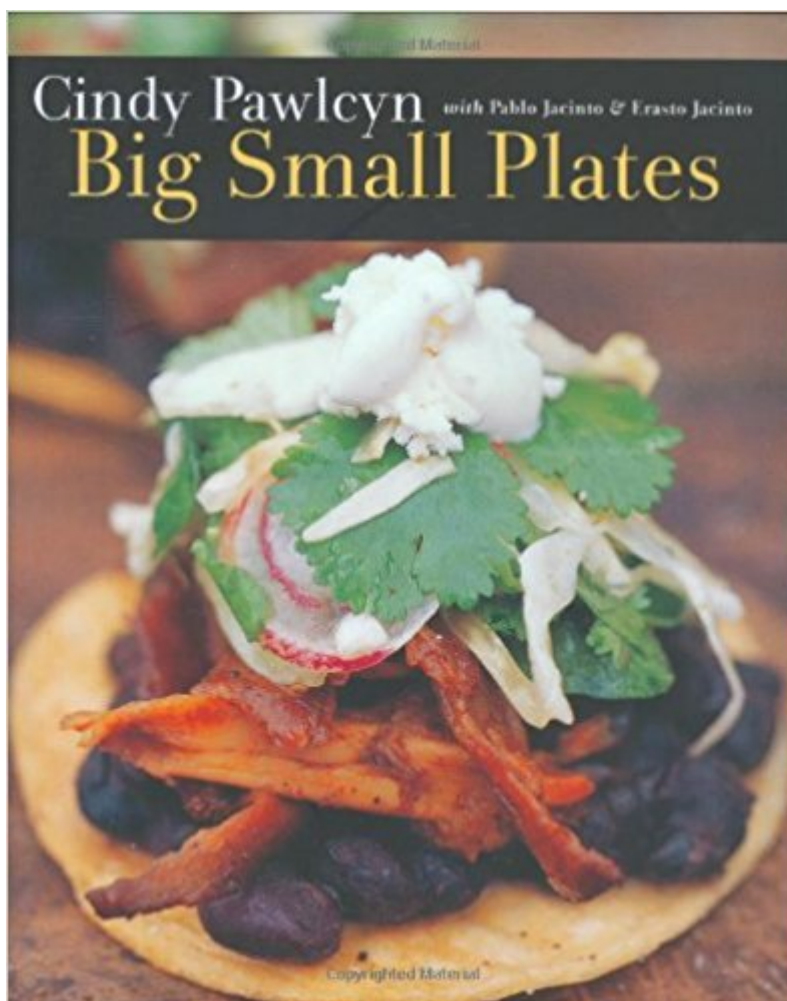


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Big Small Plates



Synopsis

Fans of Cindy Pawlcyn's Mustards Grill have been making meals out of her sampler-size starters for years. In **BIG SMALL PLATES**, Cindy brings home the biggest trend in eating out, with generously scaled recipes that promise less fuss and more flavors than traditional appetizers. The wide-ranging collection of universally appealing recipes spans soups, finger foods, salads, scoopables, and even sweets designed to satisfy big appetites as well as grazers. An alternative to conventional, varietyless main-course cooking, Cindy's small plate recipes deliver the inspiration and reliability that make this new way of eating-and entertaining-practical at home. A cookbook of 150 sampler-size recipes from Mustards Grill, Cindy's Backstreet Kitchen, and Pawlcyn's home repertoire, in her signature all-American style with Californian and global influences. Includes 150 gorgeous food, ingredient, and location photos. Pawlcyn's previous book **MUSTARDS** has sold more than 60,000 copies. **MUSTARDS** won the James Beard award for Best American Cookbook in 2002 and was nominated for the IACP Cookbook of the Year Award. Reviews "Cindy Pawlcyn is all about big fun and big flavors." -San Jose Mercury News "Cindy Pawlcyn's rollicking Big Small Plates has a cornucopia of brightly flavored small dishes." -Boston Globe "As a basic guide to the wonderful fare served at Mustards and Cindy's Backstreet Kitchen, Big Small Plates has more than enough to go around." -Wine News "The kind of cookbook I just can't resist." -Oakland Tribune "[A]n ample selection of some of the more delicious tidbits you'll ever taste." -Sacramento Bee "Pawlcyn's new book focuses on small plates-tapas-in a grand way." -Baltimore Sun "Buy this book because the recipes are flavorful, diverse, and conducive to infinite applications." -ChefTalk.com "The Napa Valley super chef and entrepreneur's praiseworthy-and successful-attempt to bring the small-plates trend into the home kitchen." -San Francisco Chronicle "Anyone looking for first courses or cocktail party food recipes will find no lack of inspiration here." -Booklist "An enormously appealing book full of heart, and food that's refreshingly real and often adventurous." -Portland Oregonian

