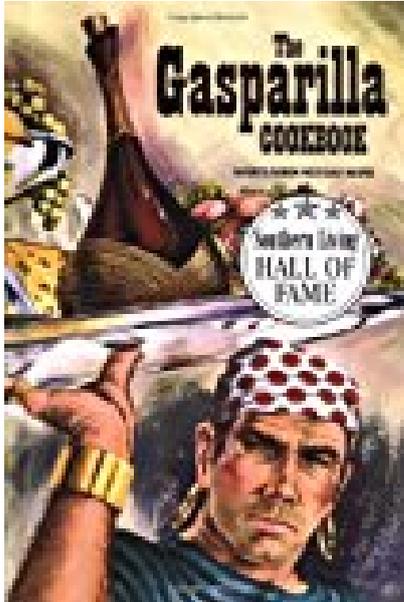


The Gasparilla Cookbook



BOOK DETAILS

- Author : The Junior League of Tampa
- Pages : 332 Pages
- Publisher : Favorite Receipes Press
- Language : English
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BOOK SYNOPSIS

Where the spine of Florida, the Ridge District, begins its gentle slope westward to the Gulf of Mexico there lies a town at the head of a beautiful bay, unlike any other town in Florida. This is Tampa, named by the Caloosa Indians long before the advent of the Spanish Conquistadors. This is Tampa which has been occupied in turn by Spanish treasure seekers, missionaries, pirates, U. S. troops garrisoned here during the Seminole Indian Wars, a French Count who was the head surgeon of Napoleon's Navy, pioneers from southern states, pioneers from northern states, Union troops, Confederate troops, Cuban cigar makers from Key West, troops in the Spanish-American War, Tin Can tourists, wealthy tourists, real estate speculators, Air Corps personnel in World War II, and last of all an influx of permanent residents who have made this the fastest growing area in Florida. Tampa is the hub of the region industrially, but more important for our purposes it's the hub of good food. Great cattle enterprises lie to the south and east, 22 miles down the coast of Tampa Bay is the farming community of Ruskin known as the salad bowl of the nation, across the bay to the west are the Gulf Beaches where seafood is king, all the area is citrus country at any point of the compass, and 28 miles northwest there is a Greek community called Tarpon Springs where the customs, the language, and the recipes are straight from the isles of the Aegean. The natives of this little town came to Tarpon Springs many years ago from Greece to harvest the sponges which are found in the Gulf of Mexico. Curio shops line the docks on the Anclote River where the sponge fleet ties up, but the Greek food affords the visitor's greatest enjoyment. In a dining room and lounge decorated with Grecian war masks, maps of the world as Homer knew it, models of ancient Greek warships, and the hull of a primitive sponge boat, one may feast on Greek salad which is fashioned as carefully as a mosaic and just as beautiful to behold. This alone would be worth the trip, but you may also have lamb prepared in strange and delicious ways, scarlet stone crab claws, the meat of which is too delicate to describe, or your choice of seafood, followed by honey-and-almond confections. Tampanans can and do find a wonderful meal in any direction. All the good restaurants serve succulent steaks, there are several fine Chinese restaurants, there is even a good French restaurant west across Tampa Bay. The notion that all Florida is palm trees, sand, and bathing beauties is false. So is the idea of Florida as a vast interior of sleepy cracker towns with pigs and chickens running the roads, or a steady diet of greasy fried chicken with blackened string beans. Florida is sun and sand, yes, but it is also cool lakes, ancient oaks, and lacy cypress trees, big cities, beautiful farms, and citrus groves covering rolling hills like tufted bedspreads. Florida is lush ranchland, crystal springs, dogwood and maple trees, people from everywhere and all walks of life who came to see, got sand in their shoes, and had to return. Tampa is a composite of all of it. It's a bountiful land. We wish all could see for themselves. But if that is impossible, then we in our small way, will try to bring it to you. The food of a land tells the life of its people, and we would like to share our good life with everyone. Here is our offering. May it bring you pleasure as we have known it.

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