were parts of this book that I really enjoyed; most importantly it feels like a very personal book, one that is close to the heart of the author. The recipes I tried were very nice (even though I had to improvise a bit). I like the look of the book as a whole and can just imagine how lovely it will look in print. I also appreciate the things I learned about getting the most out of spices. So I definitely can recommend this book; especially if you live in bigger places with more variety in food shops.

I received an arc courtesy of NetGalley and Ten Speed Press in exchange for an honest review. Thanks for that!

Crittermom says

I love Indian food, but like many I find this rich and complex cuisine daunting. Vibrant India makes Indian vegetarian more approachable for the novice and provides a rich assortment of recipes that even experienced chefs will treasure.

Normally, I skip the beginning and jump straight to the recipes. Do not do that with Vibrant India! Chitra Agrawal provides one of the best introductions detailing not only spices and their origin but also uses, techniques and necessary equipment. I found the section on dal particularly useful as the varied assortment of beans have long been a mystery to me.

The recipes are not all traditional. Often they are bold modern takes on traditional homestyle vegetarian recipes - far different from the heavy oily cuisine we find in restaurants. I liked the Red Cabbage and Citrus Coleslaw (a variation on kosambi) that could be made with a wide variety of shredded vegetables. My husband loves the Vangi Baath (Roasted Brussel Sprouts and Cauliflower). I liked the wide array of stirfries - they make for a refreshing change from other Asian dishes. There are great desserts as well - I love the chia pudding.

The recipes do require you to have access to a wide variety of vegetables and spices, but once you have your kitchen kitted out things are a lot easier. You should expect to spend time prepping, but many of the recipes are finished quickly if you've done your homework. Vibrant India is definitely one of the nicest vegetarian Indian cookbooks I've had the pleasure to come across.

5/5

I received a copy of Vibrant India from the publisher and netgalley.com in exchange for an honest review.

—Crittermom

Sarah says

This one wasn't really for me. I was so excited by the cover, and I am always interested in learning about new aspects of Indian cuisine, but the contents were just okay. None of the recipes grabbed me, none made

my to-make list, and that was surprising.

That said, I know there will be an audience to appreciate the variety of recipes and the author's warm and straightforward manner.

I received a preview copy of this cookbook from Net Galley. All opinions are my own.

Patty says

I was very interested in this cookbook because a) I love Indian food, and b) the author lives in Brooklyn, as do I. Unfortunately I did not find it to be very useful. Part of this is simply personal; I'm a lazy cook, and usually am not willing to do recipes that require hours of preparation. I know dosa is basic to South Indian cuisine! But realistically, I am just never going to soak dal for hours, and then grind it and wait for the dough to rise, and then finally make the dosa. A lot of the recipes here require that sort of effort. My other problem with the book was the fusion recipes – they weren't appealing to me. "Cucumber, Sprouted Mung Bean, and Pomegranate Salad" or "Butter Lettuce “Dosa” Wrap with Curried Potato and Chutney" or "Ben's Curry Leaf Popcorn" are interesting ideas, sure, but just not for me.

On the other hand, I did like several of the vegetable curry recipes, as well as the multitude of sambar and rasam varieties. It's also always nice to see a book that focuses on a region of Indian food that is not the Punjab, which vastly dominates Indian restaurants in the US.

I read this as an ARC via NetGalley.

Aja Marsh says

Beautifully laid out and great photos with approachable, interesting collection of vegetarian South Indian recipes from Chitra's family and her own inventions. I love the mix of tradition with modern elements and have already made a few recipes from this book (mmm, coconut rice). And also thankful she gives vegan options/substitutes for most recipes as possible!

Cherie says

Gorgeous book, full of wonderful veg recipes, personal history, great pics. Breaks down a lot of Indian cooking - love this.
