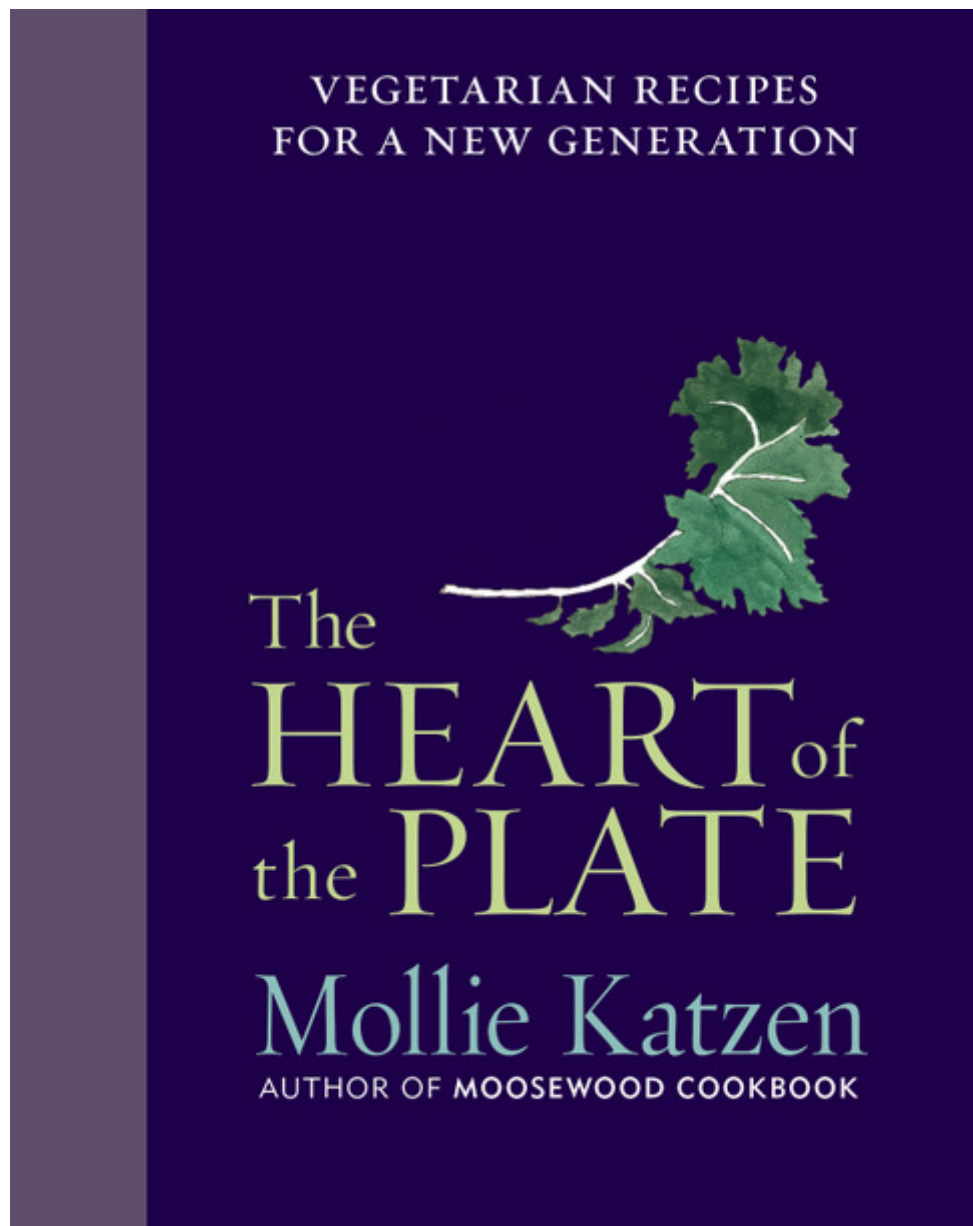


# Cook the Book: 'The Heart of the Plate'

KATE WILLIAMS



I'm sure I'm not the only one here who grew up cooking from a stained, dog-eared copy of *The Moosewood Cookbook*. The hummus, falafel, and vegetable curry recipes were staples in my parents' kitchen, and I carried my own copy of the book around with me to college and every place I've lived since. But the truth is, I don't cook from it much anymore. I still eat a lot of vegetarian meals, but I'm much more likely to throw together a salad or stir-fry than I am to bake a cheesy quiche or fry chickpea fritters. Given the content of her new cookbook, *The Heart of the Plate*, **Mollie Katzen** sympathizes.

This new book, like *Moosewood*, is a collection of vegetarian recipes, but it has an entirely different sentiment. Instead of focusing on the hearty, rich dishes that were a large part of the 70s hippie repertoire, *The Heart of the Plate* takes a contemporary, vegetable-centric approach. But you won't find any twee, precious dishes in these pages. And the recipes are (refreshingly) not organized by season. **Katzen's** recipes are still the warm, fuzzy, and friendly type. In fact,

she even has a whole chapter dedicated to "cozy" mashed vegetables and another for stews and "their accessories." Almost all of the recipes come with a lovingly detailed headnote full of hints as well as a list of optional "enhancements" for tweaking each to suit your taste or appetite. The book lists around 250 recipes, but all of these variations more than double the content.

At times, this flexibility hurts the reliability of the recipes. Some need more salt, more acid, or more time in the oven. These problems aren't totally detrimental, of course, and the inventive combinations of ingredients Katzen suggests are more than worth the bookshelf space. Only Katzen would suggest pairing roasted beets with soft pureed mango, or corn cakes with Peruvian bean stew. And her array of seasonal vegetable lasagnas are a boon to any pasta-lover.

We'll be eating lots of vegetables this week, starting with a comforting bowl of **lablabi**, a Tunisian chickpea stew. Next, we'll dive into a big bowl of **grilled bread and kale salad** accented by **lemon-marinated fresh figs**. Then we'll taste Katzen's **green rice with pecans and red grapes**, before ending with week with tamale-like **polenta and collard packages**.

## Win 'The Heart of the Plate'

Thanks to the kind folks at Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, we have five (5) copies of *The Heart of the Plate* to give away this week. All you need to do for a chance to win is tell us about **the most memorable vegetarian meal you've eaten** in the comments section below.