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Under the Golden Pagoda: The Best of Burmese Cooking

Aung Aung Taik

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Includes over 150 easy-to-follow recipes for appetizers, soups, poultry, meat, fish, shellfish, salads, vegetables, rice and desserts that reflect the best in Burmese cooking.

From Publishers WeeklyTaik left Burma in 1972, but luckily has brought a knowledge of its spiced yet subtle cuisine to a new home in America, and now shares it. Like the multiethnic Burmese themselves, Burmese food reflects varied

influences, from Indian to Chinese; rice is a mainstay, and though the country is largely Buddhist, meat-eating is common. Taik's book addresses all the usual culinary fronts--soups, appetizers, main courses, salads, vegetables and desserts--with quiet assurance and an exotic accent, offering "Butheekyaw" (golden brown gourd strips), "Bairthar Sepyan" (duck curry), "Shwephayonethee Hin" (pumpkin curry), "Whetchidauk Pyoke" (boiled pig's feet with ginger and garlic) and "Whetnaywet Thoke" (pig's ear salad), among others. The dessert section is very brief, but practical, eschewing the elaborate preparations of special occasions. Taik's glossary (ginger juice, sriracha chile sauce) is appreciated, and so is the author's modest wit. "Chicken used to cause conflict within me," Taik reflects. "I loved watching the birds roaming freely in our backyard in Rangoon, yet their meat was my favorite. Now that I have lived in America for quite a few years, I am more at ease with that earlier sentiment. When I buy a chicken here, it has no life with which I am familiar." Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc.