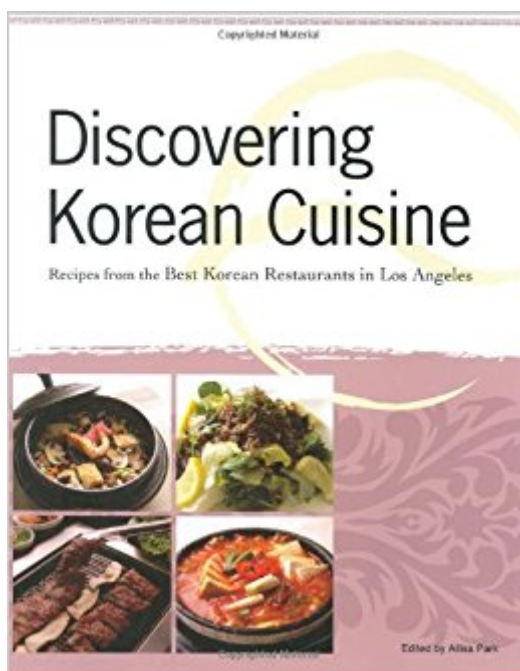


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# Discovering Korean Cuisine: Recipes From The Best Korean Restaurants In Los Angeles



## Synopsis

A step-by-step guide to re-creating healthy, delicious, Korean-style dinners, this book unlocks the mysteries behind these delicacies in an approachable, illuminating manner. Featuring contributions from 12 of Los Angeles's most prominent Korean restaurants, this cookbook includes recipes ranging from mainstays such as kimchi, bulgogi (marinated beef), mu-saengchae (spicy Korean radish), and bossam (boiled pork) to specialty dishes such as jjim-dak (vegetable chicken stew), hobak-juk (squash porridge), and jjam-bong (spicy noodle soup with seafood). Besides the typical listing of ingredients and instructions, each recipe contains a progression of photographs illustrating various stages of preparation along with the completed dish. A handy introductory section visually identifies common ingredients and details how to complete the basics—cleaning, peeling, dicing, slicing, shredding, and preparing broths and rice. Those inspired to visit the restaurants themselves will find contact information and a map of their locations in the back of the book.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Packed with over 75 recipes from some of L.A.'s top Korean restaurants, this outstanding collection will appeal to those who've never even set foot in southern California, let alone Korea. Opening with an exhaustive, photograph-rich overview of key ingredients and preparation techniques, the book offers step-by-step instructions for simple and complex dishes ranging from appetizers to sides, salads, entrees and desserts. There are a bevy of recipes for traditional dishes such as kimchi, porridge and ribs, as well as specialty and fusion dishes to ensure palates never get bored. Budding cooks can choose from familiar fare such as Bulgogi, a marinated

and stir-fried beef dish, or the more exotic, such as Jellyfish Salad, Spicy Monkfish or Seafood Vegetable Stew. Though dishes can intimidate, cooks will find their meals coming together quickly once the initial preparation is done. The book's strongest suit is its breadth of flavors and styles-there are recipes for virtually every protein source, from pine nuts to pork to tofu-offering mouthwatering options for every kind of diner. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

"I've never seen such a comprehensive collection of authentic Korean recipes. Traditional cuisine, exciting new fusion dishes, it's all in here." —Ki Young Lee, president, Los Angeles Korean American Restaurant Association  
"The book is rich in recipes, techniques, tips, and photography, and is inspiring as both a cookbook and a restaurant guide." —The BA blog by the editors of Bon Appétit  
"Packed with over 75 recipes from some of L.A.'s top Korean restaurants, this outstanding collection will appeal to those who've never even set foot in southern California, let alone Korea." —Publishers Weekly, starred review

I gave this book to my wife who just happens to be Korean and just happens to have a sister who owned and ran a Korean restaurant meaning she isn't easily impressed. But she was impressed with *Discovering Korean Cuisine*. At least she was impressed with the fabulous photography... and impressed with the elegant layout. However she commented that directions for preparation were often vague. Other reviewers have pointed out that ingredients in traditional recipes were often missing. Whether this was an adaptation to American tastes or secret ingredients restaurants simply will not disclose I can't say. We haven't prepared enough of these recipes to make a final evaluation. However you can contrast that with my tastes which rate kim chi high on the phooey list - I would rather eat sauerkraut straight up. So maybe changes and omissions are meant for people like me. Ultimately I will have to defer to my wife as we try some of these dishes. The large majority of reviewers gave it five stars so there must be something to like. If in the end it only needs an additional ingredient or two you can certainly add a handwritten footnote. Bottom line... is traditional the enemy of good?

