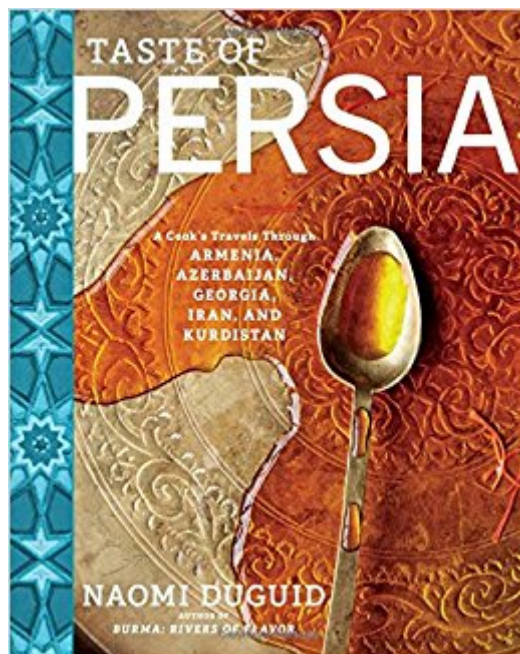




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# Taste Of Persia: A Cook's Travels Through Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, And Kurdistan



## Synopsis

Winner, James Beard Award for Best Book of the Year, International (2017) Winner, IACP Award for Best Cookbook of the Year in Culinary Travel (2017) Named a Best Cookbook of the Year by The Boston Globe, Food & Wine, The Los Angeles Times, The New York Times, The New York Times Book Review, The San Francisco Chronicle, USA Today, and The Wall Street Journal “A reason to celebrate . . . a fascinating culinary excursion.” The New York Times Though the countries in the Persian culinary region are home to diverse religions, cultures, languages, and politics, they are linked by beguiling food traditions and a love for the fresh and the tart. Color and spark come from ripe red pomegranates, golden saffron threads, and the fresh herbs served at every meal. Grilled kebabs, barbari breads, pilafs, and brightly colored condiments are everyday fare, as are rich soup-stews called ash and alluring sweets like rose water pudding and date-nut halvah. Our ambassador to this tasty world is the incomparable Naomi Duguid, who for more than 20 years has been bringing us exceptional recipes and mesmerizing tales from regions seemingly beyond our reach. More than 125 recipes, framed with stories and photographs of people and places, introduce us to a culinary paradise where ancient legends and ruins rub shoulders with new beginnings—where a wealth of history and culinary traditions makes it a compelling place to read about for cooks and travelers and for anyone hankering to experience the food of a wider world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“For an introduction to Persian cuisine, pick up Naomi Duguid’s new cookbook.

Through rich storytelling and recipes from her travels, Duguid explores the culinary heritage that unites Iran, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Kurdistan.

•Food & Wine

“Brilliant. . . . One of the most excitingly accessible books of the season, combining nuanced diasporic traditions, straightforward recipes and easy-to-find ingredients.

•USA Today

“In lieu of a Persian grandmother . . . any eager cook will be well-served by Naomi Duguid, the globe-trotting author of *Taste of Persia*. . . . Too many Persian cookbooks can be overly technical; they miss the soul of the thing. With one foot in the old world and one in the new, Ms. Duguid does a beautiful job of translating complex concoctions into accurate, easy-to-follow recipes that reflect not just the flavors but the spirit of the countries that once made up the Persian Empire.

•The Wall Street Journal

“For years [Naomi Duguid] has been writing deep-dive books with a photographic National Geographic bent and recipes that work. *Taste of Persia* . . . [is] particularly timely. Duguid captures dishes that reflect history and culture while being simply what’s on the table.

•The Los Angeles Times, Our Favorite Cookbooks of Fall 2016

“While the recipes are appetizing and approachable, this book is about more than cooking—it’s about better understanding a region and its people. Now, more than ever, books like Duguid’s make for vital reading.

•The San Francisco Chronicle, Our Favorite Cookbooks from 2016

“A fascinating culinary excursion. . . . *Taste of Persia* opens with a map, which illustrates Ms. Duguid’s wise observation that regional cooking doesn’t respect borders. So the search for Persian cuisine includes stops in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran and Kurdistan. We are seduced from the start with the flavors of the region: saffron (most of the world’s supply comes from this part of the world), mint, dill, parsley, cilantro, dried rose petals, sumac, lime, pomegranate and honey. Cinnamon, cardamom and other sweet spices weave their way through savory and sweet dishes. Ms. Duguid’s discoveries on these intrepid travels are shared in stories and pictures, along with an abundance of recipes.

•The New York Times, The Best Cookbooks of Fall 2016

“Gorgeous and useful.

•The Seattle Times

“Intensely fragrant foods and evocative travel writing. . . . This gorgeous and compelling title will transport home cooks and armchair travelers to another time and place.

