

I used to love to just throw food together. Part of it was laziness, but another part of it was just the joy in experimenting. I would never use cooking recipes at all - not if I could help it. I had dozens of cookbooks, but I never consulted the cookbook recipes. Most of them I inherited from friends who were moving in and out of town, which made it easy to amass quite a collection. I didn't want to get rid of them, but I saw very little need for them. After all, my cooking was pretty good.

Then one day, one of my friends - a serious gourmet - came over. He made the most delicious dish. It was an Italian dish - calzones I think - and it was one of the best things I had ever had. I asked how he came up with it, and to his my surprise he told me he had just follow the cookbook recipe.

At first, I was a little bit surprised. I knew that he was someone who love to experiment on his own, and it wasn't like him to use cookbook recipes. I asked him about it, and he told me about how much he had grown as a cook. Since he started using a recipe cookbook, he had gotten more compliments on his meals than ever before. He had been eating healthier, and his meals had been much more delicious than they used to be. Hearing all this, I couldn't help but admit that cookbook recipes made some sense.

I am not very good at following directions, so I started my recipe cooking pretty simple. I did a lot of rice dishes, crockpot dishes, and simple baking. Just learning to set the temperature like they say, add just enough salt, the right proportion of water, and the right spices was novel for me. When I was ready, however, I got into some more advanced, difficult cookbook recipes. I had always wanted to try cooking Thai food, so I figured it was my chance to begin. It didn't turn out so well the first time I tried it, but I persevered.

Soon, I had a recipe book of my own. It was compiled of some of my favorite cook book recipes, many of them altered with slight variations to fit my tastes. I can't say that I am quite as creative at cooking as I used to be, but I certainly cook much better food. Some of it is completely to die for.