By the time she was a teenager, Sara Jenkins had lived all over the Mediterranean, from Italy and France to Spain, Lebanon, and Cyprus, in cosmopolitan cities and in rural hamlets. The family eventually put down roots in a ramshackle farmhouse in a small Tuscan village, where she learned how to make ragu and handmade pasta at the elbow of her Italian “grandmother” on the nearby farm. Meals came from the garden and the surrounding pastures, not the supermarket, and Jenkins grew up schooled in the tradition of cooking from what was on hand.

In Olives & Oranges, Jenkins shares the simple, striking dishes she learned at the source. Many, like Peppery Braised Short Ribs and Classic Tuscan Eggplant Parmesan, are favorites from childhood. Others, like Short Pasta with Mushrooms and Mint and Spicy Lemon–Chocolate
Ganache Tart, have a contemporary sensibility. Jenkins shows how understanding the Mediterranean “language of flavor” can help you follow your instincts and make your own great meals based on what you have, too. You’ll see how salt and lemon juice bring out the natural sugar in Carrot Salad with Lemon, Sea Salt, Parsley, and Olive Oil, and how to use the same technique with lime, salt, and a Moroccan condiment called harissa for a completely different effect in Tunisian Raw Turnip Salad.

The opening chapter introduces “small plates”—easy, versatile dishes that can preface a dinner or be grouped together for a small feast, from Roasted Red Peppers with Garlic and Celery Leaves to Chicken Liver Crostini. Soups are spontaneous and flexible, whether they are cooling purées like White Almond Gazpacho or sturdy full bowls like Rich Chicken Soup with Greens. The incomparable pastas encompass fast every-night selections (Spaghettini with Burst Cherry Tomatoes) to complex celebration affairs like Braised Rabbit Ragu and Homemade Lasagna.

Fish, poultry, and meat chapters feature rustic preparations: roasted scallops capped with a pale green butter seasoned with parsley and garlic; an impressively big-flavored chicken smeared with a mixture of bacon and herbs and baked in a salt crust; and a spectacular staple of Roman trattorias, veal cutlets wrapped in prosciutto and sage and crisp-fried. Desserts range from fresh Strawberries with Prosecco to a sumptuous Coffee Cardamom Creme Caramel to the rich but light Lemon Olive Oil Cake.

Each of the recipes in the book is identified as “Quick-Cook” or “Slow-Cook” so you can choose which fit best into your schedule. “Flavor Tips” throughout the book suggest ways to modify the dishes so you can use what’s freshest and most available.

The daughter of the noted food authority Nancy Harmon Jenkins, SARA JENKINS has earned raves at all the New York restaurants where she has been the chef, including 50 Carmine, Il Buco, I Coppi, and Patio. Her newest venture, Porchetta, is located in New York City’s East Village. This is her first book.

Personal Review: Olives and Oranges: Recipes and Flavor Secrets from Italy, Spain, Cyprus, and Beyond by Mindy Fox

I received Olives and Oranges as a holiday gift. (The hinting paid off!) I always like to read cookbooks from the library first and then decide whether it belongs on my shelf. This book sits in a very prominent spot in my home! I enjoy Ms. Jenkins and Ms Fox’s writing styles and being true to the traditions of the regions. I must comment on two recipes in particular. I make roast chicken at least once a week. I now have a new standard which will be repeated again and again. The chicken with sage, garlic and lemon peel is quite possibly the best roast chicken I’ve ever made. So
tasty and moist. Secondly, being of Italian heritage myself, I love the authenticity of the Classic Central Italian Meat Ragu. My only regret is my dad is no longer here to taste something I'm sure his mom must have made for his family again and again. Buy this book. You will be happy that you did.

For More 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price:

Olives and Oranges: Recipes and Flavor Secrets from Italy, Spain, Cyprus, and Beyond
by Mindy Fox 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price!