

Nikki Werner, Brandon de Kock
COOK. BETTER.

cook. better. should be understood as a promise, because this topflight, perfectly designed cookbook tells you everything worth knowing about cooking. There are answers to questions every one of us has wondered about: Why does lasagna always taste different, even though we use the same recipe? Those beans had real crunch, but mine are always too soft. Why does a simple green salad with a plain dressing taste so good? Finally, answers to these questions and more.

Just like in sports, though, the authors don't send us straight out to the field. Rather, they start us off with a few stretching exercises and some jumping jacks. So we don't leap right into mixing and stirring, but first gain some good basic knowledge while getting into shape for the stove.

What are the necessary basic ingredients? Are there different ways to cut garlic, onions, or carrots? How does that affect the taste? Which ingredients do you need to produce something truly delicious? How do you strain sauces? What makes a good sofrito? How do time and temperature change the flavor? How do you blanch beans?

It's not until we've absorbed this fundamental knowledge that we can enjoy experimentation and our own creativity. Our imaginations are set free. And the best thing about cooking is still gathering with friends and family around a table to savor these delicacies.

It's almost impossible to introduce **Nikki Werner** without mentioning **Brandon de Kock** in the same breath. Werner and de Kock are partners and co-authors. Together, they've been cooking, eating, and traveling around the world for more than fourteen years. Besides being food experts, they've met many chefs and done a lot of research. Over time they've become collectors of valuable and useful information on everything related to cooking.

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Photos by Craig Fraser

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