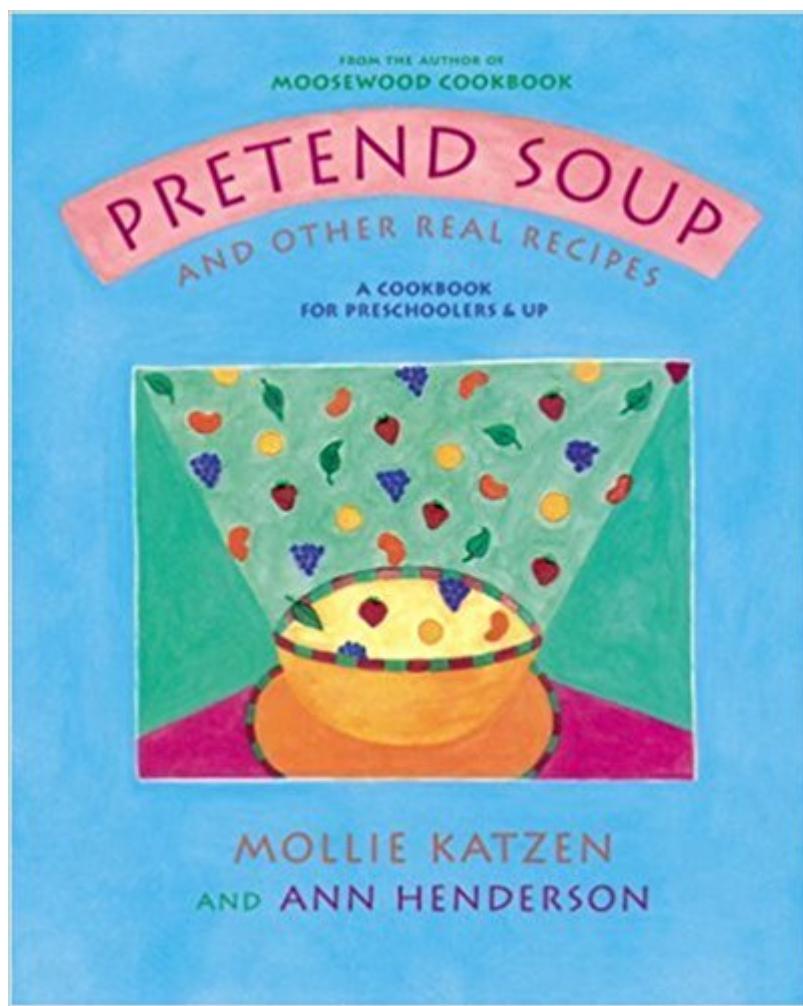


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Pretend Soup And Other Real Recipes: A Cookbook For Preschoolers And Up



Synopsis

The classic kids' cookbook with easy recipes for healthy, fun, and delicious food. Mollie Katzen, renowned author of The Moosewood Cookbook, and educator Ann Henderson bring the grown-up world of real cooking to a child's level. Children as young as three years old and as old as eight become head chef while an adult serves as guide and helper. Extensively classroom- and home-tested, these recipes are designed to inspire an early appreciation for creative, wholesome food. Whimsical watercolor critters and pictorial versions of each recipe will help the young cook understand and delight in the process. Just consider all that can be explored in the kitchen: counting, reading readiness, science awareness, self-confidence, patience, and, importantly, food literacy. Pizza, after all, does not come from a telephone. You and your child can have great fun finding this out!

Book Information

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Age Range: 3 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 2

Customer Reviews

Pretend Soup has rapidly become the children's cookbook classic, and no home or daycare center should be without a copy. Mollie Katzen, author of the Moosewood Cookbook, and educator Ann Henderson have created a masterpiece formatted for grown-ups--with written instructions, suggestions, and caveats--and for kids--with illustrated, easy-to-follow pictures. The recipes are both tasty and healthy, and the quotes from kids are very funny (Matthew: "This is so good, I can't

even say a word.") While safety is stressed and tips and warnings are included, Katzen and Henderson always stress the fun in food preparation. "Spills are what sponges are for. So keep plenty of sponges around, and a good time will be had by all!"

