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FOOD

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Local chefs spill the beans on their favorite new cookbooks

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BY KATE PARHAM

Special to the Star-Telegram

'Twas the week before Christmas, when all through the house

Not a gift had been purchased, not even a blouse.

So we turned to our beloved Fort Worth cooks,

In hopes they could tell us their new favorite books.

The chefs shared the reads that have kept them well-fed,

While visions of Christmas gifts danced in our heads.

These 2011 cookbooks are sure to delight,

Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night!

Molly McCook

Executive chef and co-owner of Ellerbe Fine **Foods**

Her pick: *Lost Restaurants of New Orleans* by Peggy Laborde and Tom Fitzmorris

Why she loves it: "My father gave me this book, and [it's] like a family scrapbook, reminding me of special meals and memories growing up in Louisiana. It's a touchstone for my heritage, and it inspires me in my kitchen at home and at Ellerbe."

Details: Pelican Publishing (released Sept. 21, 2011), \$39.95

Blaine Staniford

Executive chef at Grace

His pick: *Momofuko Milk Bar* by Christina Tosi with David Chang

Why he loves it: "It's a fun, cool little book with neat desserts that are pretty easy to make. We've done a few just to play around with at the restaurant, like the cornflake cookies, which are pretty amazing. The crack pie recipe is really different, too. It kind of hurts your **teeth** it's so sweet. But in a good way."

Details: Clarkson Potter (Oct. 25, 2011), \$35

Catherine Ruehle

Chef and owner of Sublime **Bakery**


Her pick: *Candle 79 Cookbook: Modern Vegan Classics From New York's Premier Sustainable Restaurant* by Joy Pierson, Angel Ramos and Jorge Pineda

Why she loves it: "This book does what the restaurant has done: It pleases vegans and omnivores alike and lifts vegan cuisine from the mundane to the sublime. The recipes are fresh and flavorful, hearty yet light. There's an inspiring quality to the **photography** and presentation that never fails to draw me in.



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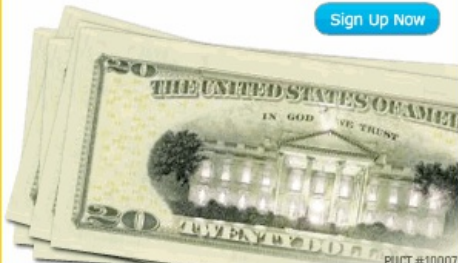
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And just when I think I know it all about food, they offer up a unique ingredient (and the source to find it) that I can't wait to get my hands on! In short, this is THE vegan cookbook for true foodies."

Details: Ten Speed Press (Nov. 1, 2011), \$30

Otto G. Borsich II

Executive chef at Central Market, Southlake

His pick: *Mourad: New Moroccan* by Mourad Lahlou

Why he loves it: Borsich's love affair with Morocco began after his first screening of *Casablanca*, but it developed into full-blown adoration after dining at Fez in Hawaii, where he sat on the floor on embroidered pillows, ate with his hands and finished the meal with a sacramental pouring of fresh mint tea from an ornamental pot.

"From that moment on, I was hooked on Moroccan food. *Mourad: New Moroccan* is an expertly crafted cookbook by Michelin Star Chef Mourad Lahlou, [owner of] Aziza, a Moroccan restaurant in San Francisco named after his mother. This cookbook delves into the rich history of Moroccan cuisine and boldly presents it in contemporary fashion.

With stories of his mother's cooking, Lahlou sticks to his roots but daringly creates high-flying flavors as if you were on a magic carpet ride. The photography is luxuriant as he transports you far and away, [leaving] you in a gastronomic trance. Lahlou soulfully hits a home run with this sumptuous book."

Details: Artisan (Oct. 27, 2011), \$40

Dena Peterson

Executive chef at Café Modern

Her pick: *Blood, Bones and Butter* by Gabrielle Hamilton

Why she loves it: It's not a true cookbook, but it's one of Peterson's favorite food books of the year. "*Blood, Bones and Butter* is an immensely personal story of how a woman worked her way through the culinary grind to eventually open a restaurant in NYC. It recounts the sacrifices, the strained relationships, the soulless catering jobs she worked to get by – all intermingled with vivid childhood memories and her passion for cooking. The book is so well written, so poignant, and mirrors a lot of my experiences growing up in the culinary world, that I found myself laughing and crying throughout the book. I wanted to call her and personally thank her for writing [it]. I thought it was very courageous."

Details: Random House (March 1, 2011), \$26

Judie Byrd

Co-founder, the Culinary School of Fort Worth

Her pick: *The Cook's Illustrated Cookbook: 2,000 Recipes from 20 Years of America's Most Trusted Cooking Magazine*

Why she loves it: "I knew I'd like this book for the detailed testing journals *Cook's Illustrated Magazine* is famous for. And yes, it proves to be a great sit-by-the-fire-and-read book. At the same time, the recipes are so thought-provoking you can't help but get in the kitchen and start cooking. It contains a wealth of interesting and clever tidbits about recipe history, food science and cooking methods. I learn something every time I sit and read this book. For beginning cooks and serious ones alike – or those like me who read cookbooks like 'normal' people read novels! – this book would make a very yummy gift."

Details: Cook's Illustrated (Oct. 1, 2011), \$40

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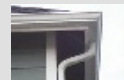
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