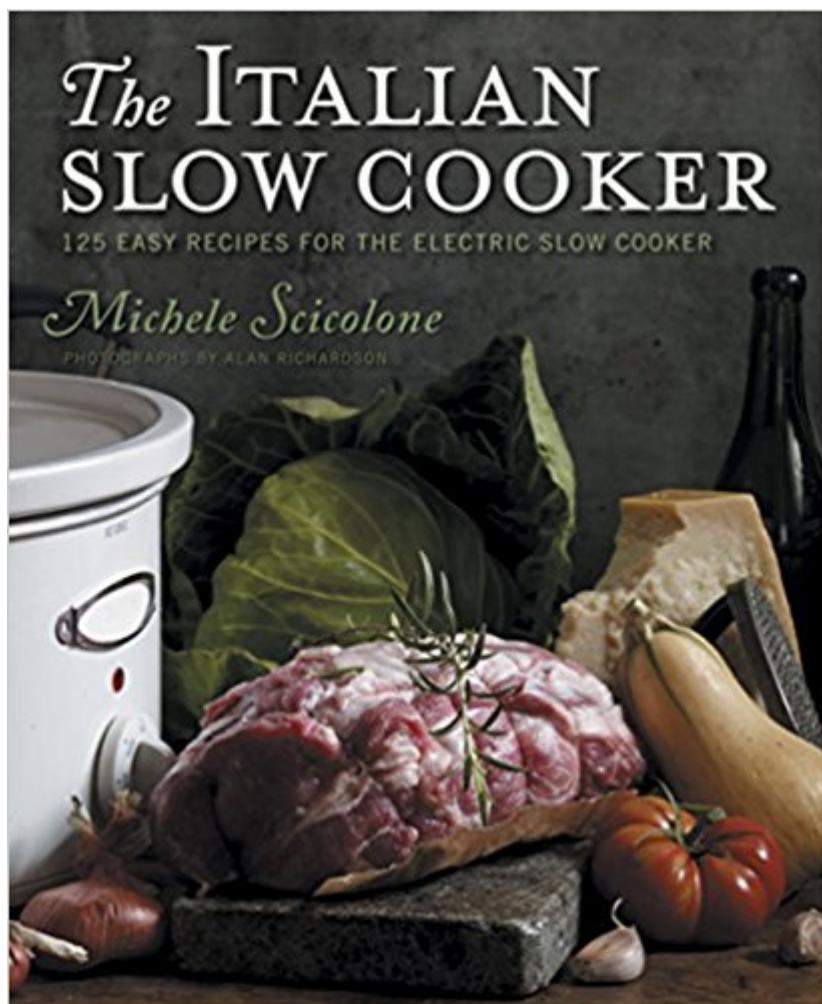


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# The Italian Slow Cooker



## Synopsis

Finally a book that combines the fresh, exuberant flavors of great Italian food with the ease and comfort of a slow cooker. Michele Scicolone, a best-selling author and an authority on Italian cooking, shows how good ingredients and simple techniques can lift the usual "crockpot" fare into the dimension of fine food. Pasta with Meat and Mushroom Ragu, Osso Buco with Red Wine, Chicken with Peppers and Mushrooms: These are dishes that even the most discriminating cook can proudly serve to company, yet all are so carefree that anyone with just five or ten minutes of prep time can make them on a weekday and return to perfection.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Product Description Finally a book that combines the fresh, exuberant flavors of great Italian food with the ease and comfort of a slow cooker. Michele Scicolone, a best-selling author and an authority on Italian cooking, shows how good ingredients and simple techniques can lift the usual "crockpot" fare into the dimension of fine food. Pasta with Meat and Mushroom Ragu, Osso Buco with Red Wine, Chicken with Peppers and Mushrooms: These are dishes that even the most discriminating cook can proudly serve to company, yet all are so carefree that anyone with just five or ten minutes of prep time can make them on a weekday and return to perfection. Simmered in the slow cooker, soups, stews, beans, grains, pasta sauces, and fish are as healthy as they are delicious. Polenta and risotto, "stir-crazy" dishes that ordinarily need careful timing, are effortless. Meat loaves come out perfectly moist, tough cuts of meat turn succulent, and cheesecakes emerge

Scicolone (The Sopranos Family Cookbook) turns her attention to the slow cooker (or crockpot) for preparing homey Italian dishes. In this accessible cookbook, she presents unintimidating recipes (which often suggest the ingredients simmer around 165 degrees for six to eight hours) that serve up hearty dishes with a minimum of fuss. The wide variety of main dishes—seafood, meats, veggies and legumes—and corresponding soups and sauces, capitalize on the flavor that only slow-cooked food can deliver. The sauces are the book's standouts, with recipes for ragus made with chunky pork shoulder or spicy Tuscan sausage, for example. She also includes recipes for a creamy polenta with gorgonzola and mascarpone; risotto-style farro with parmesan; seafood couscous made with halibut, shrimp and scallops; and braised beef with anchovies and rosemary. While her approach is certainly inventive and appealing, some recipes make one wonder whether a slow cooker is actually necessary (the stuffed peppers might be baked just as easily). That said, this cookbook will certainly relieve the time pressure on busy family cooks. (Dec.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