PreSchool-Grade 3-The theme of this fine cookbook is that cooking is a many-splendored thing. The book's purpose is "to enable very young children to cook as independently as possible under the gentle guidance of an adult partner." Each of the 17 recipes appears twice, once in words and once in full-color pictures. The child is the focus here: attention is paid to physical ability, comfortable work levels, and variety of tactile experience. A long list of skills and attitudes children can gain from cooking supports the idea that the process is more important than the product. Quotes reflect the young cooks' keen observation and joyful participation. Parents' Nursery School's *Kids Are Natural Cooks* (Houghton, 1974) also uses natural foods and has the same intent as this title. That book is arranged by season and contains more recipes; *Pretend Soup* focuses more on the processes. Anyone who works or plays with young children would benefit by having both. Carolyn Jenks, First Parish Unitarian Church, Portland, ME Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

My daughter, who is not quite 6 yet, loves to help and cook in the kitchen. She asked for her own cooking instruments for Christmas and that's what Santa brought her. She loves rushing in to put on her apron, pull out her ladybug silicon spatula, rubber spoon, matryoshka doll measuring cups (from a MoMa collaborative available at JC Penney's), and colored measuring spoons. All she needed was a good cookbook. I thought this would be a daunting task since the ones I had picked up to look at at Williams-Sonoma were not simple enough for her. My friend told me about this series of cookbooks for children so I checked out "Salad People" from the library and bought this one, "Pretend Soup". We haven't cooked from them yet so I can't compare how the recipes from the two books are similar or different. but, I can tell you that I sat down with my daughter to show her the book and she is over the moon. She loves the drawings of each step with simplified instructions (like "1 cup" and it shows pouring milk into the bowl, etc.) She is so excited. And, more importantly, all of the recipes in this book are things that she will eat. We're not over-the-top health nuts in our home but I am very careful to expose my children to a wide variety of ingredients and ethnic foods. Maybe my children won't be a fan of using zucchini for the pizza faces, but that's an easy substitution. The bulk of everything is very appealing to them and healthy. Yes, I will have to help with much of it and there are parts where the instructions call for a dough that mom or dad made before hand, but I

think that's reasonable. If I want my child to learn to cook, then I will have to be setting that example first. We love it and I love the diet and recipes in the cookbook. I love how easy it is for her to follow. And I love that it sets a clear layout for how we will be interacting when we cook together (I make the dough, she pats it out and puts toppings on, etc.)

As soon as I received *Pretend Soup*, I immediately ordered the other cookbooks by this author. Our family is vegetarian, and none of these meals contain meat (but still would appeal to most meat-eating kids as well). There is a good variety, appealing pictures and easy-to-understand directions. The recipes are simple, but delicious. Even the ones my child did not like, we have talked about what he didn't like and how could we change it? At 4 years old, my son lit up with pride when he prepared his first meal for the family from this book. Now that we have all 3 of them, I routinely let him pick a recipe each week to add to our menu plan. This would make an excellent gift for a family with young children.

OK, so I will admit that I haven't read all the way through the book yet. I only made it about 3 recipes in before my three-year-old saw the popover recipe. He was so excited that he could read the recipe by looking at the pictures. We walked through the drawings, and he described exactly how we would make the popovers, just from the simple pictures. He got so excited that we had to stop right then and make some. They just came out of the oven and they are very tasty. The recipe worked great, was broken down into simple enough steps for my son to be able to direct us with confidence, and they were all the tastier because he could say "I made them!" when they were done. The only downside was having to wait for them to cool. :-)

I've had both this book and *Salad People* since my daughter was about 6 months old (I'm an avid cookbook collector and hoped she'd want to join in as she got older). She's been helping me in the kitchen since she was old enough to stand and dump things into a bowl (I even bought her a plastic lettuce knife so she can chop vegetables for me). I didn't actually present these cookbooks to her, though, I just put them on my cookbook shelves and let her discover them on her own. Last week, she started leafing through them. I got home from work one day and *Pretend Soup* was open to the popover recipe. We talked about them, and she asked if she could make them. I said of course, and we made them for breakfast Saturday morning. They were so easy and a big hit! I love the way this book is laid out. At the beginning of each recipe, there's a page or two of text for the adults about how the recipe should go. Then, the following two pages have numbered step by step illustrations of

how the recipe should be put together. This makes it both easy and educational - kids learn sequencing (step one comes before step two, etc), counting, measuring, etc. They aren't actual photographs, but the pictures, while simple, are detailed enough that for the most part, my daughter can tell what they are. There are also words at the bottom of each step for clarification. We've tried three recipes so far - popovers, green spaghetti, and pretend soup. We didn't have the right fruit for the pretend soup (it calls for bananas and raspberries), so we talked about how a cook can substitute ingredients if you don't like something or don't have it in the kitchen. We ended up substituting blueberries and sliced strawberries, and it was perfect! She can't wait to make more - every day she asks if she can make this recipe or that one. I told her by the time she's five, she'll probably have dinner waiting for us on the table when I get home every night!

Used this with my 5-year old great nephew, and had so much fun, I bought it for my 3-year old great nephew. Both are super active boys, and cooking was something they love to do. Recipes are easy, include pictures where appropriate, and the results are really good (not just kids' gooky food). The 3-year old wasn't doing well sitting down to dinner, until he helped cook his own dinner. Ate every bite...and proclaimed, "This was the best dinner ever!"

Great addition to the kitchen for the littles.

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