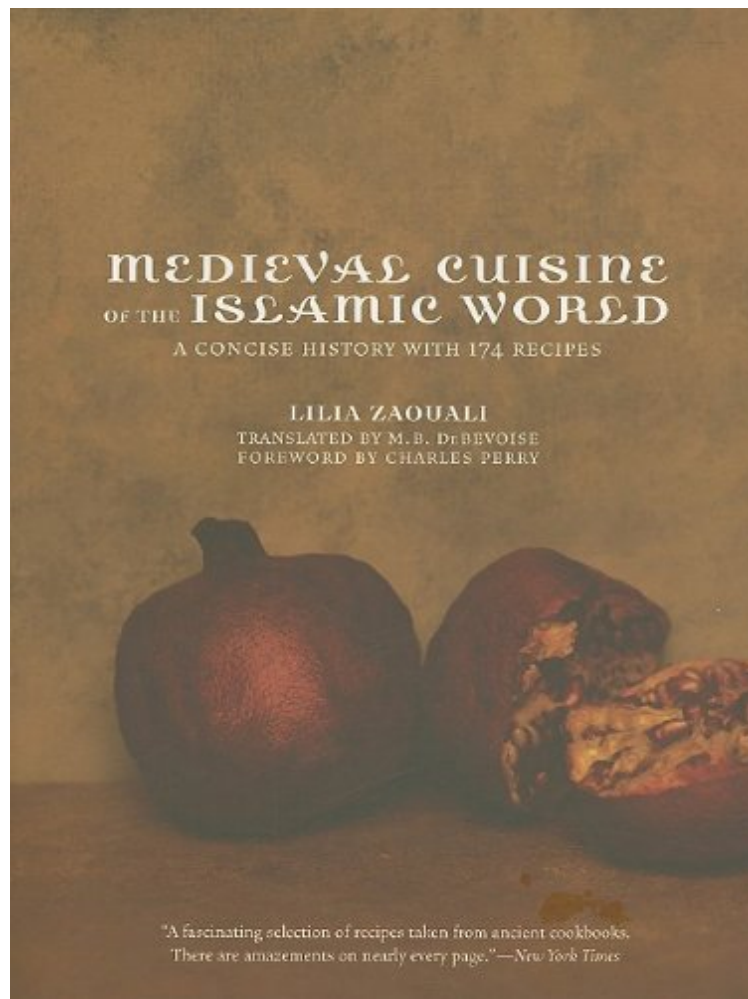


[Ebook free] Medieval Cuisine of the Islamic World: A Concise History with 174 Recipes (California Studies in Food and Culture)

Medieval Cuisine of the Islamic World: A Concise History with 174 Recipes (California Studies in Food and Culture)

Lilia Zaouali

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Lilia Zaouali : Medieval Cuisine of the Islamic World: A Concise History with 174 Recipes (California Studies in Food and Culture) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Medieval Cuisine of the Islamic World: A Concise History with 174 Recipes (California Studies in Food and Culture):

83 of 84 people found the following review helpful. "Bang the casserole against the ground," an instruction from one of the recipes in Medieval Cuisine of the Islamic World (p.135)By a reader"Bang the casserole against the ground," an instruction from one of the recipes in Medieval Cuisine of the Islamic World (p.135). (Kids, do not do this at home!)The book was written in French, translated to Italian, and from the Italian into English, that is a long journey to

