

# Cook the Book: 'Vietnamese Home Cooking'

KATE WILLIAMS



Since opening [The Slanted Door](#) in San Francisco in 1995, [Charles Phan](#) has gone on to win a couple of [James Beard Awards](#) and create [a small empire](#) of Southeast Asian restaurants across the Bay Area. It was about time he published a cookbook.

And what a cookbook it is. *Vietnamese Home Cooking* is not only a guide to preparing many of Phan's favorite restaurant dishes, but it also serves as a primer to Vietnamese ingredients (color photographs are a huge help when shopping!), equipment, technique, and soul. Chapters are (mostly) broken down by cooking style (the one exception being the "Street Food" chapter), offering detailed lessons for each of the six core techniques: soup-making, steaming, braising, stir-frying, grilling, and (deep) frying.

To be sure, this is a restaurant cookbook at its core. There is much page-turning and sauce-making necessary to complete many of the recipes. Plan on devoting quite a bit of time to making Phan's food, and you won't regret it.

This week, we'll start out by deep-frying **Hoi An Wontons with Spicy Tomato Sauce**, and then chop up a bright **Green Papaya Salad**. Next we'll steam **Black Bean-Glazed Pork Spareribs** to pair with **Roasted Eggplant and Leek Salad**. We'll close out the week by braising a fragrant **Lemongrass Beef Stew**.

## Win 'Vietnamese Home Cooking'

Thanks to our friends at Ten Speed Press, we have five (5) copies of *Vietnamese Home Cooking* to give away this week. All you need to do is tell us about your finest Southeast Asian dining (or cooking) memory.