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Customer Reviews

In *Big Small Plates*, Cindy Pawlcyn, chef at more than a dozen restaurants including Mustards Grill in the Napa Valley, offers 100-plus recipes for her signature small dishes, to be served as hors d'oeuvres, starters, or, when combined, as a meal. Strongly influenced by Mexican, South American, and Asian cooking, these include the tempting likes of Asparagus with Shiitake Spring Rolls, Mussels and Clams with Andouille Sausage in Tangerine Broth, Fried Green Tomatoes with Spicy R  moulade, and Black Pepper and Garlic Chicken Wings. The book also offers a small selection of sweets, such as Ann's Chocolate Biscuits and Lemon-Buttermilk Pudding Cake with Chantilly Cream and Berries, plus useful tips and menus that help readers match the dishes for various occasions. Readers also learn that any recipe may be increased to serve as a meal centerpiece. Pawlcyn excels at recipe writing, so readers will have no trouble reproducing the dishes at home; chatty notes also offer comprehensive dish context while providing a sense of Pawlcyn's rather astonishing professional journey that began in 1983 and is still going strong. Her commitment to good food and enjoyment of the cooking process, implicit throughout, should rub off on her readers. With lovely color photos, this is a personal cookbook of the very best and most instructive kind. --Arthur Boehm

In her newest (after *Mustards Grill Napa Valley Cookbook*), Pawlcyn explores her love of appetizers and small dishes, emphasizing foods from Spain, Mexico, and Central and South America and including recipes from her restaurants, past and present. She breaks down chapters into playful categories: "Sticks, Picks, and with Fingers," for example, focuses on foods meant to be eaten by hand, Pawlcyn's admittedly favorite way to eat. Foods served on toast, tortillas or shells appear under "On a Raft," while "Bowls and Spoons" features soups and stews (such as Mussels and Clams with Andouille Sausage in Tangerine Broth). Throughout, Pawlcyn favors seasonal ingredients, be it a recipe for Grilled Radicchio and Scallions with Black Olives or Crispy Fried Rabbit with Dijon-Chervil Sauce. While some dishes, like Pan Roasted Hazelnuts and Chile Garlic Peanuts, are straightforward, others, such as Salt Cod Cakes with Garlic Aioli, require a bit of work.

But Pawlcyn is unapologetic: "When it comes to cooking, the little extra you do makes a huge difference, so sweat the details." But the desserts (Baked Peach Crisps, Oranges and Smashed Cherries) are delightfully simple, and the menu suggestions at the end, categorized by season, will inspire any home cook. (Sept.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

This book doesn't just give recipes and great pictures, it gave me insight into Cindy, what she's going for, and how a non-professional can cook to impress w/o making yourself crazy. I haven't tried many, but liked what I did. She gives a lot of substitution suggestions in case you either don't have access to some of the less known/available ingredients so you don't feel like you wasted your money. For me, it was well worth the money. Actually met Cindy last year and she is just as sweet, helpful and caring as she seems on TV.

What's not to love about this book? I'm a fan of Cindy's Napa restaurants and have made at least 10 recipes from this book in just two months and every one has been a winner! Her recipes are just complex enough to make you look like a star in the kitchen without actually working that hard, and some are easy enough to do for weeknight dinners. Most of the ingredients she uses are easily accessible, at least in California, and are bold or surprising enough to make the dish really stand out. This book is truly about an experience of food, from gathering fresh ingredients, to working with bringing the flavors together, and sharing them with friends and family. Love this book!

Great ideas !!

'Big Small Plates' by northern California restaurateur / chef / cookbook writer, Cindy Pawlcyn, assisted by her restaurant co-owners and co-chefs, brothers Pablo Jacinto and Erasto Jacinto needs just a little explanation on its title and contents. The contradiction in the 'Big Small' is explained by substituting 'seriously delicious' for 'Big' and 'appetizers' or 'hors d'ourves' for 'Small'. 'Plates' obviously doesn't mean crockery, it means a dish of food. On reading the introduction, I was looking forward to a book on the Mexican analogues to the Mediterranean 'little dishes' or tapas from Spain, 'hors d'ourves' and 'amuse bouche' from France, anti-pasto from Italy, and Meze from Greece and Turkey. It turns out that over half of the dishes in this book are from this very same Mediterranean 'appetizer central', augmented by a number of dishes from south Asia (India), southeast Asia, (Thailand and Vietnam), and east Asia (China and Japan). When the dust

