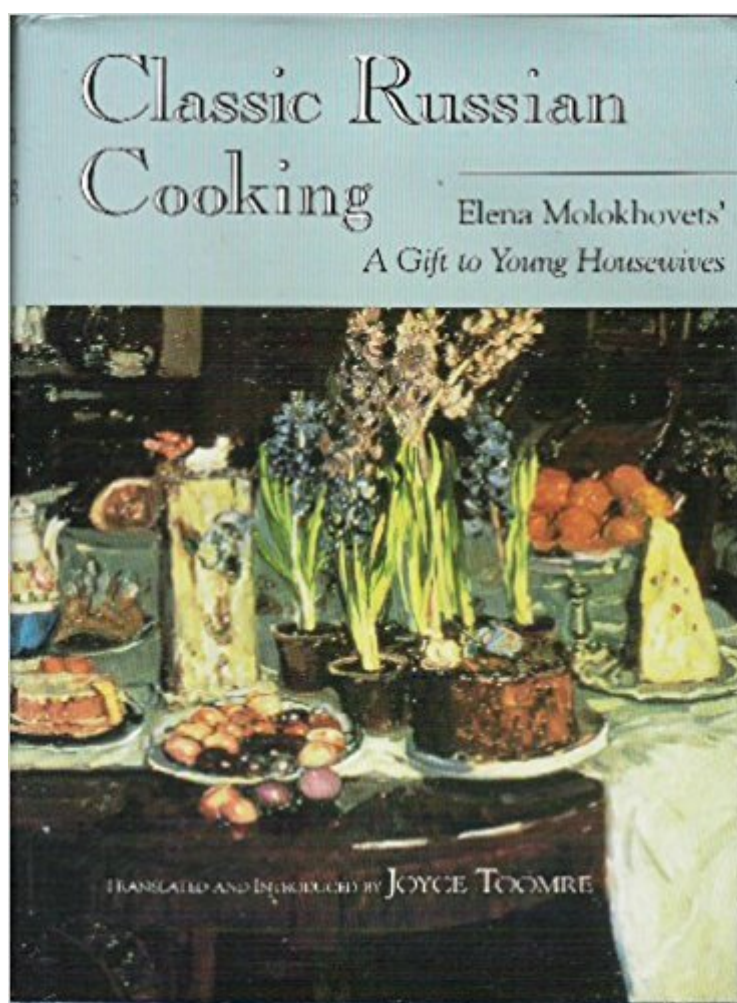


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# Classic Russian Cooking: Elena Molokhovets' A Gift To Young Housewives (Indiana-Michigan Series In Russian & East European Studies)



## Synopsis

First published in 1861, this ""bible"" of Russian homemakers offered not only a compendium of recipes, but also instructions about such matters as setting up a kitchen, managing servants, shopping, and proper winter storage. Joyce Toomre has superbly translated and annotated over 1,000 recipes and has written a thorough and fascinating introduction that discusses the history of Russian cuisine and summarizes Elena Molokhovets' advice on household management. A treasure trove for culinary historians, serious cooks, and cookbook readers, and scholars of Russian history and culture.

## Book Information

Series: Indiana-Michigan Series in Russian & East European Studies

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## Customer Reviews

Banned in Molokhovets's native country since the Russian Revolution, this gastronomic standard for pre-Revolutionary upper- and middle-class Russian households has been impressively translated and edited by food historian and Harvard research associate Toomre. Translations of more than 1000 recipes recall foods central to Russian life: cabbage with butter and crumbs, potato pudding, Beef Stroganov, babas, pirog, pashka. Toomre's substantive introduction presents "not a history of Russian cooking per se, but rather an impressionistic reconstruction of household conditions." She charts a range of elements, from the purpose of each of the four or five daily meals and the sleeping conditions of servants to the once privileged status of the potato. Toomre also assesses the influences of foreign peoples, such as the techniques of the French and the foods of Central Asia and the Caucasus, as well as modern approximations for arcane measurements. Much more than a re-creation of a lost time or a rumination on changing culinary tastes, this book is an

important contribution to Russian history. Illustrations not seen by PW. Copyright 1992 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

"Joyce Toomre ... has accomplished an enormous task, fully on a par with the original author's slave labor. Her extensive preface and her detailed and entertaining notes are marvelous." - Tatyana Tolstaya, New York Review of Books "Classic Russian Cooking is a book that I highly recommend. Joyce Toomre has done a marvelous job of translating this valuable and fascinating source book. It's the Fanny Farmer and Isabella Beeton of Russia's 19th century." - Julia Child, Food Arts "This is a delicious book, and Indiana University Press has served it up beautifully." - Russian Review " ... should become as much of a classic as the Russian original ... dazzling and admirable expedition into Russia's kitchens and cuisine." - Slavic Review "It gives a delightful and fascinating picture of the foods of pre-Communist Russia." - The Christian Science Monitor --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

My book has finally arrived. Came in the mail yesterday. I was surprised at how big and thick it is. Looks like a university textbook, but then it is published by the University of Indiana. I'm perusing the book this morning. Chock full of info. The 1st 100 pages are strictly the translator's work. She gives explanations on the various influences on Russian cooking such as the Russian Orthodox Church, Asian and French influences, that sort of thing. There's a biography of the author and the history of the book's numerous publishings in Russia. I learned that the book was smuggled out of Russia when the White Russian emigres left for France, UK, US and other parts of the world. Some of the books had been handwritten since the Soviet Union banned the publication as "decadent", and the last time it was published it was in German (done in Berlin) in the 1920s, but apparently over the years there just wasn't enough interest in the West to publish this book sooner? At any rate, it didn't get published in English until the 1990s. So looks like I'm gonna be quite busy reading. In the part that's the actual old cookbook (which doesn't start until page 101), the recipes are divided by dishes and also by non-fasting and fasting. My only criticism of the book is that there's not many pictures, and the pics are in B&W ... but I can imagine including lots of color pictures might make the book even more cost prohibitive?

The best and only version in English of the best Russian cookbook for all occasions including homestead, DIY, farming, gardening...I only wish could find any version of Part III as mentioned in this book appendix, it was last published around 1900: the volume on herb remedies for adults,

children and animals, farm and garden methods and management.

An acquaintance whose family is Russian lent me this book, and I liked it so much I bought it for my Russian daughter-in-law. I was most fascinated by the very long history of the author and the publication of the book in its context; my daughter-in-law very much appreciated the traditional recipes, given in traditional form, fortunately with transliterations of ingredients familiar to her but incomprehensible to me!

Not quite what I was looking for, but I am very glad to have ordered it. A good addition to any Russian cooking collection.

huge book like dictionary. There are more than 2000 dishes on this book. To know history and cultures of Russia, good Bible. One con is that there is no photo or picture of the cooking so if you don't know the dishes, you won't know if it's correct.

Loved the book!

The recipes really work.

This is a very good book to perfect your recipes, if you are familiar with Russian kitchen. But in general it is a very interesting book to learn about other country's etiquette, favorite foods and recipes to try.

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