

# Q&A with Sam Stern

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## What do you like to eat?

Chocolate mousse, lemon roast chicken will all the trimmings, chocolate roulade, spaghetti Bolognese with garlic bread, everything that's tapas, French onion soup with cheese croutons, sweet-potato fries, guacamole. . . . The variety of things that you can cook is just amazing.

And it's so easy to do. One minute you can be standing in your kitchen thinking, I'm hungry. What shall I cook? And then a couple of hours later, you can have all your family or your friends sitting around a table eating a real feast that you've made yourself.

Or you're just home from school and there's no one around. So you make yourself up some pasta with a tasty tomato sauce. Takes you ten minutes tops from thinking about it to having it hot and steamy and delicious there on a plate. Cooking's never boring. Once you can do it, you'll always do it.

## Why did you write this book?

I wrote this book for kids like me who enjoy cooking or who want to learn to cook. It's full of simple tasty recipes—the kinds of things that my friends and I like to eat.

## Can kids prepare the recipes in *Cooking Up a Storm*?

None of the recipes are tricky. Some are easy; some are really easy. Some are fast; some take a bit of time. If there are big eaters in your house, use my quantities. If you're a smaller eater, cut them down. If you've taken a cooking class or you already cook at home, you won't have any trouble getting them down pat. And if you're a first-time cook, then don't worry—just follow the recipes.



## Why do you like cooking?

Well, I'm usually pretty impatient, but I can spend hours chopping stuff, blending, whisking, and mixing. I find all that activity really relaxing. The first thing I do when I get into the kitchen is put on some music. I love all the technical stuff that goes with cooking: learning the basics, like how to make pastry, bread, batters, sauces, and soups; doing it in the way it says in the recipe; and then, when I'm confident, getting more creative, ignoring how Mom does it, and doing it my own way. You have to take charge when you're cooking, use your own judgment.

## What is the best way to appeal to picky eaters, especially when you're trying to cook healthier meals?

Cooking's a particular challenge in our house. I'm the youngest of five kids. One of my sisters is a vegetarian. Another is an ex-vegetarian who won't eat red meat. My brother's a meat freak. My dad's a bit of a garbage can, but he can't eat chocolate or cheese—his favorite foods. My mom won't eat anything that's tough on her teeth. Me? I eat anything except bananas and broccoli. So catering to everyone means that a wide variety of food has to get served up. It's those everyday foods that I've learned to cook. And that's where the recipes in this book came from.

## What kinds of food did you try to include in your cookbook?

You'll find a big range of food in there—from snacks you can wolf down while you're watching television to some full-blown dishes you can serve your whole family.



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