I've been cooking Korean for years, but the one thing I've never been able to master is the soondubu (soft and spicy tofu stew). I've tried recipes from every Korean cookbook there is...been to all the sites (Maanchi/Aeris/etc...) and still haven't been able to recreate that fantastic taste and texture: until now. The soondubu recipe in *Discovering Korean Cuisine* is JUST like I remembered

eating in the restaurants, and the missing step is something I would have never imagined and involves all the same ingredients I'd been using but ages the sauce for a few days. What a difference! The other recipes look pretty good as well, and I don't see any of the missing steps alluded to in other reviews, but I've only cooked a handful of the dishes, though I've made the soondubu countless times now, and each time it's still perfect. Also, some of the recipes can simply be tweaked to personal preference. For example, I don't like clams in my tangjan-jigae. I also don't like radishes in my Yukgaejang. However, that doesn't mean these dishes aren't supposed to have them in there...I happen to know Korean housewives who do or do not put those ingredients in their versions based on how their moms cooked it.

As a Korean who does not know how to cook authentic Korean dishes, I've been looking for a good Korean cookbook for the last 20 years and I have yet to find one which is as great as this cookbook. As the front cover states, these are the actual recipes from the best Korean LA-area restaurants. When I first thought about that, I thought that the recipes may be too difficult. But the exact opposite is true. First of all, they have individual pictures of each of the ingredients that will be used in the book at the beginning of the book. Since the book is written to appeal to non-Koreans as well, everything is explained to the detail. EACH recipe is illustrated, just about step-by-step. They even give you the "hints" from the pro's. It is the best!!!

I love Korean food, but I'm not Korean, so actually cooking it at home has been more of an improvisation of Korean BBQ sauce and meat. Not always effective, and there's so much more to Korean cuisine than its BBQ and grilled dishes. I love this cookbook because it's the only one I've come across that has a reasonably good recipe for zhajiangmian (Chinese-Korean style of black bean noodles), jap chae (vegetable noodles), and the sweet persimmon/cinnamon dessert drink that some restaurants serve at the end of the meal. The cookbook itself is much more diverse than other ones I've encountered - it has over 75 recipes, but the focus isn't just on a few dishes with many variations. Kimchi, porridge, soup, salad, meats, and stews are all covered, with recommendations of course from the restaurants providing the recipe (more relevant to people who live in Los Angeles). Also, each recipe is clearly complemented with instructive photos, and there's even a glossary in the back of the book of cooking and Korean terms.

We have at least 60 or 70 cookbooks, including seven Korean cookbooks. Very few of them have provided even one recipe so successful that we replicate it year after year, so when I say that all

eight of the recipes we've tried so far from this book have been truly outstanding, it's hard to believe -- especially for us. My wife is Korean and grew up in Korea; she (of course) loves Korean food, and cooks Korean dishes frequently. I'm not Korean, but lived in Korea for eight years; I too love Korean food and even cook it myself. We have eaten in Korean restaurants all over Korea, the U.S., and other countries, and we feel that by now we know the difference between Korean food that is excellent and that which is not. Some of the best restaurants we used to frequent in Seoul are -- or at least were -- little holes in the wall that have thrived for a hundred or more years by specializing in only one dish, such as Komtang or Seullungtang, and maintain long-standing clienteles of fiercely loyal customers. The standards set by these restaurants for top-notch food are seldom approached in other places. We were amazed, then, to find that the dishes we've tried from this book approximate the best we've eaten anywhere. The recipes are easy to follow, beautifully illustrated, and delicious. If you want to cook Korean, you won't be sorry you bought this book.

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