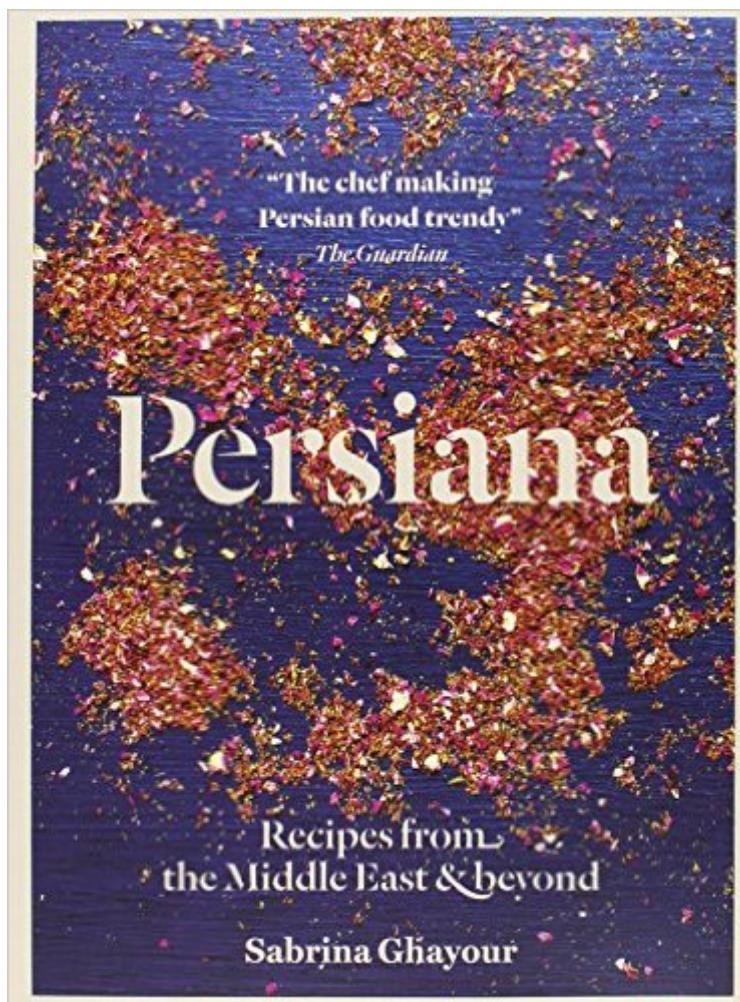


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# Persiana: Recipes From The Middle East & Beyond



## **Synopsis**

A FABULOUS COLLECTION OF RECIPES FROM ONE OF THE STRONGEST VOICES IN MIDDLE EASTERN FOOD TODAYA celebration of the food and flavors from the regions near the Southern and Eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea, with over 100 recipes for modern and accessible Middle Eastern dishes, including Lamb & Sour Cherry Meatballs; Chicken, Preserved Lemon & Olive Tagine; Blood Orange & Radicchio Salad; Persian Flatbread; and Spiced Carrot, Pistachio & Coconut Cake with Rosewater Cream.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This is a fabulous cook book: dishes are thoughtfully chosen, explanations are clear, pictures are terrific, and results impressive. It makes you rush to the kitchen and cook. As an Iranian I find Sabrina's take on many traditional dishes very refreshing -- the wink and tease I mentioned have to do with the unexpected little touches Sabrina adds that wake up traditional taste buds and make them do a little flip. I love it!BTW the reviewer who said the recipes are stolen from others is just not informed about Middle Eastern cooking. Of course Sabrina's recipes resemble others'; most of them are takes on well-known dishes carrying ID cards with traditional names. That's the whole point. She has turned sometimes fussy and sometimes too grandmotherly dishes into snappy little modern numbers without sacrificing authenticity. As an Iranian citizen of the world I feel this cook book represents me. I've already given two as presents!

