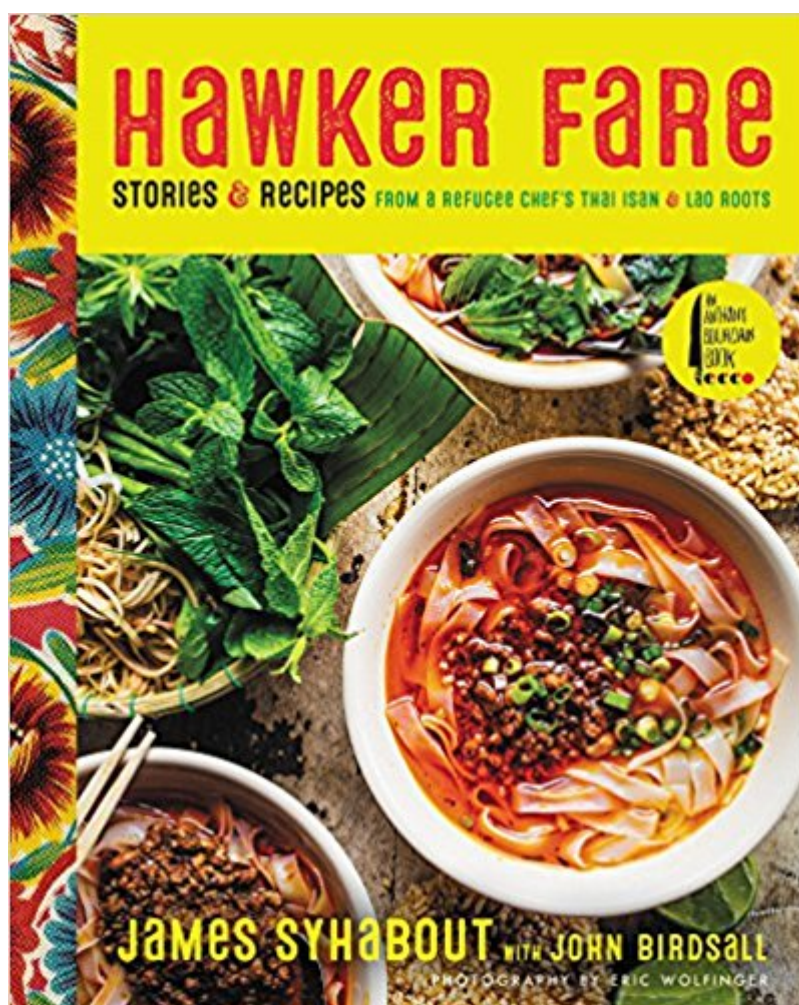


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Hawker Fare: Stories & Recipes From A Refugee Chef's Thai Isan & Lao Roots



Synopsis

From chef James Syha about of two Michelin-star restaurant Commis, an Asian-American cookbook like no other—simple recipes for cooking home-style Thai and Lao dishes James Syha about's hugely popular Hawker Fare restaurant in San Francisco is the product of his unique family history and diverse career experience. Born into two distinct but related Asian cultures—from his mother's ancestral village in Isan, Thailand's northeast region, and his father's home in Pakse, Laos—he and his family landed in Oakland in 1981 in a community of other refugees from the Vietnam War. Syha about at first turned away from the food of his heritage to work in Europe and become a classically trained chef. After the success of Commis, his fine dining restaurant and the only Michelin-starred eatery in Oakland, Syha about realized something was missing—and that something was Hawker Fare, and cooking the food of his childhood. The Hawker Fare cookbook immortalizes these widely beloved dishes, which are inspired by the open-air “hawker” markets of Thailand and Laos as well as the fine-dining sensibilities of James's career beginnings. Each chapter opens with stories from Syha about's roving career, starting with his mother's work as a line cook in Oakland, and moving into the turning point of his culinary life, including his travels as an adult in his parents' homelands. From building a pantry with sauces and oils, to making staples like sticky rice and padaek, to Syha about's recipe for instant ramen noodles with poached egg, Hawker Fare explores the many dimensions of this singular chef's cooking and ethos on ingredients, family, and eating well. This cookbook offers a new definition of what it means to be making food in America, in the full and vibrant colors of Thailand, Laos, and California.

Book Information

Hardcover: 368 pages

Publisher: Anthony Bourdain/Ecco (January 23, 2018)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0062656090

ISBN-13: 978-0062656094

Product Dimensions: 7.4 x 1.2 x 9.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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Best Sellers Rank: #1,031,258 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #100 in Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Asian Cooking > Thai #206 in Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Regional &

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