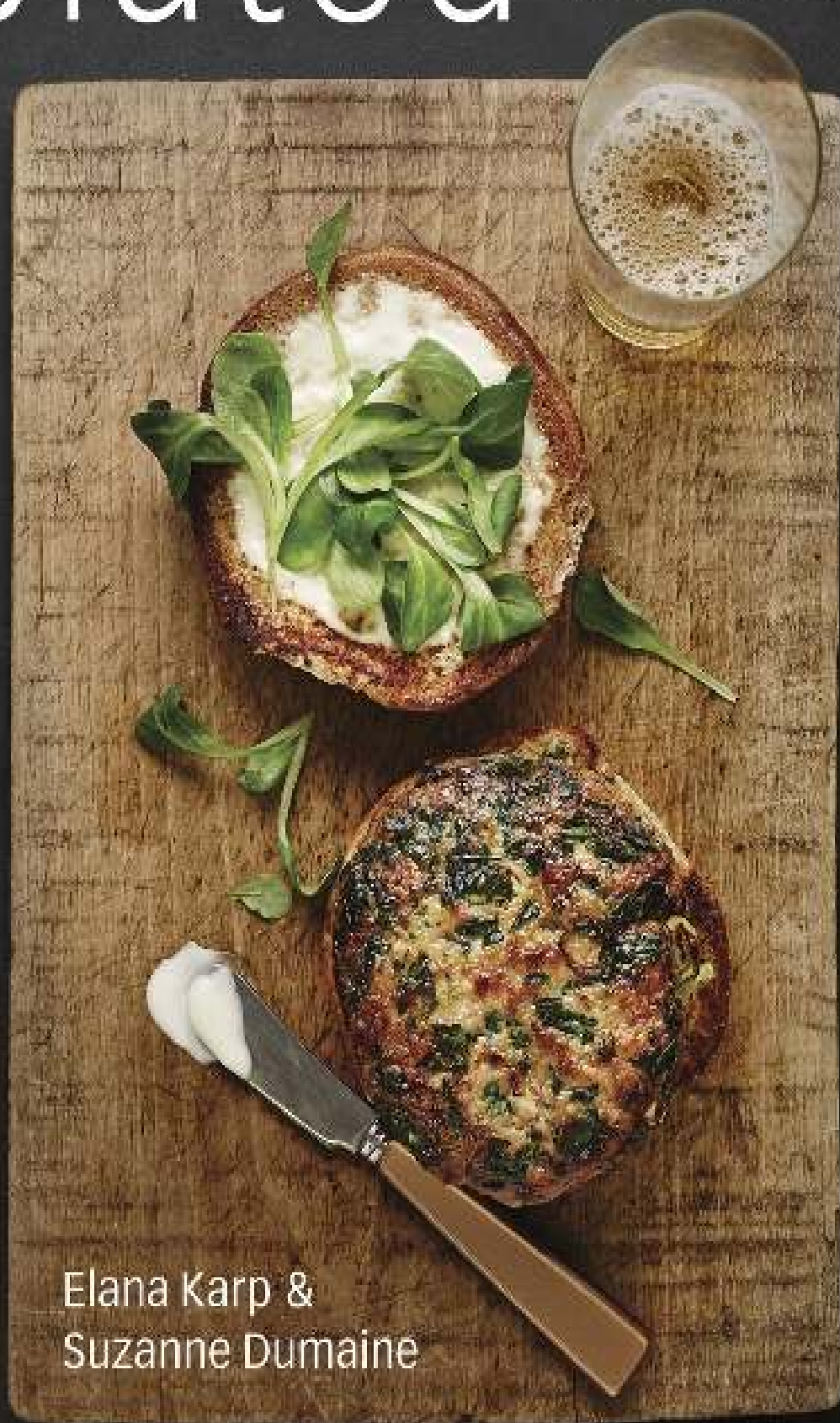


plated

Weeknight Dinners,
Weekend Feasts, and
Everything in Between



Elana Karp &
Suzanne Dumaine



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Weekend Feasts, and
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Elana Karp and
Suzanne Dumaine

Photographs by Robert Breckvad



Clarkson Potter/Publishers
New York



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Published in the United States by Clarkson Potter/Publishers, an imprint of the Crown Publishing Group, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, New York.

www.crownpublishing.com

www.clarksonpotter.com

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is available upon request.

ISBN 9781101903933

eBook ISBN 9781101903940

Cover design by Yeon Kim

Cover photography by Robert Bredvad

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to the platers out there—

we love you all! This book is for you, and anyone who just really loves dinner. And lunch
And breakfast.



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introduction

ABOUT PLATED

(IT'S NOT JUST THE TITLE OF THIS BOOK)

At Plated, we're all about the power of cooking at home. Dinnertime is meant for slowing down at the end of your day, connecting to real food and real ingredients, and reconnecting with the people you're sharing them with—but sometimes all that is easier said than done.

