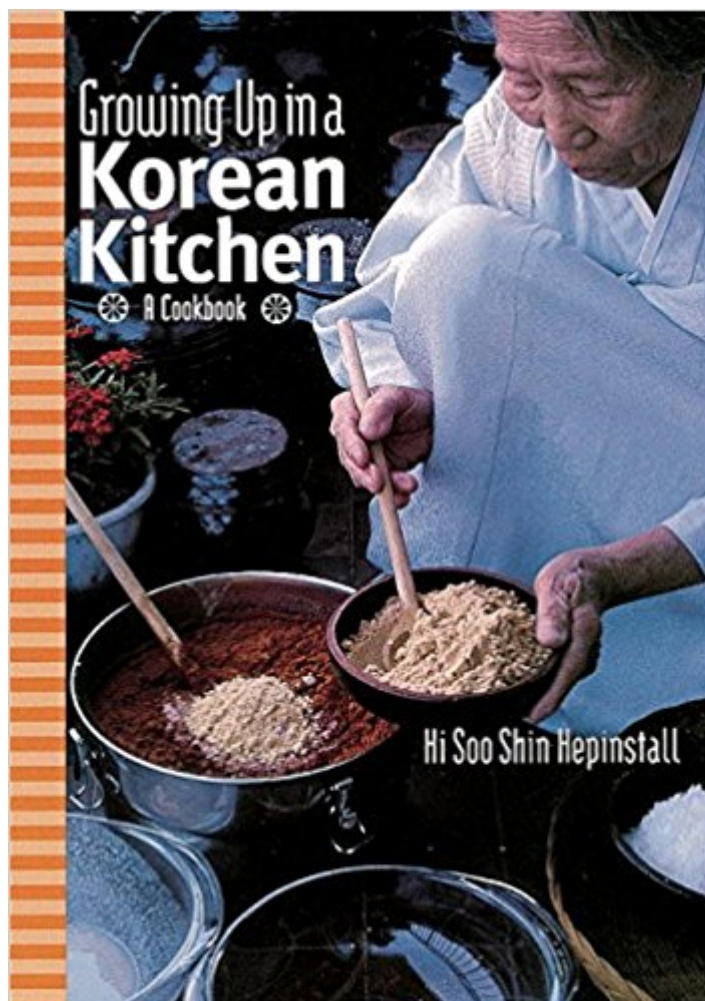


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# Growing Up In A Korean Kitchen: A Cookbook



## Synopsis

Part memoir and part cookbook, *GROWING UP IN A KOREAN KITCHEN* is one woman's cultural and culinary story, weaving childhood reminiscences with lovingly gathered recipes. With descriptions of the traditional Korean kitchen, preparations for special feast days, and the rituals of everyday family meals, author Hi Soo Shin Hepinstall draws an engaging portrait of a seldom glimpsed way of life. Easy-to-follow recipes, largely handed down through oral tradition, cover the wide range of main and side dishes, from the sumptuous elegance of "royal cuisine" to simpler countryside cooking. Korean cuisine has emerged as one of the most exciting and robust tastes of Asia, with great variety and some of the world's most sophisticated techniques for pickling and cooking with garlic and hot pepper. Cooks of all levels, as well as armchair travelers, will welcome this book to their collection. — Includes over 250 authentic recipes, a glossary, and a list of resources for finding uniquely Korean ingredients and utensils. — Illustrated with the author's travel and family photos, depicting the cultural and culinary traditions of Korea. For a list of markets that carry Korean ingredients visit [www.koreanfeast.com](http://www.koreanfeast.com)

