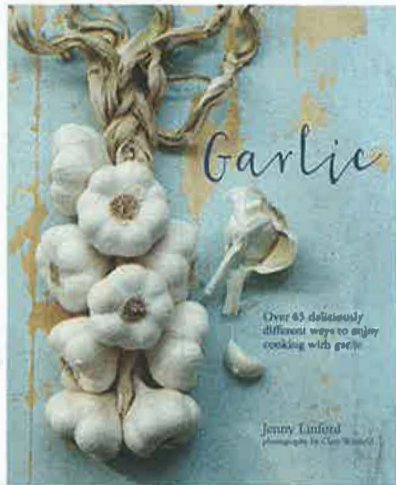


Books



GARLIC

by Jenny Linford, Ryland Peters & Small, £14.99
Aimed at: home and dinner-party cooks



Food writer Jenny Linford has a growing number of cookbooks to her name

The world loves garlic, and Jenny Linford's book has 65 recipes from all over the planet that include it. Korea, Thailand, Italy and the USA all feature - and that's just for starters.

'It's a global food,' she says. 'Every great cuisine seems to use it. The more research I did, the more I discovered it was an integral part of so much. The Chinese adore it, the French are famed for it and the whole of Mediterranean cooking is based on it.'

'It has some history, too, going back to ancient civilisations. For thousands of years garlic has been used by the poor to add flavour to food, so it is very democratic. I think that's one reason so many countries love it.'

They all use it in different ways, however. It may be one ingredient, but there's no repetition or desperation finding uses for it. Garlic is a simple bulb, but extremely versatile - and not just for cooking. One of the fact-filled sections between recipes is called 'Garlic for health', which discusses its use in Indian Ayurvedic medicine and Chinese herbalism.

Other fact sections include tips on storage - you can freeze it, but putting it in the fridge encourages it to sprout - trips to three separate farms to meet the growers and some folklore - mainly focusing on its

Dracula-killing powers. It's no surprise Linford wanted to delve deeper.

'It's a fascinating story,' she says. 'I'd love to go back and just write a biography and history of garlic.'

The main event here, though, is the recipes, sorted into chapters such as 'Mellow', including a wonderful roast garlic crab tart; 'Fiery', which takes on a kimchi pancake; and most hunger-inducing of all 'Comfort', which has an undeniable tartiflette and a simple but lovely fish pie. They're clever, but simple enough for any home cook to make.

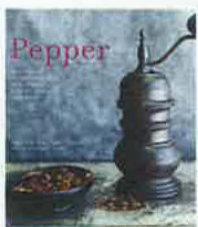
It's all highly recommended, although there is a downside to garlic, one that Linford is only too aware of thanks to her recipe testing.

'I stank,' she smiles. 'I'm sure I was known as "The garlic lady" to my neighbours. But the thing is I love the smell. I didn't mind it at all.'

On a similar theme...

PEPPER

by Valerie Aikman-Smith, Ryland Peters & Small, £9.99



PASTA

by Theo Randall, Ebury Press, £20



Meet the producers

'We wanted to make the best pies we could'

Using quirky names like Heidi and Moo, Tristan Hogg and Jon Simon took the great British pie and made it cool.

When Hogg had his eureka moment, he was on Bondi Beach in Australia, on a day off from his chef's job. Just the place, you'd think, to dream up a new ice lolly, but his inspiration was the ultimate in cold-weather comfort food - the pie.

'Pies are a real part of the lifestyle there,' says Hogg. 'And as I ate mine, on the beach, I started thinking about why they did them so much better than we did. At home back then, pies were synonymous with mystery meat and soggy pastry, and had an old-fashioned image. In Australia, there were loads of small companies making pies with interesting flavours and really good ingredients. I thought that could work at home, too.'

Hogg (left) and brother-in-law Jon Simon (right) set up Pieminister in a basement in Bristol, making pies with quirky names like Heidi (goat's cheese, sweet potato and spinach if you were wondering) and Moo & Blue (steak and Stilton). But behind the cool branding was a serious commitment to quality.

'We were passionate about provenance,' explains Hogg. 'We wanted to make

the best pies we could, using the best-tasting, ethically sourced ingredients we could find. It was about making good food, without being elitist or snobby.'

Before long, they'd opened their first restaurant, in a disused printworks in a (then) rough area of Bristol.

'It was derelict,' continues Hogg, 'but we did it up, and on the day we opened we had a queue. It grew from there.'

Thirteen years on, the pair have five Pieminister restaurants and five cafés, their pies are on the shelves of Waitrose and they've even carved out a niche catering for trendy weddings. But one thing hasn't changed.

'We've stayed true to our principles,' says Hogg. 'We use free range chicken, pork and turkey, our venison is wild, and our beef and dairy come from British Red Tractor [the quality food assurance scheme] farms. It's difficult - it doesn't just cost more, it's hard to find the right suppliers - and that's why a lot of companies end up compromising as they grow. But we haven't done that. If we did, we'd be losing everything we've built.'

All Pieminister pies, **2 FOR £6** or £3.50/270g

Decoder

A device capable of converting food terms into ordinary language

I'm going to take a stab here and say food served in bowls...

Yes, it is. But it's also more than that.

So it's different from what I call 'platefood'?

Yes, it is. It's a new movement that has

been helped along by Nigella Lawson. So look out for bowls in restaurants everywhere.

Oh, if Nigella is behind it, that's a different story. Tell me more.

She dedicates a chapter of her recent book,

What is bowlfood?