•Library Journal, starred review

“Naomi Duguid’s cookbooks belong to their own genre—they are unique travel journals studded with history, geography and ethnography, along with fabulous photos of the people she meets and the places she goes. Then, of course, there are the intriguing, detailed recipes she collects. It’s more than armchair travel—you become immersed in the culinary culture of a faraway part of the world. *Taste of Persia*, Duguid’s latest, is a glorious

trip through these five countries that once were part of the Persian empire. [BookPage](#), Top Pick in Cookbooks [“A brilliant and beautiful book.”](#) [Montreal Gazette](#) [“This book is not singularly about Persian food. It is about a culinary region and culture, about transcending borders, about contextualizing a rich, edible heritage. . . . Though Duguid tested recipes over and over again in her kitchen in Toronto, the recipes rightfully belong to the women she met during her travels. The book celebrates unsung food artists who have shared their cooking practices and recipes through centuries of oral tradition and culture. . . . Sometimes it takes an outsider who has a different perspective, to look at a region with appreciation and talk about the historical ties and culinary links.”](#) [The Globe & Mail](#)

Naomi Duguid is a writer, photographer, teacher, cook, and world traveler. Her most recent cookbook, *Burma*, brought news of a long-forgotten part of the world and was winner of the 2013 IACP Cookbook Award for Culinary Travel and the Taste Canada Food Writing Award. Her previous award-winning titles, co-authored with Jeffrey Alford, include *Flatbreads & Flavors: A Baker's Atlas*, their first book, which won a James Beard Award for Cookbook of the Year; *Seductions of Rice*; *Hot Sour Salty Sweet*, also a James Beard Cookbook of the Year; *Mangoes & Curry Leaves*; and *Beyond the Great Wall*. Duguid's articles and photographs appear regularly in *Lucky Peach*, *Food & Wine*, and other publications. She is a frequent guest speaker and presenter at food conferences. She is the host of Toronto's Food on Film series and has a strong online presence (Twitter and Facebook). Her stock photo agency, Asia Access, is based in Toronto, where she lives when she is not on the road.

Absolutely one of the best, if not THE BEST, book about Persian cuisine and culture. I love the fact that the author includes the surrounding countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Kurdistan as they share an abundance of history and flavors with each other. Naomi Duguid does an exquisite job of reflecting the hospitable and down-to-earth nature of these very misunderstood and misrepresented people through beautiful photographs and descriptions. As someone who was taught by many Iranian friends and relatives how to cook Persian & Turkish food, I can say that the recipes are a very good, authentic and delicious representation of the area's cuisine. I highly, highly recommend this book for anyone with a desire to learn more about this beautiful region, its people, and its cuisine. If I could I would give it 10 stars!

I'm a big fan of Duguid's books anyway, but this one really hit big and has already become a major part of my regular cooking routine. Granted, It helped that I had some introduction to Persian food from a very practical cookbook by Louisa Shafia last year, so had a lot of ingredients on hand--but even so, this is a part of the world where it's the combination of spices, not their rarity, that really makes the difference, so it's a bit easier to jump in. I absolutely love Duguid's travel writing/photography as well--which makes this a lovely book even if you might not be whipping up weeknight dishes of Kurdish eggplant stew. Duguid, traveling solo, takes great intimate photos of regular people in their regular kitchens, and her travel vignettes show a generosity of spirit and lack of snark or judgment that's often lacking in good travel writing, especially about this area, which can seem so daunting or antagonistic to Americans. I've already cooked a bunch of things from the book and have saffron water waiting in my fridge, ready to flavor everything. Big hits:--saffron-cardamom cake-cookie things--apricot-walnut rolled pastry that wouldn't seem out of place in a Scandinavian baking book--Georgian beef stew with walnuts that was declared "best ever" in our house (fair warning: this involved some marigold spice mix that I happened to have on hand already, but I think the technique and other, more common ingredients are what make the magic here)--that silky, lovely Kurdish eggplant stew--borani (veg with yogurt and fried onions...that I'm going downstairs to make right now...) Thanks for opening a window on a lovely part of the world!

Beautiful photographs and excellent accounts, and interesting recipes--particularly valuable is inclusion of material from Armenia and Azerbaijan, rarely covered in English-language publications.

Buy it. You need it. But when a second edition is done I think it ought to be completely rephotographed and rewritten. It rambles, focusing on the trivial or not entirely relevant and feels detached. It reads like someone thinking out loud. What 'some' people or 'many' people feel or do is a awfully worn phrase throughout. It is hard to know who exactly we are talking about. That kind of generality dilutes the text. The photos feel impersonal, not well lit or well composed and some of them just feel confusing (we have a blurry two page spread of an anonymous woman near somewhere, turning loaves) If she warrants that kind of space in the book we ought to know her name and what she thinks is important about baking bread. Her work is split by the seam of the book. It is hard to know what to focus on. The compilation of recipes is amazing, and I can live without narrative but so long as there are photos in a cookbook, they ought to have food in them. The book needs a tighter, more personal lens.

This book is an armchair traveler's delight. Ms. Duguid takes us through her travels in an interesting part of the world that so many of us will not probably go to in person. The foods of the regions are tempting, as well.

This book is absolutely awesome. For those of us who love unusual and exotic food. The author uses authentic ingredients. These can be purchased in specialty stores or online if need be. The book is also full of color photographs of the different regions, peoples and foods.

This is a cookbook to read and learn from -- and not just about cooking. It is a wonderful, personal travel book as much as it is a cookbook.

Part travelogue part cookbook. I am enjoying exploring new tastes and flavors from a part of the world I am unlikely to visit.

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