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## Customer Reviews

Korean cuisine is a tantalizing blend of sour, sweet, hot, burning hot, salty, bitter, and nutty, or so writes Hi Soo Shin Hepinstall, author of *Growing Up in a Korean Kitchen*. Part autobiography and part cookbook, this remarkable work provides a practical introduction to a cuisine Americans have encountered with delight, and a poignant memoir of a time and place in which an average family

meal could consist of seven or more dishes, hierarchically served according to gender and family standing (males and grandmas ruled). Beginning with a scene-setting journey to the author's childhood home, the book then provides a detailed account of relevant ingredients, equipment, techniques, and sauces and pastes (many based on soy beans and red pepper). Over 175 recipes follow for a wide range of everyday and special-occasion dishes, from rice and cereal specialties, including an intriguing fried rice with chicken, mushrooms, and kimchi; to fresh salad and vegetable dishes such as SautÃ©ed Spring Garlic; to barbecued specialties like Fried Beef Ribs; to desserts and confections. A chapter on celebratory dishes, such as the extraordinary, multi-ingredient Celestial Hot Pot, is balanced by a homey section on stews and dishes such as Braised Pork Spareribs. Throughout, Hepinstall offers asides that place the food in its cultural context, variations, and technical information. With an illuminating section on tea and other drinks, the book makes an exciting introduction to a kind of cooking Westerners can now prepare and enjoy at home. --Arthur Boehm

Although Korean food is poised to become the next favorite Asian cuisine, there are relatively few cookbooks on the subject. Hepinstall's book is both more ambitious than Jenny Kwak's *Dok Suni* (LJ 11/15/98) and more wide-ranging than Deborah Coultrip-Davis and Young Sook Ramsey's *vegetarian Flavors of Korea* (LJ 9/15/98). One of 12 children, she provides a personal glimpse of a disappearing way of life as well as a detailed introduction to traditional Korean cuisine (she even includes her family's recipe for soy sauce). American readers may recognize some of the dishes from Korean restaurants, but many will be new. The section on main dishes covers rice and cereals, soups and porridges, and noodles and dumplings, with a whole chapter devoted to kimchi, a signature dish; in addition to side dishes, desserts, and beverages, there are separate chapters on Korean barbecue and special-occasion recipes. Hepinstall writes well and knowledgeably, and her photographs of family and her visits to her homeland illustrate the text. Strongly recommended.

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When I started cooking Korean food, I was disappointed in this book because the recipes are Americanized in ways you won't notice unless you totally immerse yourself in Korean shopping and cooking. Watercress? Don't be silly, you need minari, which is nothing like watercress except for its growing habit. This is explained in the ingredients section, but then the recipes call for watercress. Transliterations do not follow the new standard (they use McCune-Reischauer, I think) , so if that's what you're familiar with, you will have trouble identifying some things. Most frustrating, there is NO

Korean -Hangul - in the book anywhere, so while I can take Hangul words to my Korean grocery store, these transliterations are useless for me; I can't even reverse-engineer them. And where western substitutes are insinuated in the recipes, I have no way of knowing what's really meant. So I ended up confused by this book. Good News! The author is aware of the problems, and there's a new website (the old one was dysfunctional). It includes a great index which includes the English, transliteration, and Hangul for all the ingredients and recipe names, plus a page index ([...]). It's a little odd to have to translate an English cookbook on Korean cooking back into Korean, but it's a big help. So, what about the book? First, read the "The Korean Section." Read it again and every couple of weeks if you're new to this. The recipes are elaborate but reasonable if you're serious. They're not for someone looking for "Korean food for dinner in 20 minutes or less." (although many dishes are quick to make once you're used to it - I can have jjigae on the table in half an hour or less. It takes longer to cook the rice!) You have to know your way around a kitchen and be willing to put in the time. But they are westernized in subtle ways that you won't notice unless you know a lot about Korean cooking and ingredients. So I don't recommend it for beginners. But the stories about the author's family, the local color stories, give a sense of what growing up in a Korean household - a wealthy, upper class family - was like. And once I figured out what the ingredients should be, the Baechu Kimchi recipe is excellent. When I bought the book, I wanted to make everything in it. When I realized that I had to translate it back into Korean, I got discouraged and went to the Internet for more accessible recipes. But I'm going back to it and might just make everything in it. ;) The lady at the Korean market can't believe I'm planning to make my own gochujang. Kimchi is easy; gochujang is hardcore. But there's a recipe for it, and I just can't resist. I'm grateful to have this book, which documents a vanishing way of life. Most of the women I meet in the market have never made kimchi, and I don't think any of them have made gochujang. They all remember their mothers doing it, but they wouldn't dream of it. So if you love all things Korean, this book is a must have. Note: I'm an American with no previous experience of Korea or Korean food. I have mentally "moved" to Korea and cooked Korean food exclusively since 2011, including so many batches of kimchi that I've lost count. I live 1 mile from "Koreatown" on Google maps, so I have access to ingredients that may not be available elsewhere, although there are mail order sources. This review expresses my experiences in the learning process.

