

The Best Cookbooks List



[Home](#)

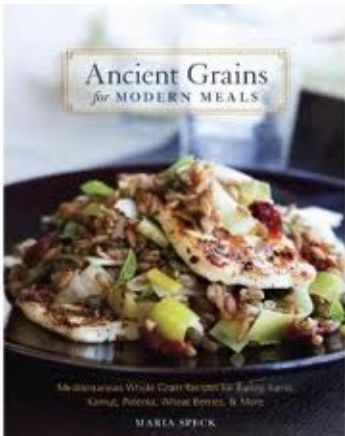
[About Hillary Davis](#)

[Subscribe](#)

[Cookbook Store](#)

04/23/2011

ANCIENT GRAINS FOR MODERN MEALS by Maria Speck



I know I only review here cookbooks that I love. And I know I always use superlatives. But I simply must tell you how very excited I am about this new cookbook by Maria Speck. It has guts and a depth to it that vaults it into the upper echelons of cookbook heaven. This is a cookbook food lovers will swoon over.

More than just recipes, Maria really talks to the reader. And it is fascinating to listen. She writes colorfully about her background and upbringing, her husband's influence on her cooking, her passion for whole ancient grains and how it came to be, plus history, methods, musings, thoughts, and tons of other recipes for dishes that would go well with the whole grain ones. Her enthusiasm jumps out at you from every single page. So you see, this is a book to read and savor. I learned so much from it. Now I am crazy to get a Masala dabba like Maria's. Don't know what it is? Neither did I. And it is brilliant.

Now let me tell you about the recipes. They totally appealed to my tastes. Wouldn't you like to try the Purple Rice Pudding with Rose Water Dates; Roast Chicken With Orange, Lavender, and Thyme; Brie Cakes with Sun-Dried Tomatoes; Orange and Lemon Couscous; or her Fig Muffins with Creamy Goat Cheese Filling?! Yum!

I loved reading about her floating bread I can make that rises in water. When it rises to the top of the water, it is ready to bake!

This book has my over the top, total recommendation. I can't wait to try the Artisanal Fruit Bread so that I can present slices of it with a great artisanal cheese plate.

I made the Orange Polentina with Honey Mascarpone Topping for breakfast, and if all the recipes are as deliriously good as this one was, then I'm going to work through each recipe in this wonderful new cookbook!

I hope Maria doesn't mind, but I am going to share with you the recipe for Orange Polentina with Honey Mascarpone Topping.

Orange Polentina with Honey Mascarpone Topping

[Ingredients for Polentina:](#)

[Printable Recipe](#)

2 cups water

1 1/2 cups whole milk

1/4 teaspoon fine sea salt

1 cup instant or quick cooking polenta or grits

Ingredients for Mascarpone Topping:

1 large orange

1/2 cup Mascarpone cheese

1/2 cup Greek yogurt

1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons honey

Method:

1. Bring the water, milk and salt to a boil. Using a whisk, gradually stir in the polenta in a thin stream. Decrease the heat to maintain a gentle bubble and whisk continuously until the polenta thickens, 1 to 3 minutes. Remove from the heat, cover, and let sit for 5 minutes.
2. Finely grate the orange until you have 2 teaspoons of zest. Peel the fruit, remove the pith, cut the fruit into 1/2 inch segments. Set aside. Using a fork, beat the Mascarpone, yogurt, 2 tablespoons honey, and 1 teaspoon of the orange zest in a bowl until smooth.
3. Whisk the remaining 1/4 cup honey and the remaining 1 teaspoon zest into the polentina. Spoon into bowls, crowning each with 1/4 cup of the Mascarpone topping, and a few pieces of orange. Serve.

[Ancient Grains for Modern Meals: Mediterranean Whole Grain Recipes for Barley, Farro, Kamut, Polenta, Wheat Berries & More](#) by Maria Speck

Posted at 03:41 PM in [Best Cookbooks Of All Time](#), [New Cookbooks 2011](#), [Niche Cookbooks](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(1\)](#)

[ShareThis](#)

Technorati Tags: [cookbooks](#), [cooking](#), [food](#), [recipes](#)

Favorite

| [Reblog \(0\)](#)

04/19/2011

AS ALWAYS, JULIA