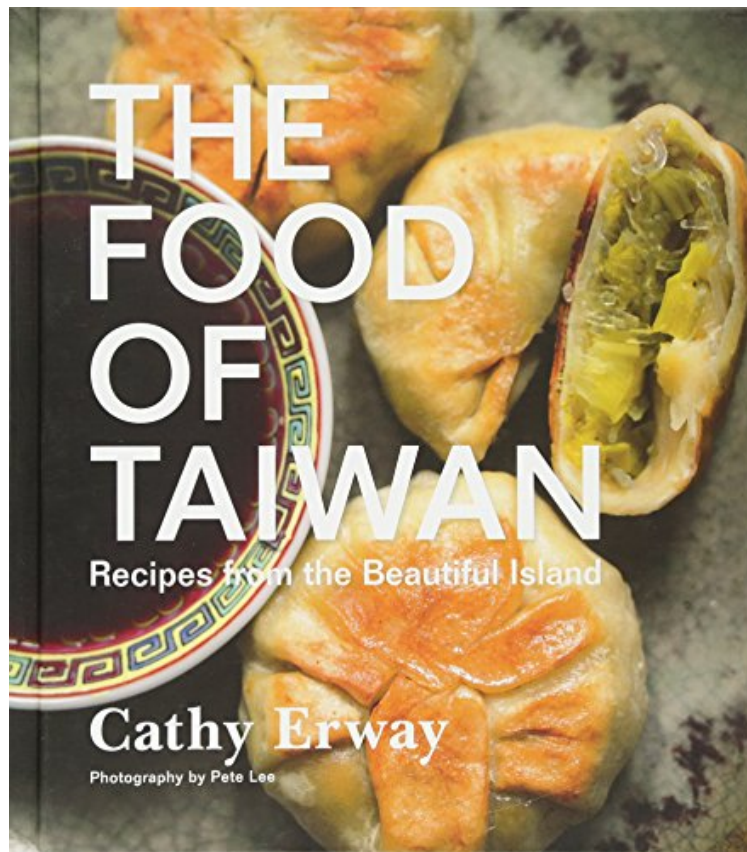


## The Food of Taiwan: Recipes from the Beautiful Island

*Cathy Erway*

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**Cathy Erway : The Food of Taiwan: Recipes from the Beautiful Island** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Food of Taiwan: Recipes from the Beautiful Island:

35 of 37 people found the following review helpful. Excellent coffee table book, not so precise cookbookBy WM CooksThis beautifully photographed book contains plenty of history in the introduction, and is very thorough and eloquent in describing the unique ingredients and cookware used in Taiwanese cooking. It also provides an ample overview of many regions of Taiwan and styles of cooking in a cultural context. But as far as the recipes go for a cookbook, I did not think the measurements or methods were entirely precise and replicable. I tried over 25 of the recipes over about a month. Here is a sampling of the results:- Pineapple Tarts: Tasted fine, but there was likely too much butter in the crust... 2.5 sticks for only 12 tarts. (I have another recipe for Pineapple Tarts from a separate source that uses drastically different proportions of butter and flour, to much better results.) Upon shaping the tarts, they looked promising, but after 30 minutes in the oven, all 12 tarts had melted into each other and the “crust” was near dripping off of the baking sheet.- Meatball Mochi (Ba Wan): The filling was not flavorful enough and didn't stick together in the way it should (the main components are pork and bamboo shoots without much else). In addition, the recipe only used 2 T of the mochi mixture per meatball, resulting in an extra 3 cups of mochi mixture leftover. This could have been better proportioned to match the amount of filling, or at least a note included as to whether the mochi