I fell in love with Iranian food back in my college days--pre-revolution--when my Persian friends

cooked their mothers' home recipes for me. I found it fresh, flavorful, beautiful on the plate, and full of surprises. Fast forward many years and I have accumulated a shelf full of Middle Eastern/Mediterranean cookbooks, many of them exclusively Persian. I love this cuisine so much, complex yet simple, refined yet rustic--consider it one of the greats, right up there with Mexican/French/Italian--that I find a new Persian cookbook hard to resist. It is an irresistible collection. For all you picture hounds, there is a full-page color picture of the completed dish for every recipe. That's right. Every...single...one. (I keep Kindle for PC installed on both my laptop and desktop computers for just such books as this. The pictures look good on my Kindle Fire (the 7" one), but they look spectacular on a large HD monitor. Every little detail... You foodies know what of I speak. Sigh!) Ingredients are given in both metric and American tsp/tblsp/ounces etc. (I read somewhere recently that the U.S. is one of three countries left hanging on to non-metric measurements. Surely we will eventually bow to the majority, but I hope it's after I'm no longer cooking. In the meantime all my new kitchen measuring cups and spoons have both standards clearly imprinted, so I don't miss out, or get confused. Just a suggestion...) The whole cookbook has been edited with the view to international distribution. But, the one thing, the only thing, I've found which wasn't "translated" for Americans is the oven temperature, which is given in Centigrade and "gas mark". But the internet is full of converters, so no biggie. Chapters are as follows: Mezze (appetizers, etc.)--19 recipes Breads and Grains--9 recipes Soups, Stews, and Tagines--12 recipes Roasts and Grills--22 recipes Salads and Vegetables--26 recipes Desserts and Sweet Treats--12 recipes A grand total of 100 and I'm determined to cook my way through all of them. There are a number of recipes for lamb, but beef can be easily substituted, a lesson learned from an old American friend married to an Iranian who always said she was a better cook than his mother (high praise indeed). I live in a small town, surrounded by small towns, where a variety of lambs cuts are expensive and not readily available. I don't know if the author would approve; I just know it can be done. (If you're interested, the book which made my friend into a "better than my mother's" Persian cook is "Persian Cooking" by Nesta Ramazani and is still in print and available on . It's fabulous beyond words and thorough, but be warned, there are no pictures.) Any unfamiliar spices (sumac, for example) are easily obtainable online from vendors like Penzey's (the best, IMHO). Persians are very fond of fresh herbs in quantity, nothing unusual, but if you fall in love with this cuisine, you might want to grow some of your own, quite easily done in pots on a window sill in a pinch. Just a few words about rice cooked Persian style: It is heavenly. Fluffy, tender, toothsome, aromatic, every grain separate from its neighbor. Fixed plain or fancy, it is hands-down the best prepared rice I've ever eaten. And it reheats beautifully for leftovers. You will never fix rice any other way. This isn't a

collection full of ingredients that you've never heard of or wouldn't recognize on the grocery shelf. The recipes are clearly written, easy to follow. Techniques are simple and successful results should be well within the reach of the average home cook. This would be a fine introduction to one of the world's great cuisines. Highest recommendation!

I am a big fan of the Ottolenghi cookbooks - Jerusalem, in particular - and over the last few years, I've come to love the flavor profiles of food from the Middle East and Central Asia. However, as much as I love the recipes in Jerusalem, they are definitely 'weekend' recipes - I have yet to make anything that took less than 45 minutes, and I often feel as if I need a sous chef. The great thing about Persiana is that you have a similar intensity of flavor and liberal use of spices, herbs, and vegetables, but the recipes are a lot more user-friendly. I especially recommend this cookbook for "mixed" (i.e. vegetarians and meat-eaters) households, as there is enough in here to keep everybody happy. Although, TBH, I think there are just about enough hearty non-meat dishes in here to justify the purchase even for strictly vegetarian households.

Persiana by Sabrina Ghayour is a wonderful recipe book, with good instructions, mouth-watering images, a nice layout, a fabulous variety of Middle Eastern foods and very enjoyable to cook from! I have made a fair few recipes from this book so far and have generally been pleased with the results though I have tweaked a few here and there to suit mine and my husband's personal taste. Do pay attention to the salt, it is probably best to only use sea salt flakes to ensure recipes are not too salty (as mentioned in another review they are large so you end up with less per teaspoon). I used normal sea salt in one recipe and it was ruined, far too salty! If you don't want to use sea salt flakes, remember to reduce the amount of salt used. Other than that issue, I am very pleased with this recipe book and would definitely recommend it. Recipe list provided below:

**MEZZE & SHARING PLATES**

Broad beans with garlic, dill and eggs (Baghala Ghatogh)

Aubergine (Chermoula)

Yoghurt with cucumber, garlic and dill (Cacik)

Marinated feta

Smoked aubergines with garlic (Mirza Ghasemi)