The Italian Slow Cooker provides hearty Italian recipes designed for your home crockpot. The recipes are very straight-forward and utilize easy to find or already have them in the pantry ingredients for dinners that taste unbelievably rich and hearty. Be forewarned, this is not a "dump it in the crockpot and leave it" kind of book. The author makes the basic assumption that you are willing to put a minimum of extra work into your recipe to yield superior results. Most of this extra work involves browning your meat in a skillet before loading it into the cooker. I find this takes little effort on my part and adds a nice complexity beyond the typical pallid, uninteresting meat of most slow cooker recipes. The author has a variety of short tidbits to begin the book to get you started. She says the ideal crockpot for her recipes is 5-7 quarts. She lists what to look for in a slow cook clooker and gives you a basic explanation of what she considers "must haves" in an Italian pantry. Once more, no exotic or hard to find ingredients. Chapters include: soups; sauces for pasta; risotto, polenta, and grains; seafood; eggs, chicken, and turkey; beef, veal, pork and lamb; vegetables and dried legumes; and desserts. Scicolone begins each recipe with a brief introduction about her inspiration for it or a handy cooking note and quickly proceeds to the recipe. She is a very direct and easy to understand cookbook author. I really applaud her for making Italian recipes that do genuinely seem like the soul food of an Italian grandmother. Her finished dishes are handsomely

photographed as well. We just ate her spareribs with spicy sausages and were blown away by the flavor--one caveat, try to skim some of the fat that rises to the top of the cooker for a less rich and more tomatoey sauce if this idea appeals to you. The pasta sauce chapter as well as the beef, veal, pork, and lamb chapter are really getting our interest. I admit that the small number of pasta sauce recipes did reflect my final rating of the book. There are also numerous recipes for things such as polenta out of the crockpot. I can easily make such items in no time flat on my stovetop while I utilize the slow cooker for something far more sumptuous. I don't want to wander into the territory of having two or three slow cookers simmering away just to get a full dinner on the table although I admire that she adapted some basic dishes to the slow cooker. For desserts you need a 7 inch springform and a 6 cup capacity baking dish that will fit the dimensions of your slow cooker. I know most cooks have these items, but just be aware in case you imagine spooning cake directly from your slowcooker--it isn't going to work that way. Also, the paperback does not stay open on its own. I am so happy to add this to my cookbook collection. With fall approaching, this cookbook will be doing double duty. We are so happy with the results of this book that we will be buying The French Slow Cooker soon. Enjoy.

Love this cookbook. I first took it out of the library, and tried recipes. Started with the risotto. Looking forward to using it a lot this winter. I have gotten a lot of great recipes from Michele's other Italian cookbook, which is why I tried this in the first place.

A definite step up from the usual slow cooker books. There may be little prep time involved in some of the recipes but well worth it. The recipes are restaurant quality and delicious. highly recommend this cook book.

I got this book for my kindle a few days ago and started tackling some of the recipes that looked good. The Mushroom and Meat Ragu sauce was ok but required some doctoring on my part before serving (tomatoes and cream really make the sauce and both were missing from this one.) The round steak braciole was bland and wasn't really a true braciole which is stuffed with more ingredients than this one. Finally I made the truffle cake which was deemed only "ok" by my cake loving clan. Also there are way too many seafood recipes in here, over half the book is seafood. Normally I'd give it less stars but I'm going easy on it as it was a deal-only \$3.99 for the kindle so it gets 3 stars.

Each of the recipes I've tried comes out perfectly. This book has helped me realize that my food-snobbery about slow cookers is completely misplaced, and has helped me save lots of time in my busy life. So glad I bought it.

This book takes me back to the 70's when crock pots were all the rage. It really is an easy way to put good food on the table without sacrificing color, taste, or nutrition. I have already been using the French slow cooker book and have received many compliments. So far, I have only made one meal (pasta fagioli), but it was delicious and made from items I already had in my kitchen. This book is not for people not willing to make a little effort. it is not "throw in a chicken, add sour cream, go away and come back to dinner 5 hours later." The flavors are unique and will have family and guests wanting to know your secret. Tell them it was because of your recent trip to Italy.....

I bought this book in hopes it would have real recipes with out using canned soup or the dump method of slow cooker cooking. I don't mind a bit of up front work if the dish comes out tasting like I had spent all day on it. This book fills the bill. Great pictures, which I love, great recipes with easy to follow instructions for those first time cooks. I also love any details about a recipe, where it came from, what to serve it with, and such. I have made the Italain Peppery Stew with tons of black pepper and served it over the Italian White Beans and both recipe were wonderful. My family loved how the stew was different and the beans were an unexpected surprise. We loved them. I would place this recipe right up there with Julia Child's Boeuf Bourguignon which I have made twice now. People who want to make a recipe and not spend time creating it will always dislike recipes that have details. But the details are the "devel in the details" if you will. Browning the meat before you place it in the crock pot makes a huge flavor and texture difference in the end product. I want my dinner to have depth of flavor and character. I encourage you to take the time and recreate these recipes and make your family a wonderful sit down meal they will not forget.

There's no easy and quick recipes here. Everything needs prepping before putting into the slow cooker. Not worth the time or effort to read or cook any of the recipes. I can put a good Italian meal together quicker than the time it takes to prep. Lydia and Nadia's cookbooks are far superior.

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