In 2012, Nick Taranto and Josh Hix, old friends from business school, were both working long hours in finance and struggling to make home-cooking a reality. Instead of spending time at the market and then in the kitchen (applying their admittedly scant culinary skills), they opted for the ease of takeout. But they were tired of eating that way—impersonally, sometimes wastefully, and usually unhealthfully. That's how the food delivery company Plated was born—with the idea of getting fresh, preportioned ingredients and chef-designed recipes in front of people at home. The goal was to enable anyone to create a meal he or she could be proud of without the hassle and confusion of weekly meal planning.

What began with two guys hunting down salmon fillets and fresh basil at the local grocery store, then hand-packing boxes to send to friends, has since grown into a sizable company that delivers a new way of cooking to customers at home, all across the country. Over the past few years, amid the growing pains of a quickly scaling business, Plated has never strayed from its core mission of helping people cook how they want, and helping them share it with the people they love around their table.

Every box we send out is carefully hand-packed with local, sustainably sourced ingredients at one of our regional facilities, ensuring that everything arrives fresh. Each meal comes with a step-by-step, easy-to-follow recipe card, so home cooks can relax and actually enjoy cooking.

AND ABOUT US

Now that you know about Plated, we thought you might like to get to know your guides a bit better. We're members of the culinary team at Plated. That means it's our

responsibility to dream up recipes, put them through rigorous testing, and scour the country for ingredients that will continue to inspire home cooks week after week. With our combined classical training and time working in the food industry, we're proud to have built a Plated culinary program that has developed thousands of different recipes.

Elana stumbled upon Plated back when it was still in the “two guys packing food” stage. At the time, she was working with school-based food education programs. She has grown the culinary program from her own in-home “test kitchen” (her apartment still smells like bacon) to the uniquely designed professional research and development Plated Test Kitchen we work in today.

Suzanne found Plated soon after that, and was an early recipe contributor while working at Food Network. She eventually joined Plated full time, helping to build a culinary team to support what was beginning to look a lot like a real business. Obviously, it turned into one!

But more important than any of our qualifications is the fact that, well, we love food. In a deep, real way that left us no choice but to make it the center of our day, every day—and we're lucky that means it's our job! We discuss our lunch options before we eat breakfast; spend hours contemplating the best melty cheeses; posit hundreds of recipe ideas a week (some of which we wake up thinking about); and light up in the presence of a new restaurant, dish, or food destination. And we care just as much about *sharing* food. For us, the best part of cooking is watching people enjoy what we've made for them. What's the point of patiently creating two-day ramen if not to hear someone try to tell you how good it is while slurping a mouthful of noodles?

WHY WE WROTE THIS BOOK

Our philosophy is that food should be fun. It's about embracing the experience in its entirety—from planning, to prepping, to cooking, and, of course, the satisfaction of actually eating. So how could we encourage other cooks to feel this way, too?

When we sat down to brainstorm our direction for this book, chicken became our inspiration. Specifically, the [One-Pan Roasted Rosemary Chicken with Seasonal Vegetables](#). Seared, then roasted over a bed of vegetables with a rosemary, garlic, and white wine sauce, this dish utilizes a classic technique, a few simple but reliably delicious flavors, and only one pan. It's a nourishing dish that our customers go crazy over, relishing that “ta-da” moment when it comes sizzling out of the oven with crisp, golden skin. There's just something about setting down a roast chicken on the dinner table that evokes pride—it's the Platonic dinner ideal. Giving customers the tools to feel this way about something they cooked and the type of food they're eating is our

motivation every day at Plated, and it serves as the founding principle for this book.

We felt the clearest way to help you feel comfortable and confident in the kitchen is by providing you with core techniques and allowing you to customize from there. As babies of the '80s, our approach can best be described as “choose your own adventure” cooking.

It can be a challenge to keep our favorite recipes interesting day in and day out; the most natural solution is to cook by season. So in our [Weeknight Dinners](#) chapter, we aim to inspire you to incorporate seasonality into meal planning by arming you with four variations of seasonal swap-ins for each main dish. Each recipe can be changed up depending on peak produce when you're cooking it, making every single one of them relevant and exciting twelve months of the year.

From there, the book concept took on a life of its own. In [Great for Leftovers](#), we give you solid recipes and show you how to reinvent the leftovers into entirely new meals by adding a few ingredients; we show you how to plan efficiently in [Make Ahead](#) with dishes that stand up well to saving; we take you on a kitchen adventure in [Weekend Feasts](#), sharing meals that take a little extra TLC and will taste a little extra delicious for it; and we strategically walk you through the process of cooking a whole menu for any number of occasions in [For a Crowd](#). And [On the Side](#) and [At the End](#) remind us that sometimes the smaller elements are the ones that steal the show. No matter how much time you have to cook, there is something in this book for you.

