

All-Time
Favorites from
My Life in Food

Selected
from
**ESSENTIAL
PEPIN**

ESSENTIAL PEPIN DESSERTS

With videos demonstrating
essential techniques

JACQUES PÉPIN

tehranchef.com



ESSENTIAL PEPIN DESSERTS

All-Time Favorites
from My Life in Food

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Introduction

Editor's Note: *Essential Pepin Desserts* contains selected recipes from *Essential Pepin*, which was originally published in October 2011. The larger volume contains videos demonstrating essential cooking techniques and more than 700 recipes. The introduction that follows is also excerpted from *Essential Pepin*.



In my sixty years as a cook—as a professional chef, a husband, a father, a grandfather, an author of many cookbooks, and a cooking teacher—I have created thousands of recipes, each memorable and worthy in its own way. In *Essential Pepin*, for the first time, I have taken stock, reflected back over my life in the kitchen, and assembled the best in one place: the recipes I love the most.

Essential Pepin is a new book—everything has been rethought and updated—but it is familiar as well: it's like meeting up with an old friend, because it goes back to the beginning of my culinary writing. It is “essentially” the way I have cooked as a young man, as a mature man, and, now, as an older man. It demonstrates the ways I have changed through my many books, my many moods, my many styles, from elaborate classic French cooking to fast food done my way. It shows how I have changed and learned. Like any working chef, I have always experimented with different foods and different methods. The recipes that I have created through these years are the diary of my life. I am, have been, and always will be a cook: my culinary identity defines me.

When I decided to put this book together, I believed it would be a cinch to do, an easy matter of assembling and reorganizing recipes. It

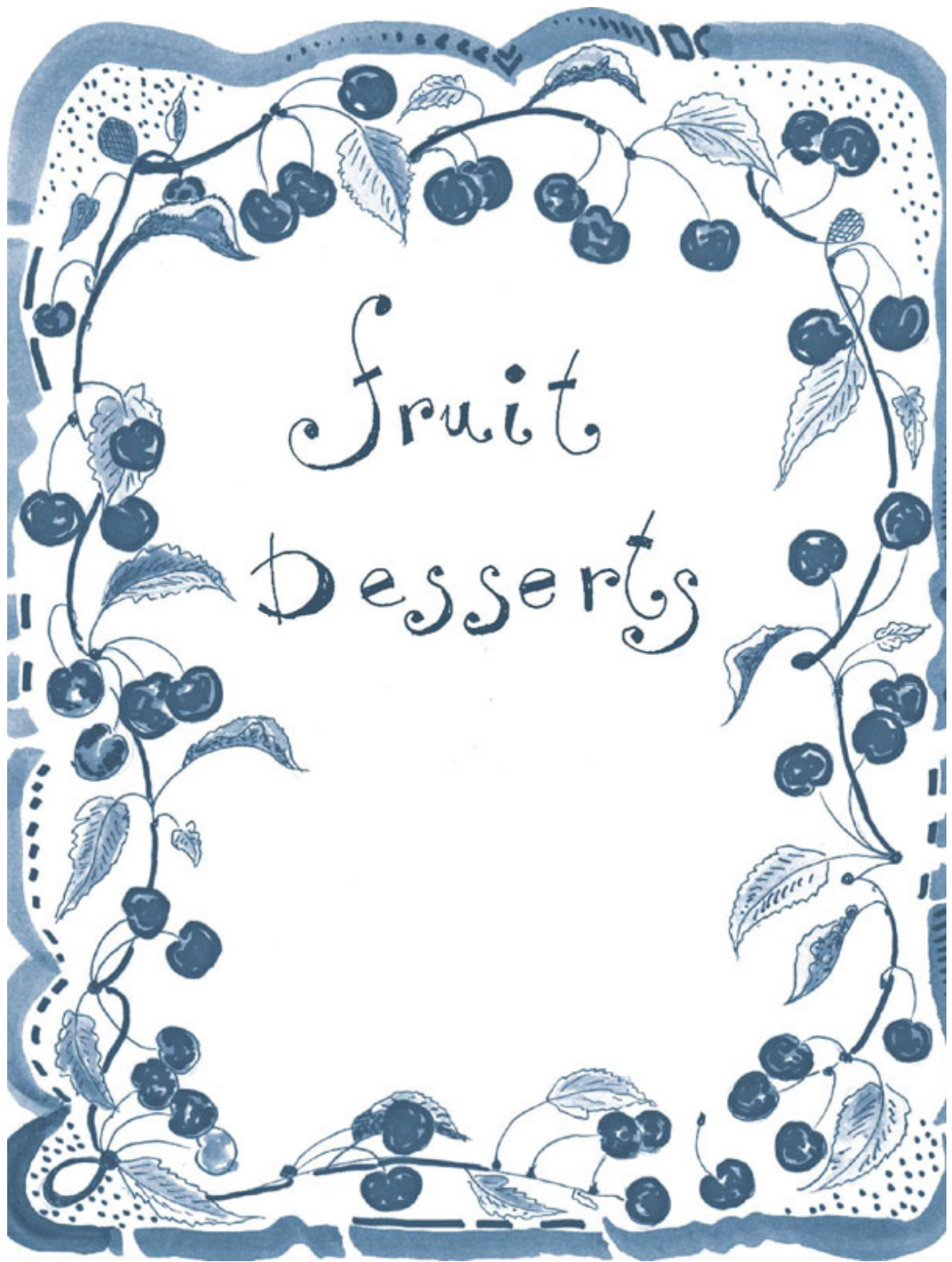
turns out to have been a huge endeavor, bigger by far than writing a cookbook from scratch. Each period of my past exemplifies widely different styles and methods, from the cooking times for fish and vegetables to the amount and types of fat used, to the presentation, as well as procedures and techniques. As a result, I had a real conundrum: either leave the recipes as they were, to represent exactly a moment in time, or adjust, correct, and retest the recipes for a modern kitchen to make them usable, friendly, and current for today's cook while retaining the spirit and flavor of the originals. I chose the second option, with a few reservations. Through all the adjustments, I have tried to keep the intrinsic quality of the recipes as they were conceived. The appetites of a young, a middle-aged, and an older man are different, but a certain continuity remains. In that context, this book represents me more today than at any other time in my life.