take for a text dealing with medieval Islamic cookery written originally in Arabic. The book, nevertheless, generally makes a smooth read, with the exception of some instances where the reader is left puzzled whether the translation, the writer or the original Arabic texts and recipes are indeed to blame. Some things did get lost in translation, all right. There are places where ingredients are wrongly identified and sentences not accurately construed. For instance, according to a recipe, the dish is presented by stacking chicken pieces on top of each other (p.64), whereas in reality, the recipe asks the cook to arrange the pieces (tunadhdhad) on the platter. A medieval pot called dast is inaccurately translated as a 'jar.' Jam, once again, is rendered as a jar (196), whereas, in the medieval culinary lingo it is actually a platter. Pickled lemons kept in brine (musayyar), the signature condiment of the North African cuisine then and now, is erroneously rendered as 'candied lemon' (p.67), or 'lemon coated with salt' (p. 138). The flavor of one of the dishes in a recipe is described as "sweet and sour flavor that influences the mood of the person who eats it (p. 81)," whereas the original recipe simply suggests that the sweetness and sourness of the dish is to be determined by the eater's mizaj temperament, in modern terms, "adjust to taste." The green seeds in one of the recipes are not cardamom as rendered (p. 130), but terebinth berries. The quince and onions that have been "chopped but not cut up into pieces," (p. 139) - does not make sense at all, are in fact to be "slashed into sections, but not all the way down" as the original Arabic recipe instructs. Some of the statements sound rather funny, a condiment recipe, for instance calls for "locusts that have returned from hunting" (p. 140), which should be "locusts that have just been caught," (140). Or, the recipe instructs the cook to "bang the casserole against the ground" (135)- sounds like the medieval cook was under a lot of stress! In fact, the cook is asked to put the pot on the ground away from the fire, and beat the cooking dessert vigorously. There are also some inaccurate generalizations, such as fish was mostly consumed dried in the eastern medieval Islamic world. The best part in the book is the first, dealing with background of the medieval Arab cuisine. It is well researched, although I find it strange that there is no bibliography. It would have been nice to see the sources that contributed to the research put together at one place, as I do not think the inclusion of a bibliography would have made the book less appetizing to the 'general reader.' In the third part, which entirely focuses on modern North African dishes, the writer's own cuisine, I felt the need, especially when in a lazy mood, for a brief note telling me where in the second part (dealing with the original medieval recipes) a given modern recipe has its counterpart. Besides, medieval weights are not explained, neither are we given the modern equivalents, except for the pound, which is mentioned alongside the dirham and uqiyya, which does not help much. I also find it odd that the back flap of the dust jacket, while it includes a brief description of the writer and the forwarder, the translator, who, besides working on the text and has, in his own words, "made a great many changes to the organization of the Italian edition while also adding a good deal of material to the text, glossary and notes" was left out. As a reader, I am entitled to know something about him, as well. All things considered, the book after all is what it claims to be, a concise history. It is smartly packaged and priced, visually appealing with some color medieval illustrations. So, all in all, it can be a fair deal. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Well written recipes that are easily followed. Interesting historical information. By SeekingWell written recipes that are easily followed. Interesting historical information, but it is difficult to tell quickly the actual source and time period of the individual recipes is. It would be 5 stars if this was more easy to discern as you looked at each recipe. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. adventures in food. By Nancy M. Parker Fascinating history of Islamic cookery from Persia to Spain, recipes are translated exactly but clearly. A glossary of untranslated terms is provided but could have been improved by a simple table of equivalent measures. The reader is left mostly to his own devices when finding modern substitutes for medieval seasonings though there is some discussion of what they would have tasted like. (trust me, you don't want to make kamakh, but thinning bleu cheese with milk should come close enough)

Vinegar and sugar, dried fruit, rose water, spices from India and China, sweet wine made from raisins and dates these are the flavors of the golden age of Arab cuisine. This book, a delightful culinary adventure that is part history and part cookbook, surveys the gastronomical art that developed at the Caliph's sumptuous palaces in ninth- and tenth-century Baghdad, drew inspiration from Persian, Greco-Roman, and Turkish cooking, and rapidly spread across the Mediterranean. In a charming narrative, Lilia Zaouali brings to life Islam's vibrant culinary heritage. The second half of the book gathers an extensive selection of original recipes drawn from medieval culinary sources along with thirty-one contemporary recipes that evoke the flavors of the Middle Ages. Featuring dishes such as Chicken with Walnuts and Pomegranate, Beef with Pistachios, Bazergan Couscous, Lamb Stew with Fresh Apricots, Tuna and Eggplant Pure with Vinegar and Caraway, and Stuffed Dates, the book also discusses topics such as cookware, utensils, aromatic substances, and condiments, making it both an entertaining read and an informative resource for anyone who enjoys the fine art of cooking.

Engaging and informative. . . . A valuable addition to the literature on medieval Arab cuisine.