



[*Aloha Kitchen: Recipes from Hawai'i*](#) by Alana Kysar, copyright © 2019. Photographs by Alana Kysar and Brooklyn Dombroski. Published by Ten Speed Press, a division of Penguin Random House, Inc.

Our Summary:

Most cultural cuisines can be defined by indigenous foods, spices or flavors that combine to make archetypical dishes. Hawaii, however, defines its cuisine by the influence of world cultures that have passed through the islands, and in [*Aloha Kitchen*](#), author Alana Kysar brings that cuisine to life. Beyond the influence of world cultures, this book is a manual for cooking ethnic cuisine in a way that is fresh, accessible and ready for your personalized interpretation. With explanations of

everything from the iconic *Plate Lunch* to irresistible ideas like pickling mango or frying whole fish, [*Aloha Kitchen*](#) is everything familiar and yet manages to be deliciously different.

What you need to know:

Get it: [*Aloha Kitchen: Recipes from Hawai'i*](#) by Alana Kysar, copyright © 2019. Photographs by Alana Kysar and Brooklyn Dombroski. Published by Ten Speed Press, a division of Penguin Random House, Inc., March 26, 2019 (Hardcover \$30.00) ([Amazon \\$21.60](#); [Kindle \\$15.99](#))*

See it: 240 pages of local Hawaiian food and recipes, including pictures of almost all the finished recipes and pictures of local landscapes that serve as backdrops to the chapter headings.

Make it: 85 recipes that span the full range of Hawaiian local food culture, from appetizers and sides to meats and fish plus sauces, snacks and drinks.

Chef Donna's Review:

[*Aloha Kitchen*](#) isn't what you might expect. At first, the book appears to be a survey of cultural cuisine, with dishes like *Chicken Adobo*, *Char Siu Pork*, or *Beef Curry*. But when you look deeper and read the stories that lead the recipes, you begin to understand where author Alana Kysar has come from and how her family's recipes have evolved. This is as much a story about civilizations that have passed through the islands, as it is about the people that lived, worked and created the food that now define Hawaii's food culture.

Alana Kysar brings [*Aloha Kitchen*](#) to life with her brief history of the islands and the different cultures that influence Hawaii today. She tells her story of growing up in Hawaii and how cooking her family's food after she moved to the mainland kept her close to home. She also provides the most useful 'getting started' section I have ever read. She includes notes about stocking your larder and descriptions of the produce used in the recipes. But *The Basics*, which includes her *Building Blocks* for cooking and learning to cook are quite practical. With explanations of *knife skills* and her comments on *room temperature*, even a beginner cook will feel confident to take on the recipes in this book.

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With influences from Filipinos, Koreans, Westerners (British), Chinese, Japanese, and Portuguese, the recipe names in [Aloha Kitchen](#) are as familiar as are the ingredients now common-place in your grocer's ethnic section. There are but a few (literally, maybe only two) ingredients that you'll need to search for, like li hing powder or preferred brands of rice. But you can easily find these online at affordable prices. Produce is the same way, with all but a few tropical fruits and ferns that may be hard to locate. Oh, and you do discover (perhaps re-discover?) Spam®!

[Aloha Kitchen](#) is divided into neat chapters that focus on appetizers, sides, and the primary proteins from which you build your meals. These are followed by, and meals are completed with, noodles, sweets, snacks and drinks, which makes [Aloha Kitchen](#) practical for every home cook and kitchen. And, Kysar celebrates Hawaii's quintessential *Plate Lunch*, with a solid description of the foods that belong on the plate, in what ratio to each other, and then she sets you up to masterfully create your own.

And creating your own version of [Aloha Kitchen](#) recipes is something Kysar encourages, right up to her statement about the paper the book is printed on, which is suitable for your notes, for years of wear, and for the stains of history to soak in! Most recipes come with an *On The Menu* side-bar that has suggestions to complete your meal. Each contains three additional recipes from the book, which you can make relatively easily and quickly. The recipes will surprise you with refreshing clarity and ease of preparation. Kysar is not a chef, so she's keen on making things work in a home kitchen.

[Aloha Kitchen](#) is also filled with intriguing recipes and ideas like the *Li Hing Gummy Bears*, *Ginger Misoyaki Butterfish*, and *Malasadas* – the Portuguese donuts filled with macadamia pastry cream. But there's also the familiar, like *Fried Wontons*, *Teriyaki Beef Sticks*, *Beef Chili* and *Chow Fun*. That's Hawaii's food culture, a reflection of its history, occupation and economy, encompassing centuries of evolution. [Aloha Kitchen](#) does a marvelous job of combining ingredients, cultures and stories that helps you bring a modern taste of Hawaii's local food to your kitchen and your home.

Recipes to cook from [Aloha Kitchen: Recipes from Hawai'i](#) by Alana Kysar, copyright © 2019. Reprinted with permission by Ten Speed Press, a division of Penguin Random House, Inc.

[Ginger Misoyaki Butterfish](#)

[Li Hing Gummy Bears](#)

[Mandoo \(Korean Shrimp and Pork Dumplings\)](#)

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