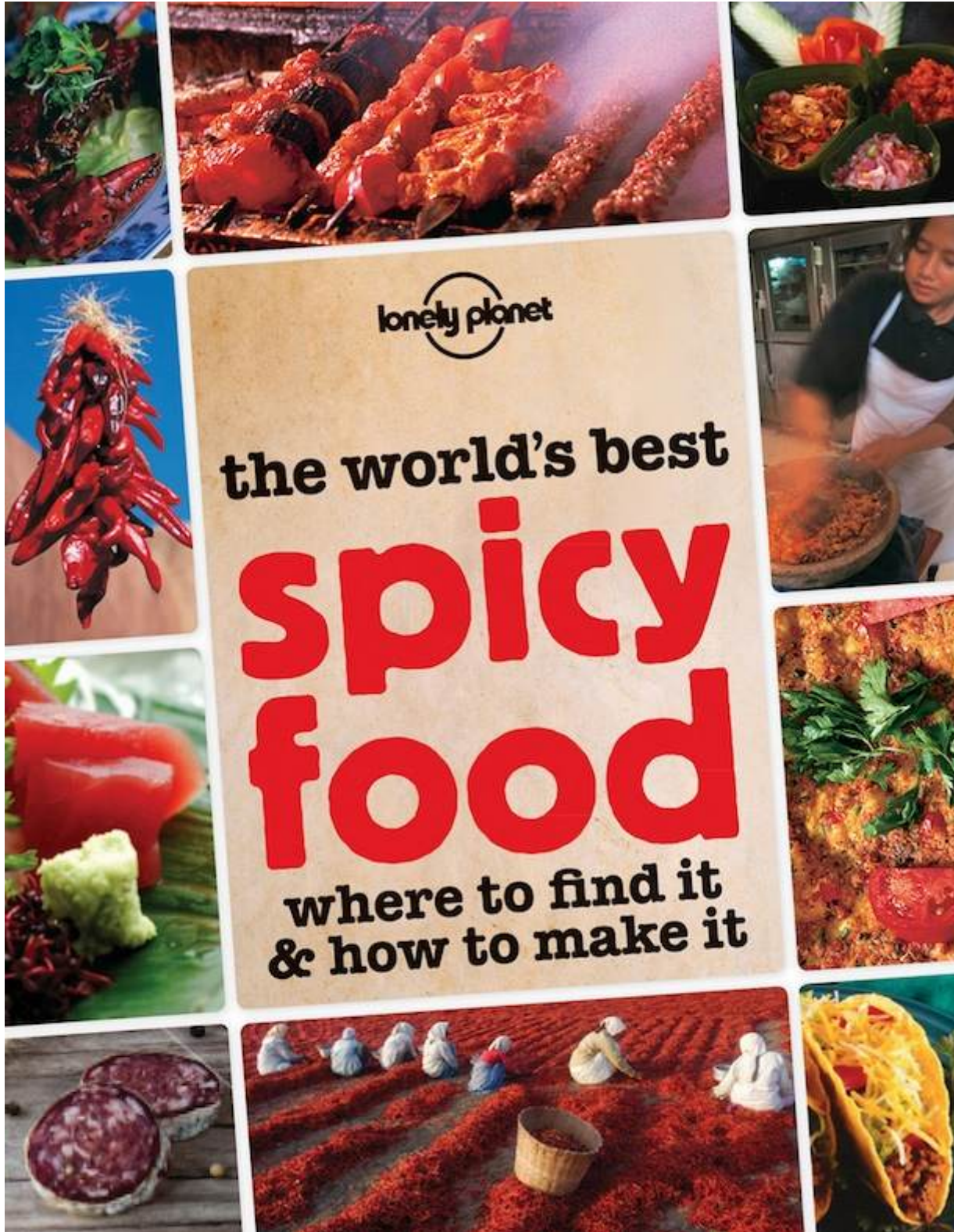


KATE WILLIAMS



It's hard for me to remember a time when I *didn't* crave spicy food. Salsa, Tabasco, and [Pickapeppa sauce](#) (try it on red beans) have been staples of my condiment repertoire for at least the last 20 years. So I jumped at the chance to cook from [Lonely Planet](#)'s new cookbook and travel guide, [The World's Best Spicy Food](#). A collection of recipes culled by food writers around the world, the book takes an encyclopedic look at everything capsicum.

Just like the range in heat from a bell pepper to a bhut jolokia, the recipes in [The World's Best Spicy Food](#) spans an array of potency. Some dishes, like Hungarian goulash, have plenty of pepper flavor, but not a lot of spice. Others, like Korean tteokbokki (rice cakes simmered in gochujang), are ratcheted up to 11. Each recipe comes with an essay that details the dish's origins and flavors as well as the best place to eat it. Perhaps it's not surprising that there's an emphasis on Southeast Asia and China throughout the pages; they far outnumber the few samplings from the North and South America, Europe, and Africa.

Cooking from the book isn't terribly difficult, but you'll need to spend some time combing international grocery stores to find many of the ingredients listed. (Lonely Planet provides a glossary with a few ingredient substitutions, though it's far from complete.) Some recipes are more detailed than others; I found myself doing quite a bit of googling while cooking to make sure I was using the right ingredients and taking the right steps. Even with these shortcomings, the resulting dishes are fun, especially for a spice lover like myself.

This week, we'll sample a range in spiciness. We'll start with a relatively mild Turkish flatbread called **lahmacun** and then dive into a bowl of funky Malaysian **laksa lemak**. Later, we'll braise Ethiopian **doro wat**, and then end the week with fiery Korean **tteokbokki**.

Win 'The World's Best Spicy Food'

Thanks to our friends at Lonely Planet, we have five (5) copies of [The World's Best Spicy Food](#) to give away this week. All you need to do for a chance to win is to tell us about **the spiciest food you've ever eaten** in the comments section below.