can be saved for later.- Three Cup Chicken: This turned out extremely salty. The second time I made it, I used 1/4 of the written 1 cup of soy sauce, for much better results. One possible explanation could be the differences in salinity of various brands of soy sauce, even if they are labeled "light". It would be helpful if specific brands/photos of condiments were suggested.- Pan-Fried Leek Buns: The filling was good and I appreciate the suggestion for Chinese leek substitutions, but the recipe does not say to pan-fry the buns on both sides... yet the photo on the cover of the book, as well as my experience, told me that they should be fried on both sides.- Pork Meat Sauce: After my Three Cup Chicken experience, I decreased the soy sauce called for in Pork Meat Sauce (prepared in a similar style with a long braising time in a soy-based sauce), and it was much more enjoyable.- Taiwanese Pork Belly Buns (Red-Braised Pork Belly and Marinated Cucumbers recipes): For the Pork Belly recipe, I found that 2 cups of water diluted the flavor of the other ingredients in the braising liquid. Next time, I would decrease the amount of water or let the liquid reduce some over the 2 hour cooking time. Marinated cucumbers were standard.- Some recipes (such as Braised Cabbage with Dried Shrimp and Shiitake Mushrooms, Fried Chicken Bites, or Sauteed King Oyster Mushrooms with Ginger) that had fewer components and employed minimal seasonings were much more successful, as I was able to easily adjust the seasoning to taste. In addition, it would be much more helpful and comforting if the photographs matched what could be achieved in the average home kitchen. Many of the photographs are from street vendors or restaurants, which doesn't accurately reflect the "homemade" or "Americanized" version of the recipe as written. I would have also benefited from photos of the process for more specialized methods such as how to shape a bun properly. This book is an excellent survey of Taiwanese cuisine – but be cautious if using it as a cookbook and only regard the recipes as a base or inspiration for your own cooking, as the recipes are lacking in thorough testing, specificity in less common ingredients, and precision in measurements. Use your cooking common sense and taste for seasoning as you go. There are a few recipes that are winners, but not enough to warrant a place for this book on my cookbook shelf. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Highly recommended for the food adventurer in yourself or your loved ...By P. YuFor anyone who loves food, travel, Taiwan, SE Asia, and cultural flavors--this book is a must-read. Unique and delicious recipes highlight the unusual mix of culinary traditions that unite Taiwan cuisine, and gorgeous photos make the food leap right off the page. Highly recommended for the food adventurer in yourself or your loved ones. 3 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Excellent and Do-able Recipes from TaiwanBy PatAfter I heard the author talk about the food of Taiwan on an edition of the Splendid Table, I realized that I wanted to try the book to find out more about this aspect of Chinese food. While the historical and cultural information is interesting and well written, I am most delighted with the book primarily because of the excellent quality of the recipes. They are clearly written, and a nice variety of vegetable dishes are included. I read all the way through and now have a long list of things to try. The steamed eggplant is a wonderful method for cooking that vegetable. Any topping would be delicious with the soft creamy texture that results after slices of Asian eggplant are steamed. The book does require access to Chinese ingredients. And a good wok and a steamer might not technically be required but would make working with the recipes easier.

Acclaimed author Cathy Erway offers an insider's look at Taiwanese cooking—from home-style dishes to authentic street food While certain dishes from Taiwan are immensely popular, like steamed buns and bubble tea, the cuisine still remains relatively unknown in America. In *The Food of Taiwan*, Taiwanese-American Cathy Erway, the acclaimed blogger and author of *The Art of Eating In*, gives readers an insider's look at Taiwanese cooking with almost 100 recipes for both home-style dishes and street food. Recipes range from the familiar, such as Pork Belly Buns, Three Cup Chicken, and Beef Noodle Soup, to the exotic, like the Stuffed Bitter Melon, Oyster Noodle Soup, and Dried Radish Omelet. Tantalizing food photographs intersperse with beautiful shots of Taiwan's coasts, mountains, and farms and gritty photos of bustling city scenes, making this book just as enticing to flip through as it is to cook from.

"In this appetizing collection, Erway (*The Art of Eating In*), an acclaimed blogger at Not Eating Out in NY, takes readers on a cultural and culinary tour of Taiwan that will engage armchair travelers and foodies alike... From pantry staples such as chili bean sauce, ginger, and rice wine to the vibrant night markets that take over entire streets, she offers an insider's perspective of the Taiwanese lifestyle and reveals what makes a dish distinctly Taiwanese. In addition to chapters on appetizers, vegetables, meat, and seafood, she explores the lasting culinary influences of military villages, train bento boxes, and Taiwanese tea. Recipes for fried pork chop noodle soup, shredded chicken over rice, and Hakka-style sweet green tea convey cultural insight as well as instruction... Photos of everyday people, the diverse landscape, and alluring dishes complete this engaging and delightful collection." —*Publisher's Weekly*, starred review