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Mary Bell's Complete Dehydrator Cookbook



Synopsis

Far from being a fad, food dehydrating is one of the most ancient, effective, and nutritious ways of preserving food. Now, at last, there is a book that teaches absolutely everything there is to know about using an electric food dehydrator to dry foods at home -- and gives more than 100 foolproof recipes for scrumptious snacks and meals made from dried foods. With this extraordinary book, you can learn how to cross junk food and expensive store-bought snacks off your family's shopping list -- and add to your cupboard homemade, preservative-free fruit leathers, candied apricots, beef (and fish) jerkies, "sun" dried tomatoes, corn chips, banana chips, and so much more! Mary Bell gives specific techniques and instructions for preparing every kind of fruit (from apples to watermelon) and vegetable (from asparagus to zucchini). She also provides important shopping tips for buying an electric food dehydrator. The recipes for cooked meals (including mushroom soup, sloppy joes, pesto, and moist banana bread) will make this book a kitchen classic. And recipes for lightweight, filling trail snacks mean that the book will travel, too. Additional chapters explain to how make herb seasonings, granolas, celery powder, cosmetics, dried fruit sugars, potpourri -- and even pet treats! Food drying is an excellent way for gardeners to preserve their produce. It is a great way to make healthful snacks for the kids. It's perfect for the new wave of thrifty consumers who can't bear to spend dollars at health food stores for treats they could make for pennies themselves. And food drying doesn't use chemicals or preservatives -- so it's great for you and for the planet, too!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

With this extraordinary book, you can learn how to cross junk food and expensive store-bought snacks off your family's shopping list--and add to your cupboard homemade, preservative-free fruit leathers, candied apricots, beef (and fish) jerkies, 'sun' dried tomatoes, corn chips, banana chips, and so much more!

Mary Bell has spent more than twenty years traveling around the country demonstrating food dehydrators and food drying techniques. When not on the road, she divides her time between Madison, Wisconsin, and Lanesboro, Minnesota, where she and her husband work at the Forest Resource Center, an environmental education facility. She is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin and holds a master's degree from Saint Mary's College. An editor at Gourmet Magazine for over 10 years, Evie Richter wrote the text to Gourmet's Menus for Contemporary Living. She has worked on books by many of the greatest talents in the world of food, including Alice Waters, Ann Willan, Mich  l Gu  ard, and Wolfgang Puck.

Mary Bell seems to have written the definitive book on home dehydration. The book is well-organized, practical and covers everything one might dry and then some (cucumbers?) She includes good tips for keeping color and drying foods that don't want to lay flat, for example. In short, it is a great introduction. There are some recipes using dried fruits and vegetables that I haven't tried yet, but as a newbie, her recipes are helpful in figuring out how to use your dried foods and how much liquid is needed to reconstitute various kinds of fruits and vegetables. The only thing I would like to have included is more comprehensive troubleshooting tips. For example, How dry is dry enough for various kinds of foods? I would have liked a bit more description of acceptably dried carrots so that I didn't feel I had to dry them till brittle. All the same, the book helped me gain confidence in a new area of preservation so that I'm pretty handy at it after only a few months.

The book is useful as a primer for people who are not familiar with dehydrating, but should be called a "guide to dehydrating" or something because much more space it allotted to instruction than to recipes. It includes How-To basics for dehydrating and rehydrating human foods, flowers, and a few animal foods/treats. We were disappointed at the recipes, we thought they are rather few in relation to the number of pages. Also, the book is not well organized. There is a section called "recipes" but other recipes are scattered around in other chapters. Nothing bad about the book, just that we are more advanced and were looking for a full-on cookbook to refer to frequently. Since we already

have the standards: Putting Food By, Stocking Up, and the National Center for Home Food Preservation's "So Easy to Preserve", we really did not need all the instruction. This is a nice book to go along with an inexpensive \$50 dehydrator, and we will probably use it as a gift in that way for a young couple.

I use Mary Bell's dehydrator cook book all the time. I have made the apple fruit rolls and I have used her jerky seasonings and marinades and they really taste great. Its also cheaper than buying the seasonings for the jerky. She really is the queen of dehydrator cooking. I would definitely recommend this book to anyone especially people like me who have just started dehydrating food to be healthier and to save money.

A good addition to the library of anyone into food storage & prep, particularly those of us who hike, canoe, sail, and are away from refrigeration for some time. If you're imaginative you can infer even more from this book.

the book is okay I like it but it has one page that's been torn out . I won't be doing reviews any more as they're telling us we have to write so many words to do it.

I'm just beginning with actual drying of foods. Mary Bell's book makes it incredibly easy; explains why food drying is a wonderful method for preserving foods, what can be dehydrated successfully (practically all foods!) how to do it and how to know when it's ready, how to store and, finally, recipes! Her writing is very clear and easy to understand. I've already made raisins, dried carrots, tomatoes, bananas, apples, pears, and today will bake a carrot cake (with dried carrots) while some mushrooms I found on sale are drying. All the info I needed is in her book. She tells you what you need to know before you start, and how to prepare fruits and vegetables for drying. Drying meats and fish, herbs, flowers, making food leathers (like roll-ups) and trail food; it's all in the book! It's a great book for a beginner, and might even have some new ideas for an experienced gardener/cook.

Good information

Mary Bell makes me want to dehydrate stuff - any stuff, all stuff, anything I can get my hands on. She expertly takes the mystery and fear out of dehydrating and shares her love and passion for a process that is, as she reminds her readers, thousands of years old. Yes, you get lots of hints, tips

and recipes, but I feel like the most important thing Mary shared was an attitude that dehydrating is not difficult or scary, anybody can do it and it will save you time, effort and money.

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