settles, the Mexican dishes are in a distinct minority. This does not mean this is a weak book! It only means that if your bookshelves are already creaking under the weight of cookbooks from the Mediterranean and the Pacific rim, there may be less new material here than you may expect. On balance, I suggest that no matter how many Italian, French, Spanish, Indian, Thai, Chinese, and Japanese cookbooks you already have, if you do not have a 'go to' book on appetizers, this volume may be your answer. Another thing is that this is definitely a foodie book. There is not even the pretense of 'fast' or 'easy' or 'cheap' cooking here. Since these are 'starters', few of the dishes are difficult, but virtually all of them, except for some of the desserts, require some definitely serious culinary skills with techniques such as grilling, deep-frying and dough making. A second symptom that this is a foodie book is the number of unusual ingredients called for in many of the recipes. Over half of the recipes will require a trip to the Latin American, East Indian, or Chinese grocery store or a very well stocked megamart. Most of these unusual ingredients such as lemongrass are becoming more familiar, but others such as Kaffir Lime leaves are still very hard to find. I was just a bit disappointed with the list of sources, as almost all of them are in or around Napa Valley. Of course, all do Internet or Mail Order business, but still, the author could have been just a bit less Napa-centric. Very important is the fact that this book has that ephemeral quality so eloquently described in 'Cook What You Love' by Bob and Melinda Blanchard. The authors are totally in love with what they are doing, and they succeed in passing that enthusiasm on to the reader. That means the book is simply fun to read, which makes it that much more fun to look for interesting recipes. Since the book is all about appetizer recipes, the organization is a bit unusual, dividing the dishes up into the means by which these little bites would be eaten. The chapter headings are: Chapter 1. Sticks, Picks, and with Fingers (obvious enough) Chapter 2. Dressed, Not Naked (Salads and dressings) Chapter 3. Bowls and Spoons (Soups, nicht wahr) Chapter 4. On a Raft (Crostini, Bruschetta, Biscuits, and other bread platforms) Chapter 5. Knife and Fork (or things needing end-user cutting) Chapter 6. Something Sweet (largely 'assembled' quick desserts). The book has one of my favorite features for a 200-recipe book. That is, its table of contents gives all the titles of all the recipes right up there in the beginning of the book. That, combined with the organization, makes a perfect way of picking three dishes with the right combination of eating techniques. One does need to know, however, that hidden among these 'main' recipes are quite a few supplementary recipes for things such as aioli, tartar sauce, and miscellaneous other condiments. A separate chapter for these is the usual way to go, but that can be annoying too. Good compromise may have been a supplementary listing of supporting recipes. This book also has the distinction of being the very first one I have found which uses corn mold as a recipe ingredient. I

became aware of this while watching the very first `Iron Chef America' match between Bobby Flay and Rick Bayless, when Bayless pulled it out of his wrapping of day-old `Chicago Tribune' pages. The authors say one can find this stuff in Mexican groceries. I leave it to you, fair reader, to try this one out and report back! As `restaurant books' go, this one is superior to most as both a good read and a good source of very well-written recipes for entertaining, although you will not, as in a Thomas Keller book, be treated to a lot of teaching on new techniques. Rather, it will be up to you to know your way around the kitchen and a well-stocked pantry. Highly Recommended.

A friend, who is a fabulous cook, recommended this book to me. I bought one for myself and one for my daughter. We both have been extremely happy with the recipes. I find that even though it is titled "Small Plates" these recipes serve well as dinner entrees. Last night I went to my friends for dinner (the one who recommended the book), she fixed the Lamb Chops and Shrimp Cocktail with avocado. They were absolutely delicious. I would highly recommend this book.

Nice book...great recipes so far! Nice for appetizers or small plate dinners.

Cindy Pawlcyn and her collaborators have done it again. Their latest book is a gem. The recipes are approachable by all and share ingredients you can find easily even if you don't live in produce rich Napa California. The flavors are as luxurious as Laurie Smith's photos. Cindy and team always manage to pull you in to the culture, the feeling and the way of life that the cooking conveys. Many authors publish books of their recipes but this book takes you on the journey and doesn't disappoint. The food is great, the recipes are rock solid and you can't go wrong with this one. If you love "Mustard's" or if you were a fan of Miramonte you will love it.

A great addition to my small meals collection of cookbooks. Love it!

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