

# BOOK REVIEW

## *Cooking in Europe 1250-1650*

(The Greenwood Press *Daily Life Through History* Series)

by Ken Albala (Author), Lisa Cooperman (Illustrator)

Greenwood Press

Westport, CT

0-313-33096-4

In *Cooking in Europe 1250-1650*, Ken Albala has put together an excellent book full of recipes from our time period of interest. He has included 171 recipes, many from sources that are not available in English, including twelve recipes from *Livre fort excellent de cuisine* (France, 1555), twenty-one recipes from Scappi (Italy, 1570) and ten from Lancelot de Casteau (Belgium, 1605). But the book has far more to offer than just the recipes.

It has an excellent overview of food and food ways from our Society-period, and some of the best instructions I have ever seen on how to work with original, unredacted recipes. While the bulk of the book consists of the recipes, the overview touches on every major aspect of food during the Middle Ages and Renaissance, including the following: spice usage, influence of religion on food, food and health concerns, manners, the structure of meals, etc.

*Cooking in Europe 1250-1650* manages to be an excellent book for the beginning medieval cook because of its fine instructions on how to cook from primary sources, as well as being an excellent book for the experienced medieval cook, because of its wealth of recipes and extensive bibliography. It is a valuable addition to any medieval or would-be medieval cook's library.

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