We know that time is often the biggest obstacle to cooking at home—grocery shopping, preparing multiple dishes, managing your hunger—all of this requires careful planning. With that in mind, we've organized each recipe step to save you time. Instead of listing preparations next to ingredients in the ingredient list, we instruct you to get everything ready—or *mise en place* in French—as you move through the recipe, to make it more time-efficient. That way, the ingredient list is more of a shopping list, and you know what to prep when so you're not breaking a sweat by the time you first turn on the stove. Cooking should be fun, but it doesn't always have to take all day. We've gone ahead and organized the whole book around how much time you want to spend in the kitchen on any day.

BEFORE YOU HEAD ON YOUR MERRY WAY...

We poured our culinary hearts and souls into putting together a cookbook that's at once unique and practical—something we hope becomes an oft-used, tomato sauce-splattered go-to in your kitchen. This book is for you. It's for any cook who wants to know his or her way around the kitchen, and to master what comes out of it.

We couldn't be more excited to share our recipes with you, and we sincerely hope our

crazy enthusiasm comes through. Writing this book wasn't always easy, but it was always fun. (And it usually was done over food.) We hope you enjoy using our cookbook at least as much as we enjoyed writing, cooking, and taste-testing it for you.





kitchen basics

Before you get cooking, we've put together some handy information that will help you. What follows is a list of kitchen and pantry must-haves and some tips and how-tos to get you on your way. We know you want to dive right in, but if you take a few minutes to read through what's here, you'll save yourself a lot of time (and headaches!) later.



EQUIP YOURSELF

BARE ESSENTIALS

When you're first outfitting your kitchen, these are the basic tools every aspiring chef should have. Most dishes can be made using nothing more than these (with a little MacGyver-ing in some cases).

- Wooden spoon
- 8-inch chef's knife
- Tongs
- Microplane
- Rubber spatula
- Metal spatula
- Chef's knife
- Paring knife
- Colander
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Two rimmed baking sheets
- Large pot
- Medium nonstick pan
- Large ovenproof sauté pan
- Meat thermometer

THE NEXT STEP

You're starting to become a little more experimental in the kitchen, and beginning to use it more! These are some additions to your growing collection that will help make life a little bit easier.

- Cast iron skillet
- Blender or food processor
- Large baking dish
- Fish spatula

- Braising pan with lid
 - Small saucepan
 - Slotted spoon
 - Fine-mesh sieve
-

GOING ALL OUT

When friends come to your house, they call you “Chef.” Sounds pretty sweet, no? You might not have any more room in your kitchen, but you’ll want these badass kitchen tools anyway—and we don’t blame you.

- Immersion blender
- Grill pan
- Roasting pan
- Stand mixer or hand mixer
- Mandoline slicer
- Spider

STOCKING YOUR PANTRY

These are some basic shelf-stable items you should always have on hand. In a pinch, you could probably make a pretty delicious meal from these alone. They're the foundations you'll rely on for most of the dishes you'll be cooking.

- Extra-virgin olive oil
- Kosher salt
- Tellicherry peppercorns (and a proper pepper grinder)
- Canola oil
- Dijon mustard
- Balsamic vinegar
- Apple cider vinegar or Champagne vinegar
- Honey
- Soy sauce
- Sesame oil
- Chicken or vegetable stock
- Canned diced tomatoes
- White rice
- Quinoa
- Polenta
- Bread crumbs or panko bread crumbs
- All-purpose flour
- Granulated sugar
- Dry pasta
- Canned chickpeas

OUR KITCHEN COMMANDMENTS

STARCHY PASTA COOKING WATER IS LIQUID GOLD

Don't throw it down the sink! When you're making pasta, transfer it directly to the sauce

after boiling, along with a few tablespoons of the pasta cooking water. The starch left in the water will create a silky, emulsified sauce seemingly out of thin air, and help it cling to the noodles.

LET IT BE

When you're cooking something that you'd like to get crispy on the outside, resist the temptation to move it around in the pan and check on it. Letting it be will allow for maximum contact with the heat of the pan, giving you the best results. On the other hand, when you're sautéing something you'd like to cook gently without giving it much color (like garlic or onion), stirring more frequently will prevent browning.

SEASON LIKE YOU MEAN IT

When it comes to differentiating good food from great food, a lot comes down to perfect seasoning. Salt and pepper are your food's best friends—season with more of both than you think you should. For salt, scoop up a large pinch using your thumb and first two fingers, and sprinkle it from high above to distribute it as evenly as possible over the food.

THE STOCK MARKET

Stock is meant to be used as the base of the dish, not the defining element. Always buy low-sodium or unsalted stock; salted stock can quickly overpower a dish, and will become exponentially saltier if it's reducing in a soup or stew. Some of our favorite brands are Kitchen Basics and Pacific. If your local butcher happens to sell some homemade stock, well, lucky you. If you make your own, bravo!

