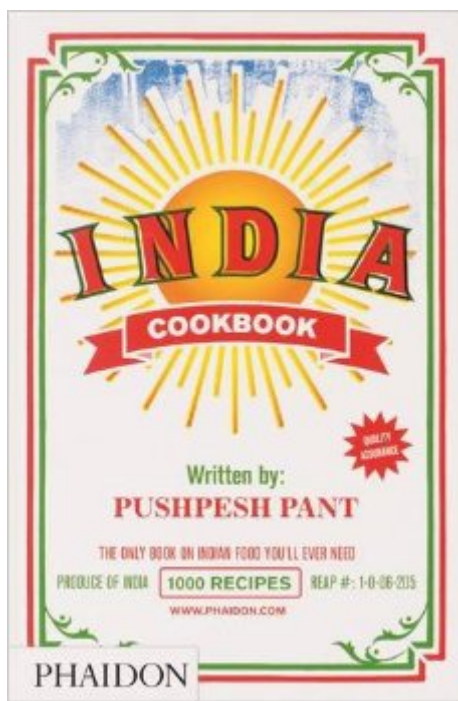


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# India: The Cookbook



## Synopsis

India: The Cookbook is the first comprehensive guide to Indian cooking, with over 1,000 recipes covering every aspect of India's rich and colourful culinary heritage. Unlike many other Indian cookbooks, it is written by an Indian culinary academic and cookbook author who lives and works in Delhi, and the recipes are a true reflection of how traditional dishes are really cooked all over India. They have been carefully edited to ensure that they are simple to follow and achievable in western kitchens, with detailed information about authentic cooking utensils and ingredients. Indian food has been hugely popular in the UK for many years, and the appetite for Indian food shows no sign of diminishing. Now, for the first time, a definitive, wide-ranging and authoritative book on authentic Indian food is available, making it simple to prepare your favourite Indian dishes at home, alongside less well-known dishes such as bataer masalydaar (marinated quails cooked with almonds, chillies and green cardamom), or sambharachi kodi (Goan prawn curry with coconut and tamarind). The comprehensive chapters on breads, pickles, spice pastes and chutneys contain a wide variety of recipes rarely seen in Indian cookbooks, such as bagarkhani roti (a rich sweet bread with raisins, cardamom and poppy seeds) and tamatar ka achar (tomato and mustard-seed pickle). India: The Cookbook is the only book on Indian food you'll ever need.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Phaidon should be ashamed of releasing this book in its current state (especially proclaiming "Quality Assurance" on the cover). Although, as other reviewers have pointed out, this book is beautifully designed, it is so poorly edited and indexed that each time I pick it up I encounter a new

glaring error. Problems include:- Recipes are printed twice, one after the other, e.g. Mirchi ka Salan (p. 319 & 320) and Matar Paneer (p. 315 & 316)- Recipes do not appear in the index, e.g. Keeme ke Samose / Lamb Samosas (p. 209)- Recipes are not indexed intelligently. Most types of dishes are not listed together in the index, for example you cannot look up "samosa" or "kebab" in the index and see a list of the different recipes for that type of dish, you will find only the recipes that begin with that word, e.g. Kebab Cooked on a Stone is listed under "kebab" but not Roasted Lamb Kebabs. In an 800 page book with 1000 recipes where the index is the only way to find recipes (there is no table of contents for each section) the terrible indexing job is unforgivable. In addition, the author has made several mistakes that nearly sabotage what is obviously a labor of love and the product of a tremendous amount of research. First of all, the recipes are poorly written and have many oddities and omissions. Pigeon Peas in Rice Konji (p. 542) has no rice mentioned anywhere. As another reviewer pointed out, the recipe for Mirchi ka Salan / Stuffed Green Chillies is comically flawed: the chillies are never stuffed. This is even more egregious given that this recipe is pictured and it would be impossible to follow the recipe as is and produce something vaguely resembling the photo.

As an avid collector of Indian cookbooks in particular, I have rarely come across a collection that is encyclopedic, rigorous in sticking to the classic recipes as well as meticulous about pinpointing their regional origins. This book manages to do it all. I can't speak much about the author, as the traditional "about the author" section seems to be missing in this book, save for a 2-page color photo spread. That said, the design, the weight, the color coding and the sparse and accurate descriptions are generally a pleasure. For the novice new to Indian cooking, you will find a good overview of the various regions, but once you dive into the actual recipes themselves, there isn't much guidance on the nuances of the techniques, other than the standard description of the method.

I had heard about this book on chowhound.com and was very excited about it because I love Pushpesh Pant's food oriented work. I own another of his books, food Path: Grand Trunk Road from Kabul to Kolkota, which I love and have cooked from a lot. India: The Cookbook is excellent. The recipes are very authentic, homemade type stuff, and they look very good. I love it and can't wait to try out a few recipes. I am so sick of books which claim to be real-deal Indian cooking but the recipes are very restaurantish and not really what Indian food is like in people's homes, or books which claim to represent Indian cuisine, but it is clear that the recipes are very specific to how

dishes are made in the author's region, yet this is never mentioned. The only way to really learn the myriad of Indian cuisines is by understanding regionality, and differences in cuisine within regions based on ethnolinguistic or religious community. India: The Cookbook doesn't really delve into ethnicity/religion in cuisine much, though is occasionally mentioned. But India: The Cookbook contains many, many recipes from all of India's major regions. Among the specific regions included in the book are Jammu-Kashmir, Punjab, Delhi, Awadh, Coastal (Pant lumps together the Western Coast states, occasionally specifying which), Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, Bengal, and a few others. I am not Asian, but my husband's family is from Pakistan (originally from Northern India), so getting good, authentic recipes is very important to me, as I cook South Asian cuisine at least a few times each week and like to cook a large range of dishes rather than eating the same thing all of the time.

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