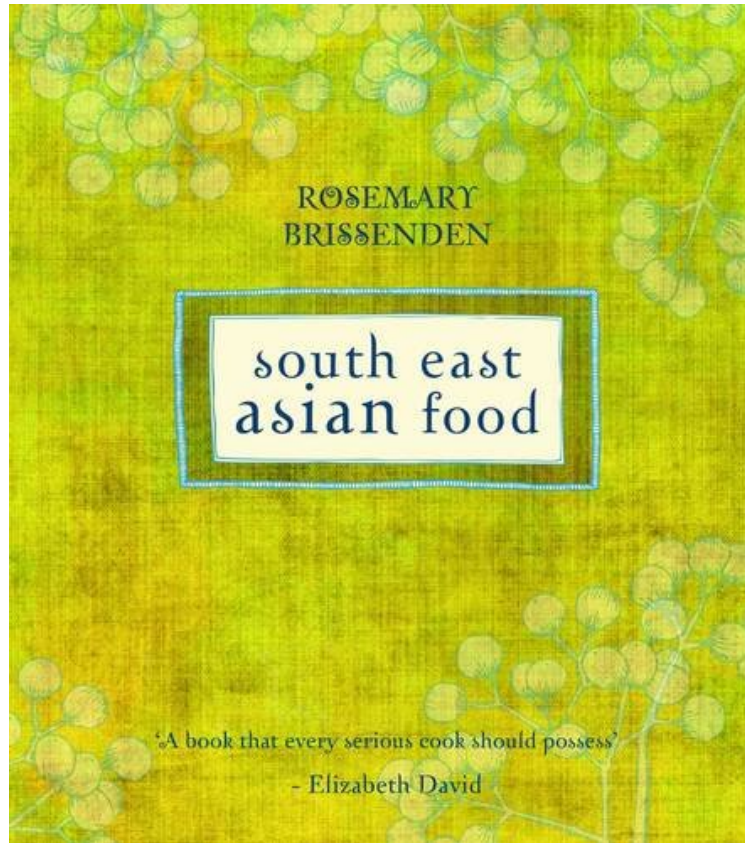


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## South East Asian Food

*Rosemary Brissenden*

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**Rosemary Brissenden : South East Asian Food** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised South East Asian Food:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Good eating!By Zing NafzingerThis is one of my favorite cookbooks. I use it for daily cookery, as well as for special occasions. The flavors do not disappoint!0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Small Sized BookBy RexBook is very small with zero illustrations. The book I received was nothing like the picture.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A fantastic, deep resourceBy Stephen FosterI don't really think of this as a cookbook, though it certainly is, with 90% of the space taken up purely by recipes. This enormous tome places all of the various cuisines in context and explains the meldings and cross-pollinations that have occurred over time. Many of these conversations take place in the recipes themselves, which I really like.It is certainly not a first Asian cookbook for anyone, and maybe the reason I don't think of it as a cookbook is that I suspect most of the recipes have been collected by the author, rather than written by her. That is not a criticism.I bought the book because of my long-time fascination with the food of the region, evolving from Thai through Vietnamese to Malaysian (via Redmond's brilliant and quirky Malay Satay Hut) and most recently the almost-extinct Straits Chinese/Malaysian cuisine known as Nonya. All of these are covered really well, as is the history of the many connections between them. At some point the Portuguese also show up, introducing the chile pepper, and the

world simply becomes a better place. Ingredients are covered really well. I wish the ingredient index was longer (it starts with "B", frustrating my very first search, for anchovies), but it is plenty detailed. An excellent resource. But I got fond of this book the first time I opened it, at random, to a recipe for Sambal Ikan Bilis. My long-gone dad was a Singapore POW, and "Ikan bilis!" is how he summoned our cat to dinner. He told us it meant "little white fish," and indeed it means dried baby anchovies. Strange to get a childhood memory validated so late in life. You bet I now have me some. But that recipe is also the reason for the four stars: the recipes are sometimes questionable. The ikan bilis recipe instructs you to remove their heads. Do that if you like (I can't imagine why), but what is not mentioned is that the tiny little things need to be individually gutted, like cut each one open and scrape the dried guts out. It makes a real difference to the flavour. It sounds impossible, but quickly becomes much like de-stringing green beans, and just as quick. Just cut the bellies open and scrape the guts out with a fingernail. Give the black, stinky discards to the cat: he'll thank you.

Since its first publication in 1970, South East Asian Food has achieved a reputation as the authoritative book on the subject. Elizabeth David listed it among the books every serious cook should possess. This new edition features a completely updated and easy-to-follow design, with beautiful illustrations throughout. The selection of recipes in South East Asian Food will show you the varieties and unique properties of each cuisine, from tangy Thai salads, satisfying Vietnamese soups, aromatic Indonesian curries to exquisite Malaysian sambals. With the help of the author's clear instructions and knowledge of the local foods, you'll be able to recreate these delightful, fragrant dishes in your own kitchen. As Rosemary says, 'With the world full of same-tasting instant approaches to South East Asian food through packets and jars, this book aims to serve as a guide to cooks who wish to enjoy its true freshness and variety by cooking it for themselves. If it also conveys a sense of a rich and diverse set of culinary traditions I shall be more than happy.'

About the Author Rosemary Brissenden has visited South East Asia for many years and has become familiar with the countries and cuisines. She published the first English language cookbook of its kind - South East Asian Food