SEAR-IOUSLY, DRY YOUR FOOD

Cooking wet food leads to steaming, and therefore to mushy proteins. Take the extra step to (gently) pat your proteins as dry as possible before seasoning and cooking them in fat like oil or butter; you'll get a picture-perfect seared crust. Besides, adding wet proteins can create a splatter that won't feel so good when it hits your hand.

SIZE MATTERS

For consistent cooking times and doneness, cut all your *mise en place* the same size (or as close to it as possible).

GIVE YOUR VEGETABLES SOME (PERSONAL) SPACE

To achieve the perfect golden roasted vegetable, space your vegetables out on the baking sheet. If they're too bunched up, they'll steam from overcrowding. They'll thank you for the room to breathe with their deliciousness.

PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE

We know you're excited to eat, but allow meats to rest for about 10 minutes after cooking and before cutting in. Doing so allows the juices in the meat to redistribute so that when you do make that first slice, they stay in your food, rather than running out all over your cutting board or plate. Keep in mind that your meat will continue cooking while it rests, so if you fear you've undercooked something slightly, chances are it will end up perfect.

SAVE THYME ON HERBS

When you're removing the leaves from rosemary, thyme, tarragon, or oregano, you can save yourself a good 30 minutes with this trick: Hold the stem upright, pinch at the top, and slide your fingers down to strip off the leaves in one fell swoop. For leafier herbs, such as parsley, cilantro, mint, sage, and basil, just pick the whole leaves off. In either case, don't make yourself crazy—a little stem never hurt anyone!

KEEP YOUR HERBS FRESH TO DEATH

The most delicate herbs are softer, leafier varieties like mint and basil. Your best bet for making these last is to stand them up in the fridge in a glass of water that reaches just to where the leaves begin. Alternatively, wrap the stems in a damp paper towel, then wrap the bunch in a loose or perforated plastic bag. Woodier herbs like rosemary and thyme will keep wrapped up in a loose or perforated plastic bag, or in a plastic container in the fridge's crisper drawer if you've got one.

KNOW WHEN THE PAN IS HOT

When you're cooking with oil, the clearest indicator of heat is when ripples begin to appear on the surface of the oil (naturally—not because you stirred it or poked it) and it looks shimmery. At this point it's ideal to add your food; unless specifically directed, don't wait for the oil to start smoking. For cooking with butter, the ideal point is when it begins to foam, but before it begins to turn brown. When you're cooking with a dry pan or grill pan, periodically hover your hand a few inches above it. If you can feel the heat radiating off the pan, it's hot enough. If it merely feels warm, wait another minute and test it again. In all the above instances, sizzling is the sweet sound you should listen for when you add your food to the pan. If you don't hear it, quickly remove your food and allow the pan to continue heating for a few minutes longer.

KNIFE SKILLS

If you're new to cooking, the first thing to master is basic knife skills. You'll be much more efficient (and less likely to cut yourself—or someone else). We've broken down the essentials for how to...

CHOOSE YOUR WEAPON

There is a seemingly endless array of fancy, shiny knives in any culinary store, but there are only two you really need: an 8-inch chef's knife and a small paring knife. Expensive Japanese knives look cool, but what's most important is that the knife feels good in your hand. Everyone has personal preferences, so don't worry about the brand. Just find something you feel comfortable using.

HOLD THE KNIFE

Holding a knife correctly will make a huge difference in how safely and quickly you can prep your food. Pinch the bottom of the blade using your thumb and forefinger, and then wrap your other three fingers around the handle. While it might feel weird at first, just keep at it—this grip will give you the best control.

SLICE AND DICE

Holding the knife with one hand, form your other hand into a claw so that your knuckles are exposed, but your fingertips are curled underneath. Hold the ingredient in place with this grip; it will protect your fingertips while keeping everything sturdy as you cut.

For smooth slicing, keep your knife tip on the board and use a rocking motion with the blade to make the cut. Think of it as a back-and-forth rocking motion, rather than a straight up-and-down one (which also won't do your blade any favors).

KEEP THE BLADE SHARP

Keeping your knife sharp is absolutely the most important part of using it well. A dull knife will make every cut about ten times more labor-intensive and frustrating, and is also harder to control (read: fingers in danger). Check for sharpness by holding up a piece of standard printer paper and running the knife into the top. If it slices easily, super! If it doesn't, time to sharpen. If you don't have a knife sharpener, just bring your knives into any store that also sells knives, and they'll likely do it for you.

NOT MESS UP YOUR KNIFE

Keep it far, far away from the dishwasher at all times, under any and all circumstances. Wash gently by hand, scraping away any bits of food, and dry immediately.

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