

MARIE SIMMONS

Cookbook Author | Cooking Teacher

BIOGRAPHY

An award-winning cookbook author, recognized food writer and inspiring teacher I have turned a love of cooking and feeding people into a rich and satisfying career.

EDUCATION AND BEGINNINGS

I studied Foods and Nutrition at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, worked as a Test Kitchen Editor at *Woman's Day* magazine, where I was mentored by the best in the world of magazines. One of my responsibilities at *Woman's Day* was to prepare lunch for the food editor and her colleagues including the great James Beard. Later I honed my skills as a pastry chef at the historic Brooklyn restaurant, Gage & Tollner. Yearning for the more creative aspect of working with food, I answered a call for a position at *Cuisine* magazine where I ultimately became the food editor until the magazine's demise.

FOOD WRITER

After *Cuisine* I launched my career as a free-lance food writer, recipe developer, spokesperson and cookbook author: I created and wrote *Fresh & Fast*, the *Los Angeles Times* syndicated newspaper column for 15 years, co-wrote and ultimately wrote the Cooking for Health column for *Bon Appetit* magazine for 18 years, and Simmons Sez, a popular food column, for Bay Area News Group, for 5 years. I have written for many publications including *Culture*, *Prevention*, *Eating Well*, *Real Food*, *Cooking Light*, *Redbook*, *Food & Wine*, *Fitness*, *Shape* and *McCalls*.



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COOKING SCHOOL TEACHER

I teach cooking classes to help promote my books and to inspire cooks to eat well. I have taught nationwide for Sur La Table Cooking Schools and Central Market Cooking Schools in Texas, de Gustibus and The James Beard House in NYC, In Good Taste in Portland, Oregon and other schools from Seattle to Washington DC.

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I was the Culinary Programs Manager at Copia: The American Center for Wine Food and the Arts in Napa, CA where I created the curriculum and educational programs and taught daily classes. Currently I teach regularly at La Cocina Que Canta, the culinary school at Rancho La Puerta in Tecate, Mexico.

COOKBOOK AUTHOR

My first cookbook is the best selling *365 Ways to Cook Pasta* (Harper & Row, 1988). My first rice cookbook, *Rice, the Amazing Grain* (Henry Holt and Company, 1991), thrilled and surprised me with a glowing review in *The New York Times*. Another early book, *The Light Touch* (Chapters Publishing, Ltd, 1992) was equally lauded by Marian Burros, the esteemed health writer for *The New York Times*, and then went on to be nominated for both the Julia Child and James Beard Awards. *Lighter, Quicker, Better* (William Morrow, 1995), co-authored with Richard Sax, won both the Julia Child and James Beard cookbook awards. *The Good Egg* (Houghton Mifflin, 2000) won the James Beard Award. I wrote the Beans and Grains Chapter for the *New Joy of Cooking* (Scribner 1997). *Fresh & Fast* (Chapters Publishing Ltd, 1996) probably my most popular book, continues to sell steadily. I conceptualized and wrote *Things Cooks Love* (April 2008), the first in a series for Sur La Table, nominated for a Julia Child Cookbook Award.

I have also written: *A to Z Bar Cookies* (Chapters, 1994), *A to Z Muffins* (Chapters, 1995), *A to Z Pancakes* (Chapters, 1997) and *A to Z Puddings* (Chapters, 1999), *Holiday Celebrations* (Williams-Sonoma, 1998), *COOKIES* (Williams-Sonoma, 2002), *Italian Light Cooking* (Putnam Publishing, 1992), *The Amazing World of Rice* (William Morrow, 2003), *Essentials of Healthful Cooking* (Williams-Sonoma 2004), *Fig Heaven* (William Morrow, May, 2004), *MASTERING Soups & Stews* (William-Sonoma 2005).

PRESENTER AND SPOKESPERSON

I have been interviewed on hundreds of radio (*Fresh Air* with Terry Gross) and TV interviews including *Good Morning America*, *CBS This*

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Morning, CNN Cooking 101, TV Food Network and View From the Bay.

I have been honored to speak at meetings and conferences for the California Fig Advisory Board, USA Rice, The International Association of Cooking Professionals, The Symposium for Professional Food Writers at The Greenbrier, Bon Appetit Health Fair Seminars, The California Almond Board, The Smithsonian Institute in Washington, DC and the 15th Annual Festival of Women Authors hosted by the Berkeley/Oakland YWCA.

As a spokesperson I have had the good fortune to be able to cross market my cookbooks with laudable food products such as Aunt Jemima maple syrup, Land of Lakes butter, Progresso Italian pantry products, Dannon yogurt and fresh and dried California figs.

I am a past president of Les Dames Escoffier San Francisco Chapter and sit on the board of the Les Dames Escoffier International, a long time member of International Association of Culinary Professionals and the San Francisco Professional Food Society.