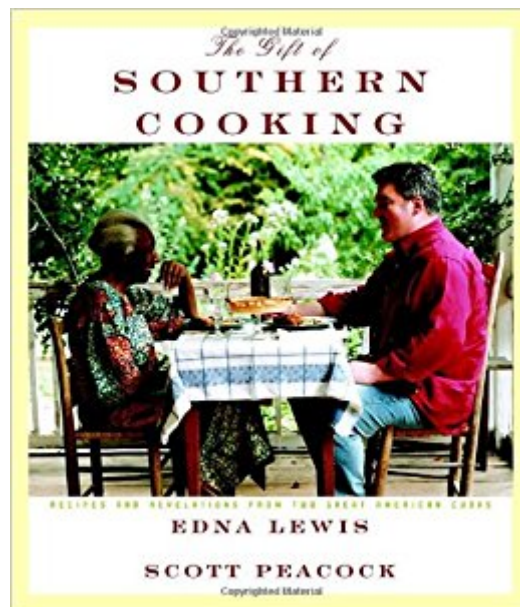




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# The Gift Of Southern Cooking: Recipes And Revelations From Two Great American Cooks



## Synopsis

Edna Lewis--whose *The Taste of Country Cooking* has become an American classic--and Alabama-born chef Scott Peacock pool their unusual cooking talents to give us this unique cookbook. What makes it so special is that it represents different styles of Southern cooking--Miss Lewis's Virginia country cooking and Scott Peacock's inventive and sensitive blending of new tastes with the Alabama foods he grew up on, liberally seasoned with Native American, Caribbean, and African influences. Together they have taken neglected traditional recipes unearthed in their years of research together on Southern food and worked out new versions that they have made their own. Every page of this beguiling book bears the unmistakable mark of being written by real hands-on cooks. Scott Peacock has the gift for translating the love and respect they share for good home cooking with such care and precision that you know, even if you've never tried them before, that the Skillet Cornbread will turn out perfect, the Crab Cakes will be "Honestly Good," and the four-tiered Lane Cake something spectacular. Together they share their secrets for such Southern basics as pan-fried chicken (soak in brine first, then buttermilk, before frying in good pork fat), creamy grits (cook slowly in milk), and genuine Southern biscuits, which depend on using soft flour, homemade baking powder, and fine, fresh lard (and on not twisting the biscuit cutter when you stamp out the dough). Scott Peacock describes how Miss Lewis makes soup by coaxing the essence of flavor from vegetables (the She-Crab and Turtle soups taste so rich they can be served in small portions in demitasse cups), and he applies the same principle to his intensely flavored, scrumptious dish of Garlic Braised Shoulder Lamb Chops with Butter Beans and Tomatoes. You'll find all these treasures and more before you even get to the superb cakes (potential "Cakewalk Winners" all), the hand-cranked ice creams, the flaky pies, and homey custards and puddings. Interwoven throughout the book are warm memories of the people and the traditions that shaped these pure-tasting, genuinely American recipes. Above all, the Southern table stands for hospitality, and the authors demonstrate that the way everything is put together--with the condiments and relishes and preserves and wealth of vegetables all spread out on the table--is what makes the meal uniquely Southern. Every occasion is celebrated, and at the back of the book there are twenty-two seasonal menus, from A Spring Country Breakfast for a Late Sunday Morning and A Summer Dinner of Big Flavors to An Alabama Thanksgiving and A Hearty Dinner for a Cold Winter Night, to show you how to mix and match dishes for a true Southern table. Here, then, is a joyful coming together of two extraordinary cooks, sharing their gifts. And they invite you to join them.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The books of Edna Lewis--In Pursuit of Flavor, The Taste of Country Cooking, and the out-of-print Edna Lewis Cookbook--should be on any serious cook's bookshelf. Add to that list The Gift of Southern Cooking, which she wrote with fellow Southern cook, Scott Peacock. In her time, Edna Lewis has quietly upheld the virtues of a good meal and the Southern cooking she learned as a child. Her grandfather, a former slave, joined with freed slaves to found Freetown, a Virginia farming community. So Lewis grew up with the food at hand, fresh buttermilk, for example. She moved to New York City early on where she cooked for and rubbed shoulders with artists and actors, musicians and writers, cooks and Communists. And through all her years, through her life and through her cooking, she described the most elegant, simple line. It's there for you to see in each of her recipes, the way she approaches flavor. Here in her mid-80s Lewis brings out the best of Southern cooking with a collaborator less than half her age. She's a Virginian; he's from Alabama. So get ready for a delicious spread. They are both dedicated to preserving Southern food ways, and to updating whenever they can. The book is simply packed with wonderful treats from Spicy Eggplant Relish all the way to Warm Apple Crisp. It's written in Peacock's voice and unless he says so there's no telling where his recipes end and hers begin. But it doesn't matter. They are peas in a pod, those two. You will not only learn how Southern food should taste with The Gift of Southern Cooking, you will learn why and you will learn how. Neither your fried chicken nor your buttermilk biscuits will ever be the same. --Schuyler Ingle

Lewis (In Pursuit of Flavor), grande dame of Southern cooking, has at last come out with a cookbook explicitly devoted to the traditional cooking of the American South. Authenticity is always an issue in southern cooking each state has its fiercely held opinions and sacred recipes but Lewis and her young friend and protege, Scott Peacock, have unbeatable credentials. Peacock, a restaurateur, is from Alabama, Lewis from Virginia, so their culinary reach extends from the Tidewater to the Gulf. They have decades in the kitchen between them and have been cooking together since 1988; indeed, much of the book's charm rises from their heartfelt friendship and mutual respect. Though the book is written in Peacock's voice, nearly every page offers anecdotes and instructions from Miss Lewis. These are mouthwatering recipes, conceived with integrity (there's even a recipe for your own baking powder if, like Miss Lewis, one is habitually suspicious of industrial food) and include a panoply of classic southern favorites: Cornbread-Pecan Dressing, Old-Fashioned Creamy Grits, Country Ham Steak with Red-Eye Gravy, Hot Crusty Buttermilk Biscuits, and Southern Greens Cooked in Pork Stock. But as if to prove that the Southern kitchen does not begin and end with the pig, several more modern innovations appear: Sauteed Frogs' Legs with Brown Butter and Capers, Silken Turnip Soup, Chanterelles on Toast. The rest of the country owes its thanks to this unlikely pair for bringing Southern comfort back to everyone's table; and so, as one chapter puts it, Praise the lard and pass the biscuits. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

THE best cookbook I have. The mayonnaise recipe...I only make my own now. It's going on 10 years since I got my copy of this book...The deviled eggs, potato salad and Mac and Cheese recipes are the only versions I ever make. The story of Edna & Scott is great reading too. Get this book!!!!

It's hard to express how much I love this cookbook! Great recipes and easy to follow directions. If you are from the South, these recipes will resonate with memories. Ms. Lewis is a master at combining old traditions with modern tastes and making them so delectable. Her bread recipes and fried chicken recipe are literally bliss. I guess you can tell that I really love this cookbook!

Edna Lewis continues to live on as one of the best chefs of our time. Thank you Scott Peacock for your outreach!

Excellent reading. Reminds me of my childhood. My mother cooked a lot of the meals in the book.

love the recipes!

Another great cookbook for any collection.

The best, most thoughtful, well-researched book of its kind! First class!!

Received it and spent the afternoon reading it. Great stories with recipes and tips.

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