

SEPHARDI

COOKING THE HISTORY

Recipes of the Jews of Spain and the Diaspora, from the 13th Century to Today



HÉLÈNE JAWHARA PIÑER

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"*Sephardi* is truly the only cookbook of its kind. Hélène is cooking enticing and delicious cuisine of Sephardic Jewry while telling the story of migration and rich history that is part of my family's ancestry. Mazel Bueno to *Sephardi!*"

—**Michael Solomonov**, Chef and Owner,
Zahav, James Beard Award Winner

"This book comes with a heart, a spine, a soul. Its spine is the resilience of a thousand years of Sephardi cooks, living in minority enclaves surrounded by frequently unfriendly majority cultures, who retained the essence of their Jewish culinary heritage and transmitted it to their children. Its heart beats to the rhythms of the Jewish week and liturgical year, Shabbat, Sukkot, Pesach, Yom Kippur, the fasts and feasts, the tables around which Jewish families gathered from season to season and from century to century. Its soul is nurtured in a faith that despite the hatred and fear, the inquisitions and the pogroms, the silent discriminations and the attractions of assimilation, Sephardi descendants in Spain, in Portugal, and in all the lands of the diaspora are, and will forever be, cooking Jewish."

—**David M. Gitlitz**, Professor Emeritus of Hispanic studies,
and co-author of *A Drizzle of Honey*

"Reading these recipes I could almost smell my grandmother's kitchen, and the dishes she cooked which descended from the Sephardic community in Smyrna. Jawhara Piñer's research has uncovered details that have been mostly forgotten, and I am certain that this book will have readers running to the stove to taste this largely unknown, opulent cuisine."

—**Ken Albala**, Professor of History, University of the Pacific

"Jawhara Piñer retrieves the most important medieval and modern Sephardi recipes to reconstruct these dishes and understand them as part of a persecuted culture that maintained its identity but often had to hide its Jewishness to survive.

The result is an extraordinary book, which unravels the Sephardic past through the lens of a cook-historian, who tells the story, and cooks it over a slow fire, like the one needed for Shabbat dishes to keep warm."

—**Henrique Soares Carneiro**, Professor of Modern History,
University of São Paulo

"This is a critical new work of Jewish culinary history. In addition to providing thorough historical context to foods commonly associated with the Sephardic diaspora, the book includes many unique and rare recipes that bring Sephardic Jewish history to life in the kitchen."

—**Jeffrey Yoskowitz**, author of *The Gefilte Manifesto*

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Berenjenas confitadas con canela

Candied eggplants with cinnamon

Makes 1 large jar
Time: 2 hours

- 6 very small eggplants
- 1 tsp vinegar

For the syrup:

- 2 cups (400 ml) water
- 1 3/4 cup (350 g) sugar
- 2 cinnamon sticks
(2 inches long)

This is a sweet Sephardic dish that has traveled far and wide. Mainly consumed by the Sephardim of Spain and Morocco, we find these candied eggplants with cinnamon as far as the Dominican Republic. The pleasures of food know no borders.

Prick the eggplants and boil them for 7 minutes in water (just enough to cover them), with a teaspoon of vinegar. Then, put them in clean cold water for 5 minutes.

To make the syrup, gently heat water, sugar, and cinnamon in a pan. Do not let it boil.

When the syrup is hot, add the eggplants and cook them very slowly for at least 1 hour. Do not let the syrup dry out and make sure the eggplants are always submerged. Avoid touching them as they will be very soft and breakable: move the pan instead.

Submerge a jar in boiling water for 1 minute. Then, get it out and place the candied eggplants in it to keep, or eat them right away.

