



### [Where Cooking Begins: Uncomplicated Recipes To Make You a Great Cook.](#)

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#### **Our Summary:**

In her first book [Where Cooking Begins](#), Carla Lalli Music, sheds the chef's coat and her career mindset as food director at *Bon Appetit* magazine to offer a glimpse into her home kitchen. One that is unadorned with expensive gadgets and counter-top appliances, but filled with hungry children that don't always like vegetables, and crave time with their mom as much as they crave pancakes. This is a book about how a career-mom maneuvers from work-life into home life and *wants* to cook dinner, prepare food to take along on weekend

getaways, and welcome people into her home in the middle of the week because that's when time allows and calendars coordinate. It's a book that teaches us to cook simply and purposefully without losing ourselves or our minds in the process. It's about how we *wish* we could function in the kitchen, and some uncomplicated ideas to get us there. It's what we talk about all [Season 3](#) long on [Now That's A Mouthful podcast](#).

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

**Get it:** [Where Cooking Begins: Uncomplicated Recipes To Make You a Great Cook](#). Copyright © 2019 by Carla Lalli Music. Photographs copyright © 2019 Gentl and Hyers. Published by Clarkson Potter, an imprint of Penguin Random House, LLC, March 19, 2019 (Hardcover \$32.50; [Amazon \\$19.30](#); [Kindle \\$16.99](#))\*

**See it:** 272 pages of perhaps kitchen-life-changing ideas; step by step process photos of the 6 essential cooking techniques; full color photos of every finished dish. 3 Parts to the book broken into sub-chapters: *Part 1 The Strategy*, *Part 2 The Techniques*, and *Part 3 The Recipes*. Each part functions independently but when read together makes the book infinitely more appreciable.

**Make it:** 70 Recipes featuring produce, eggs, pasta and grains, chicken, fish, meat proteins, soups and desserts. Lalli Music includes a "spin it" section for each recipe with ideas to change ingredients for seasonal swaps and your preferred flavor profiles.

\* Product prices and availability are accurate as of the date of publication and are subject to change. Any price and availability information on Amazon.com at the time of purchase will apply to the purchase.

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

[Where Cooking Begins](#) takes you back to your first and most rewarding moments as a cook: where simplicity ruled, the outcome was delicious, and somehow you managed to create a meal without spending a great deal of time searching for ingredients, or slaving over laborious recipes. The three parts of the book are logical, but not rigid. The chapters within each part is about the recipes and learning. You need not start the book at the beginning, though you just might. You can jump into the middle and begin cooking, or practice a cooking technique. In this book, you begin where there's a spark of interest. Regardless, you learn.

For everything [Where Cooking Begins](#) is, it quite literally can teach you how to cook. The earliest chapters introduce a smarter way to think about cooking. Then, a series of step-by-step photos



demonstrate the basic cooking techniques. Finally, you find recipes. Whether you follow the instructions or adapt ideas to your already savvy kitchen know-how, you feel comfortable in choosing to adjust or deviate from Lalli Music's ideas. [Where Cooking Begins](#) reminds us to be ourselves in the kitchen, not someone else's idea of who we should be as a cook, including hers.

There is a bit of professionalism nuanced throughout this book, though it doesn't change its solid premise. Foremost, the author lives in Brooklyn and has access to fresh markets, purveyors and a job that puts new, best and reliable ingredients front and center each day. [Where Cooking Begins](#) does not include a reference list of online purveyors, so you do have to find your most reliable online sources. Lalli Music does list her many favorites, but in her exhaustive acknowledgements section. And, you must remember that Lalli Music thinks like a chef because she is one. She thinks about what's possible with what's on hand before she ever asks, "what's for dinner?" Regardless, that way of thinking is easily adapted, and undeniably refreshing.

[Where Cooking Begins](#) provides uncomplicated recipes that have flexibility built in them. The *Ham and Butter Baguette with Green Beans* may seem simple, but dare we take seasonal produce and make it the star of the meal sandwiched between two pieces of fresh bread? Probably not, until now. And, if your star produce isn't in season, Lalli Music offers plenty of ingredient swaps (she calls "spin it", which I find a bit irritating; swap, revamp, re-do, switch, all make sense. Spin it? No.). If that swap needs a different prep or approach, she provides that information, too. Her recipes for *Mozzarella with Chard and Raw Sugar Snap Peas*, *Buttery Beets and Grapefruit*, *Leeks with Potato Chips and Chives*, or *Sweet Potatoes with Tahini Butter*, all have options and plenty of ideas with them. You'll be able to celebrate what's in season, and [Where Cooking Begins](#) gives you the know how to make them dinner-worthy in an hour or less.

The simplicity of ideas and uncomplicated recipes begs the question, "why this book?" The answer? We've forgotten that cooking begins before we ever step into our kitchen, which is why [Where Cooking Begins](#) advocates for a mail order larder and home-delivery from your local grocer. A smart choice for the things that don't require your inspection, like cans and jars, or boxed pantry staples. Then, when inspiration strikes, and you know what you want to cook, the time at market is spent touching or smelling or maybe even tasting that which becomes the star of your meal. [Where Cooking Begins](#), is about helping you find ways to cook food that satisfies you. That you'll be happy in the kitchen and bring pleasure to those around your table, is an added bonus.

Recipes to cool from [Where Cooking Begins: Uncomplicated Recipes To Make You a Great Cook](#).

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[Fruit Compote with Labneh, Maple Syrup and Olive Oil](#)

[Ham and Butter Baguette with Green Beans](#)

[Spaghetti Aglio e Olio with All-o the Parsley](#)