



[*Cook Like a Local: Flavors That Can Change How You Cook and See the World*](#)^{*}, by Chris Shepherd and Kaitlyn Goalen, copyright © 2019. Photographs by Julie Soefer. Published by Clarkson Potter, a division of Penguin Random House, Inc.

Our Summary

[*Cook Like a Local*](#) may just be the modern equivalent to [*The Silver Palate Cookbook*](#) or [*The Joy of Cooking*](#). It's everything you want a cookbook to be. It has a place on your kitchen counter so you can leisurely flip through for ideas and inspiration, it gives you solid information and an education – if you care to read it, and there are recipes that you really want to cook. Best of all you *can* cook them with the ingredients you'll likely have in your pantry. Chef, restaurateur, and now author, Chris Shepherd uses Houston, Texas as a reference point for his idea of “local.” But you won't be cooking steak, ribs, and baked potatoes. The book's cover picturing cilantro, shishitos, and crispy

wings, is all you need see to understand the range of culturally-inspired dishes waiting for you inside. Shepherd shows you how to translate six specific ingredients into incredible flavors and with that, opens your eyes to a world of culture, common people, and regional cuisine that isn't just in his backyard, but yours too.

What you need to know:

Get it: [*Cook Like a Local: Flavors That Can Change How You Cook and See the World*](#), by Chris Shepherd and Kaitlyn Goalen, copyright © 2019. Photographs by Julie Soefer. Published by Clarkson Potter, a division of Penguin Random House, Inc, September 3, 2019 Hardcover \$35.00 ([Amazon \\$28.49](#); [Kindle \\$14.99](#))^{*}

See it: 288 pages of easy to read text, including useful and educational information about ingredients, cooking methods and recipes that are doable in a home kitchen. 100 images of the finished recipes and people in Shepherd's food community are included. The *Table of Contents* is broken down into six specific ingredients (*Fish Sauce, Chiles, Soy, Rice, Spices, and Corn*), but sadly no recipe names are included in that table of contents. The index will make you work a bit to find what you're looking for, so as long as you know to look for gazpacho under soup, you'll find what you're looking for faster.

Make it: 120 recipes divided among the 6 chapters that include all types of meals and snacks, many with an Asian flavor profile, and many combining the classic dishes of the Texas and Northern Mexico region with those flavors and ingredients. These are fun to muse over AND to cook.

Chef Donna's Review:

There's an authentic vibe to Chris Shepherd's first book, [*Cook Like a Local*](#). You feel it the moment you open the book, regardless of the page you land on. His message that we all live in immigrant communities resonates clearly. Through his recipes and the six ingredients featured as chapter headings, he demonstrates that ethnic cuisine is no longer something we import. Instead, it's as regional as the town we live in.



[Cook Like a Local](#) is written to help you incorporate foods and flavors from a spectrum of immigrant influence into your own cooking repertoire. Shepherd uses ingredients as an entry point and organizes the book around pantry staples and seasonings you're likely to have on hand. Things like soy sauce and fish sauce, dried red pepper flakes and other chili-based seasonings, rice and corn. These simple ingredients are the springboard for flavor that he infuses into a wide-range of home-kitchen classics and family-style favorites. From *Fish Sauce* you'll make a simple dipping sauce or vinaigrette, marinades for meat proteins, and a caramel sauce for crispy Brussels sprouts. Dive into the *Soy* chapter and you'll be pickling, and making condiments or glazes for everything from beef to noodles to pancakes. Yes, pancakes.

That's what you're treated to in [Cook Like a Local](#). The ingredients that Shepherd uses are not only commonplace in our home kitchens, but are the foundations for a diversity of cuisines. Each has a long history and its evolution parallels the major migrations of human beings across our planet over the centuries. Each ingredient is a gateway to the stories, cooking styles and relationships that have inspired the recipes in [Cook Like a Local](#). Recipes like *Cantaloupe-Habanero Gazpacho (Chiles)*, *Soy Sauce Pickled "Deviled Eggs" (Soy)*, *Calas (rice fritter) with Coconut Cream (Rice)*, *Corn Porridge with Garlic and Shiitakes (Corn)*, give you pause to consider these ingredients in not-so-common combinations.

In the end, [Cook Like a Local](#) is less about the purity and distinctive lines of a particular cuisine, and more about the overlapping and sometime messy confluence that creates a local cuisine. You'll feel comfortable visiting new eateries and markets that have always been in your backyard. You'll feel at home with these recipes and this book, as you begin to expand your own ideas about the flavors and ingredients you wrap into your personal cooking repertoire. But mostly, you'll deepen your understanding that being a "local" is about who we are, how we live and what we eat in the most familiar way.

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[Noi's Thai Fried Rice Balls with Cucumber Salad](#)

[Masala Chicken Wings](#)

[Vinegar Pie](#)

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