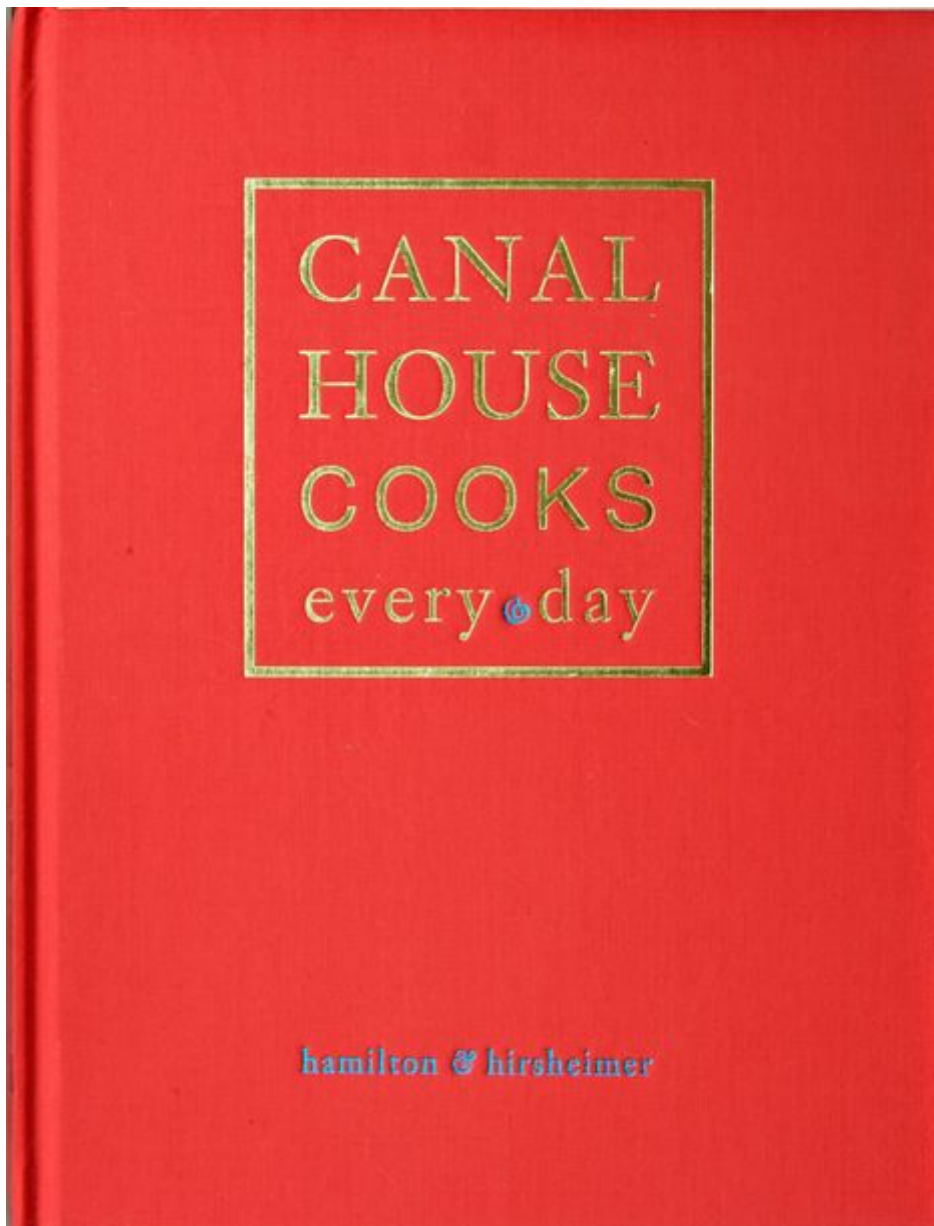


# Cook the Book: 'Canal House Cooks Every Day'

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Let's get this out of the way first: *Canal House Cooks Every Day* is a gorgeous book, designed to be a collectors item just as much as a cookbook. This fact is not surprising given the elegant minimalist aesthetic of co-authors **Melissa Hamilton** and **Christopher Hirsheimer**. The duos' quarterly magazine and daily blog posts are similarly anchored by their signature overhead shots of simple, seasonal dishes--the photographs themselves would make for a lovely coffee table book.

But what sets *Canal House Cooks Every Day* above other titles edging out the actual coffee on living room tables is the complete approachability of the food. Sure, Hamilton and Hirsheimer are picky about the quality and seasonality of their ingredients (and occasionally this pickiness comes off as precious elitism). However, most of the recipes in the book could be prepared by relative novices in the kitchen, and many take fewer than 20 or 30 minutes to throw together. Over half of the recipes are written in conversational paragraphs, as if Hamilton and Hirsheimer were

describing the process out loud, in person. These recipes transport the reader to Canal House itself, much like their popular blog, **Canal House Cooks Lunch** .

In fact, regular readers of the blog will recognize many of the images in the book. Hamilton and Hirsheimer drew inspiration for their cookbook (the duo's first under the Canal House name) from their blog. In the cookbook, recipes are organized by month and day, with notes on things like the weather when the recipe was developed or how the two were feeling that day. Again, this personal touch makes for an intimate read, in and out of the kitchen.

This week, we'll sample a few of Hamilton and Hirsheimer's picks for summer snacks and more substantial meals. First, we'll make a simple **strawberry conserve**, and then pair it with **jamón serrano** for a perfect pre-dinner nibble. Next, we'll assemble a **composed salad of summer produce**, perfect for the long hot days ahead. Finally, we'll whip up a **pesto** punctuated with anchovies and green olives, and then we'll roll it up inside **flank steak** for an easy grilled dinner.

## Win 'Canal House Cooks Every Day'

Thanks to the kind folks at Andrews McMeel, we have five (5) copies of Canal House Cooks Every Day to give away to our readers this week. All you need to do for a chance to win is to tell us about your favorite simple summer meal in the comments section below.