



[Dinner Just For Two](#), copyright © 2019 by Christina Lane, published by The Countryman Press, a division of W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

#### **Our Summary:**

When you understand the premise behind Christina Lane's new book, [Dinner Just For Two](#), you realize you are holding a book as useful as the *Better Homes and Gardens® New Cook Book* or the *Joy of Cooking* cookbook, only this one is for everyday *small-batch* home cooking. Lane is the author of [Desserts for Two](#) (the cookbook and the popular blog), and [Sweet & Simple \(from Season 1 of Now That's A Mouthful podcast\)](#). She takes the idea of practical, useful, everyday modern classic recipes, and makes them into small batch servings of two to three. Say bye-bye to boring leftovers and get ready to use and repurpose your pans, pots, and small countertop kitchen appliances. This book

gives you the know-how and the recipes to make just enough for one meal, which gives you the freedom to create something new each day of the week.

#### **What you need to know:**

**Get it:** [Dinner Just For Two](#), copyright © 2019 by Christina Lane, published by The Countryman Press, a division of W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., April 2, 2019 Hardcover \$35.00 ([Amazon \\$22.48](#); [Kindle \\$16.05](#)).

**See it:** 336 pages divided into 9 chapters by themes (i.e., *Pasta for Two*, *Skillet Meals*, *Small-Batch Bread*), with a *Leftovers* section divided by ingredients that match recipes and page numbers in the book. A thorough index, including recipe names is included.

**Make it:** More than 110 recipes that yield two to three servings focused on dinner-time eating.

#### **Chef Donna's Review:**

[Dinner Just For Two](#) is a useful guide whether you're beginning to cook or trying to manage and create a budget-conscious food plan for a family of three, maybe four. Author Christina Lane takes you chapter by chapter into the smart world of food and menu planning, starting with *A Pantry for Two* and then outlining necessary staples to keep on hand weekly. Her list of equipment includes smaller-sized pots and pans, which are at your fingertips if you have a starter cook-set. Some things, like an 8-inch skillet or the mini-Dutch oven, may require some retail therapy to acquire.

[Dinner Just For Two](#) isn't about finding ingredients in smaller quantities. It's about using a portion of the standard package and then having options to use the remaining portion another night in a different recipe. With useful tips along the way, [Dinner Just For Two](#) happily provides ideas of what to do with that half onion, or the leftover pasta or cheese that you won't need for your first small-batch meal of the week. With recipes paired to use the same or similar ingredients, like *Minestrone Ribollita* and *Zuppa Toscana*, you don't need to worry about wasting food. Even if you're not hungry for more soup, instructions for freezing are provided.

[Dinner Just For Two](#) devotes an entire chapter to pasta, which happens to be the first chapter! With ideas for homemade pastas and store-bought pastas, Lane offers both traditional pasta dishes like *Baked Ziti with*



*Homemade Ricotta*, but also offers the unexpected like *Spinach Pesto Pasta with Walnuts, Pear and Parmesan Pasta Salad*, *Lemon Spaghetti with Artichokes and Breadcrumbs*, and *Gnocchi Three Ways* (ricotta, beet and pumpkin). You'll have plenty of comforting food whenever the mood strikes, regardless of the season you are cooking in.

Lane includes chapters with proteins that make complete meals for two, and a stunning bread chapter that gives ideas for wraps, sandwiches, burgers and salads. [Dinner Just For Two](#) goes one step further, though, and teaches you how to make the buns and bread you'll use, only in a small batch format, like *Focaccia*, *Perfect Dinner Rolls*, and *Brioche-style Hamburger Buns*. You can have exactly the right amount of fresh baked bread on hand any day with minimal effort.

Naturally, a book from the [Desserts for Two](#) guru would have a chapter on desserts! And, [Dinner Just For Two](#) delivers. You'll find plenty of ideas for sweet treats, in small batches, that will keep you, and whoever you are cooking for happy. Key Lime Pie in a loaf pan, who knew? *Two Mini Apple Pies* made in ramekins, anyone? How about a *Mini Chocolate Cream Pie* or *Coconut Carrot Cake Cupcakes*? You'll make exactly what you need and never have to worry about overindulging on the leftovers.

When all is said and done, [Dinner Just For Two](#) is all about small batch cooking, not minimizing your grocery list. What you will find, however, is that you are able to intelligently plan your menus and meals throughout the week by using the smart, cross-referenced *Leftovers* section. You won't buy things in smaller quantities, but you will use them up, which gives you options and the freedom to make something different and delicious every day.

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[Lemon Spaghetti with Artichokes and Bread Crumbs](#)

[Hot Honey Lime Glazed Protein of Choice](#)

[No Knead Dutch Oven Bread](#)