Yoghurt, cucumber and mint (Maast O Khiar)

Smoked aubergine salad (Batinjan al Rahib)

Persian herb frittata (Kuku Sabzi)

Hummus

Spicy tomato and pepper dip (Ezme)

Turkish feta pastry cigars (Sigara Bârek Peynir)

Salt cod fritters

Pistachio and feta dip

Safavid-style beef pastries

Baked eggs with feta, harissa tomato sauce and coriander

Spiced beef and potato cakes (Kotlet)

Lahmacun

Spiced lamb (Kefta)

Spice salted squid

**BREADS & GRAINS**

Eastern-style focaccia

Persian flatbread (Naan Barbari)

Persian herb rice (Sabzi Polow)

Persian bejewelled rice (Morassa Polow)

Persian basmati rice (Chelo)

Rice with lentils and crispy onions (Mojardara)

Tomato

bulgar wheat (Bulgar Pilavi)Spicy prawn rice (Maygoo Polow)Lamb biryani  
SOUPS, STEWS & TAGINESBamiaSpiced vegetable soupChicken, preserved lemon and olive taginePersian saffron chicken, fennel and barberry stewChicken, walnut and pomegranate stew  
(Khoresh-e-Fesenjan)Lamb and vegetable tagineLamb shank, black garlic and tomato taginePersian dried lamb, lamb and split pea stew (Khoresh-e-Gheymeh)Spiced lamb and apricot stewLamb, butternut squash, prune and tamarind taginePomegranate soup with meatballs (Ash-e Anar)Seafood and saffron stewROASTS & GRILLSStuffed aubergines with lamb, onions and tomatoes (Karniyarik)Saffron and rosemary chicken filletsChicken bastillaRas el hanout chicken wrapsHarissa and preserved lemon roasted poussinsSaffron and lemon chicken (Joojeh Kabab)Lamb and sour cherry meatballsMechouia-style lamb leg with cumin dipping saltSpiced rack of lamb with pomegranate sauceTurkish adana KÄ¶fte kebabsTray-baked rose petal lamb chops with chilli and herbsLamb and pistachio pattiesSpice-perfumed shoulder of lambSeared beef with pomegranate and balsamic dressingQuince and pomegranate glazed porkCod in tamarind, coriander and fenugreek sauce (Ghelyeh Mahi)Prawns with sumac, coriander, lemon and garlicCitrus-spiced salmonBelly-stuffed rainbow trout (Mahi shekampor)Scallops and shaved fennel with saffron, honey and citrus vinaigretteZa'atar cod with relishBandari monkfish tailsSALADS & VEGETABLESBlood orange and radicchio saladBarley salad with griddled broccoli and za'atarRadish, cucumber and red onion salad with mint and orange blossom dressingPuy lentil and quinoa salad with lemon and sumacPomegranate tabbouleh cupsTomato salad with pomegranate molasses (Gavurdagi Salatası)Turkish white bean salad (Piyaz)Bulgur wheat salad (Kisir)Quinoa salad with toasted pistachios, preserved lemons and courgettesSalad oliviehChicken and artichoke salad with yoghurt dressingFig and green bean salad with date molasses and toasted almondsFennel and apple salad, dill and pomegranate seedsShirazi saladRed rice salad with barberries, grilled vegetables and toasted almondsFattoush saladChargrilled aubergines with saffron yoghurt, parsley and pickled chilliesSpiced root vegetable cakes with tamarind and date saucePersian kashk auberginesCumin-roasted carrots with honey-lemon dressing and goat's cheeseHarissa-marinated asparagusTray-roasted baby courgettes with garlic and tomatoButternut squash with pistachio, pesto, feta and pomegranate seedsTurmeric and cumin roasted potatoesRoasted garlic and sweet potato pureeZa'atar roasted squash with spiced yoghurt and pickled chilliesDESSERTS & SWEET TREATSSpiced carrot, pistachio and almond cake with rosewater creamBaklavaLacy saffron fritters with pistachio and dill sugar (Zoolbia)Pistachio and lemon shortbreadsStrawberry and pineapple carpaccio with basil and mint sugarsCinnamon and citrus almond pastry cigarsEastern messCardamom and rosewater poached pearsPistachio, honey

and orange blossom ice creamPistachio, rose and raspberry madeleinesRice  
puddingSyrup-poached apricots with walnuts and clotted cream

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