Okay, Bonnie, my wonderful Korean born wife passed away in 2005 and I longed for her food. Used to help her in kitchen enough to know that she did not cook by recipe. Her skills were gained by years of being a "kitchen helper" under her mother, grandmother and various aunts in the early

1950s. And, she had knife skills that would put iron chefs to shame. As I helped her I'd ask, "How do you make this? What's the recipe?" I get a response like this, "Oh you know a little bit of this and a little bit of that." Of course she never measured. Her cooking also evolved. Although she didn't give recipes she would show people with hands on demonstrations "... Oh, come over on Thursday, I'm gonna make kimchi, I'll show you." Anyway, I came to learn that she did have a cooking 'recipe' loosely associated with numbers. For example her kalbi marinade had 5 key ingredients and if she made it, I'd sometimes hear her tick the ingredients off out loud. We were in Poland three years, 1990-3 and she fed a lot of Poles. Was in Poland in 2006 and Polish friends had kind of a memorial dinner for her and one Polish woman made this toast "Until I met Bonnie I never knew spinach could taste good, let alone THAT good!" That toast brought tears to our eyes. The recipe for Sigumch'i Namul (seasoned spinach) is THAT good. So are several of the other recipes in this book. The great thing is that this book explains things step by step and provides a discussion of what makes Korean food, well, Korean food. Have at least five other Korean food cookbooks. Think I'm gonna toss them.

I was born in Korea and lived my first 15 years in Seoul. I tried 10+ recipes from this book, and each time I am just amazed how authentic the food tastes. It's just right. For example, I questioned the author's call for rice wine (or vermouth!) in sujungga at first. After all, this was my favourite drink/tea as a child. I spent half of a Saturday to obtain a bottle anyways, and followed the recipe step by step. (yes, it took a long time to make it) The result was remarkable and my husband asks me to make it quite often. We actually keep vermouth around all the time, just for this "tea". I feel very lucky that I stumbled on this cook book, here on .com. My mother's family is originally from northern part of Korea, so her way of cooking is slightly different from "authentic" Korean cooking. (plus, she's just not a good cook) I believe a good proportion of Korean American population has roots in either from northern or southern part of the peninsula. So, depending on where your family is from, the food prepared from this book may taste quite different from what your mother used to make at home. If you grew up in Korea, you know what I am talking about- everyone's grandma has special family recipe for Kimchi. My all-American husband and I ate out all the time, and it finally caught up with us with high cholesterol and high blood pressure. I thought eating Korean food would help us eat more vegetables, and it did. It takes a LONG time to prepare all those banchans on the weekend, but it's much simpler to put together dinner during the weekdays. I do recommend using a pressure cooker to make the multi-grain rice (jab-gok bap).

My paternal grandparents immigrated to the USA from Korea. Every Sunday we ate dinner with them and it was always Korean. I never took advantage of learning to cook Korean when I had the opportunity and now with the help of this cookbook I am embracing my ethnic heritage. Hi Soo Shin Hepinstall loving and generously shares her recipes and detailed instructions which I appreciate so much. I have made Kimchi, six of her side dishes, Hot Red Pepper Sauce (hit at my last dinner party) and her fried beef and chicken. Not but not least her Chapchae (crowd pleaser), although time consuming it is well worth the effort. I will try more recipes and am confident they will turn out very tasty. Thank-you Hi Soo Shin Hepinstall for a fabulous cookbook.

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