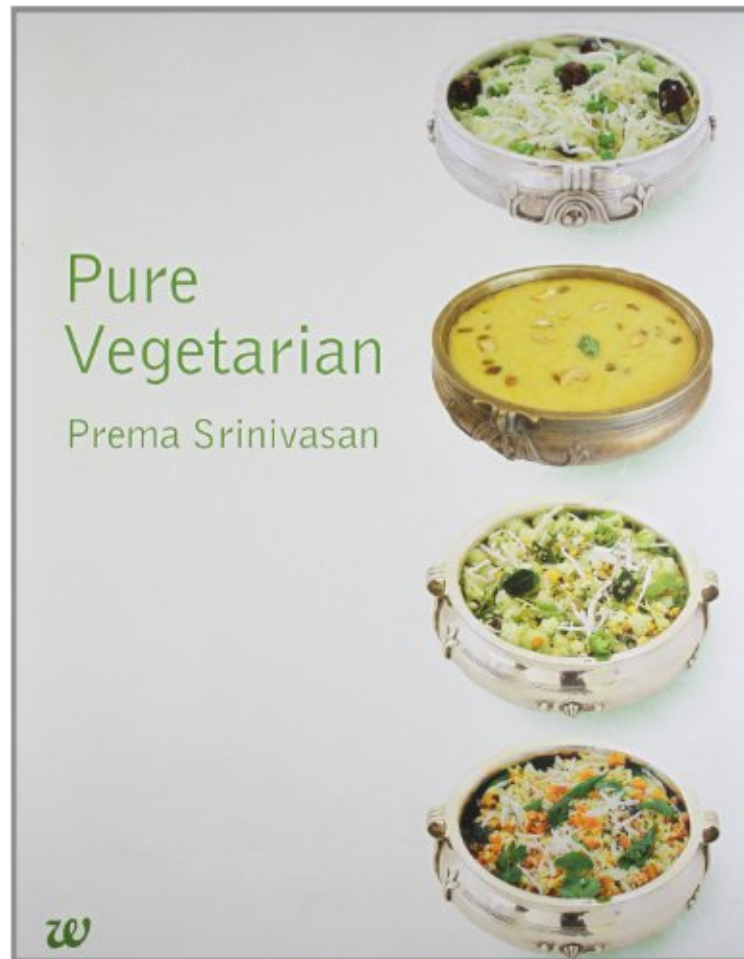


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## Pure Vegetarian

*Prema Srinivasan*

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**Prema Srinivasan : Pure Vegetarian** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Pure Vegetarian:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A new 'bible' of South Indian vegetarian cooking By Gini Alhadef AT LAST!!! PURE VEGETARIAN is a definitive and authentic guide to the traditions, methods, and ingredients, of South Indian Tamil vegetarian home cooking, from the magical and everyday white steamed idli pancake to the rarefied preparations of 'pan'--a combination of betel leaf and areca nuts, "an Indian custom on the par with the Japanese tea ceremony," as the author Prema Srinivasan states. As one of the many personal anecdotes told simply, often with humor, she recounts the legendary dancer Balasaraswati's own way of preparing this end-of-the-meal delicacy: "She demonstrated with elegant movements how the betel leaf is first taken, cleaned with water, then wiped on a clean cloth, the ends of the leaf broken off, how the slaked lime mixed with coconut water is smeared on the back of the leaf, then a sharp slice with the hand to pull out the central nerve cutting the leaf into two, a deft

shaping of the leaf into a cone and the gentle placing of it into the mouth. Then and only then, is the areca nut taken and warmed between the palms of the hands and popped into the mouth." In this quietly dazzling book, the author has portrayed the workings of a true orthodox South Indian kitchen, along with her own personal history--as a young girl of seventeen knowing how to make just one dish, to a growing "delight in the amazing and unlimited variety of 'pure vegetarian' dishes from around the world [...] Central to all these cuisines is the code of yama, to eat in moderation, and niyama which is ahimsa or non-violence, which means not to hurt any living thing, a code laid down by the Vedic seers." Over a hundred recipes, including a bounty of chutneys, pickles, and of course the famous coffee of the south, with jaggery, milk, and cardamon, are given in detailed and clear descriptions and wonderfully austere yet sublimely tantalizing images showing the finished dishes, served in traditional vessels, along with all the attendant implements from the banana leaf as a plate, to tin cups and saucers, and of course stacked tiffin boxes. You will discover what foods are offered in a temple but also the subtle art of blending spices. The book is tellingly dedicated to "J Krishnamurti, Ascetic and Aesthete at once, who understood the Material and the Transcendental." This beautifully designed, large-format paperback treads a path steeped in both. A delightful stream of knowledge runs through it. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy CustomerGood cookbook, has a lot of new recipes even for an advanced South Indian cook like myself. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent book - not so attentive vendorBy Indian CookExcellent book. I had read good reviews on the book before I bought it. not so sure about the vendor - packaging was excellent. however, the book inside was dog-eared. This damage was NOT in transit. the vendor really paid a lot of attention to packing a damaged book!

The key to the best vegetarian food of the Tamil world is home-style cooking. Prema Srinivasan leads us to that world with her Pure Vegetarian Cookbook, a guide which will have cooks and foodies perking up their ears and cleansing their palates in anticipation. If you thought rasams, sambhars and idlis summed up the cuisine of the area, Srinivasan points you to the countless variations on such dishes and others. The more than hundred recipes in this book offer up ways, influenced by region, community, or simply, the seasons, to put the best platters on the table. They showcase the wide variety and infinite inventiveness of the Tamil kitchen. Lesser-known dishes, featuring specific types of grains, and an awesome array of chutneys and pickles, are also lovingly included. Each section is accompanied by anecdotal explanations of the history and culture around the recipe, and by beautifully illustrated plates showing the ingredients, the utensils, the presentation, and of course, the food itself, each in relation to the rest. This book is a much-needed addition to the library of any discerning gourmet, or anyone with an interest in the food and culture of Tamil India.

About the AuthorPrema Srinivasan was brought up in a traditional South Indian family. From an early age, she learned to appreciate culinary heritage. Later on, she developed an interest in the origins of food. As she learned to cook, she developed her variations of a healthy vegetarian diet, balanced according to Ayurvedic principles. Recognizing that food cultures are in a dynamic process of evolution, Srinivasan took a keen interest in incorporating some of the trans-regional and international influences that are compatible with the traditional core of South Indian vegetarian cuisine in our cosmopolitan age.