As I look back on my gustatory voyage, I find continuity in my cooking and recipes: a desire to simplify techniques and methods, a striving for simplicity, a search for the best ingredients, and an emphasis on taste rather than presentation or originality. But while trends change, basic techniques do not, whether it's boning a chicken, cooking an omelet, or making a chocolate goblet. Since visualizing the intricacies of some of these procedures is difficult, I taped videos to accompany this book, demonstrating techniques that are essential for the novice as well as the seasoned cook—techniques I acquired during my arduous years as an apprentice. They are meant to stimulate you and get you involved in the basics, and they will help you not only with this book, but with any cookbook you have in your home.

As I read through these recipes, they bring back vivid and sweet memories. I taste, smell, and feel the ingredients, and I see friends and family members. I recapture many joyful moments through all these many years, and I know that these food memories will stay with me for

the rest of my life. One thing that will never change: the greatest meals are the ones shared and enjoyed with loved ones.





Fruit Desserts

Techniques

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[Video: Removing the Seeds from a Pomegranate \(0:50\)](#)

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Techniques



Peeling and julienning orange skin and segmenting an orange (03:50)



Removing the seeds from a pomegranate (00:50)

“Good Lady” Apples (Apples Bonne Femme)

Serves 6



For these baked apples, ubiquitous in home cooking as well as in country inns and restaurants, only a few ingredients are needed. Inexpensive and quickly prepared, the dish can be made year round. Use an apple that will keep its shape during cooking, such as Golden or Red Delicious, russet, Granny Smith, or Pippin.

The apples look best when they have just emerged from the oven, puffed from the heat and glossy with rich color. But it's best to serve them barely lukewarm, even though they will shrivel a bit as they cool. If you have leftovers, the apples can be reheated the next day (baste them with the juice). These are delicious served with a slice of pound cake or with sour cream.

The mixture of apricot jam, maple syrup, and butter makes a flavorful sauce. If you don't have maple syrup, substitute granulated sugar. You could also add lemon juice and cinnamon, mace, nutmeg, or any other spice that you like.

6 large apples (2 pounds)

1/3 cup apricot jam

1/3 cup light maple syrup

3 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 6 pieces

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

Using a corer or a knife, core the apples. Be sure to plunge the corer or knife straight down so that it doesn't miss the core (if this happens, remove any remaining seeds).