

Female Bloggers Turned Entrepreneurs Bring Cooking Joy to All, Wyckoff Living, May 2025

by Brielle Bleeker, Wyckoff Library

There is no shortage of cookbooks when it comes to meeting unique palates; from plant-based to a carnivore diet; farm-to-table to sweets and treats; family style to small dishes for one; there's something for everyone. Female bloggers are turning their passion into businesses, bringing their wildly successful and popular websites and blogs to the shelves, releasing cookbooks--many of which have hit bestseller lists. Check out some of the fantastic selection the Wyckoff Library has to offer:

Carleigh Bodrug, *PlantYou* founder and author of the #1 *NY Times* bestselling cookbook of the same name, dreamed of helping people “discover the power of adding more plants to their plates.” With a background in journalism and a personal wake-up call to change her traditional “meat and potatoes” diet, Bodrug “connected the dots between food, health, and well-being” and founded *PlantYou* in 2016. Since then, the site has grown to over eleven million followers today, all looking for tips and tricks to guide them in embracing a plant-focused diet. Along with the website, Bodrug launched a digital meal-planning program to make the switch to plant-based easy, accessible, and enjoyable. Her two cookbooks, *PlantYou* and *PlantYou Scrappy Cooking* not only offer hundreds of delicious and healthy recipes, but are set up infographic style, making them both appealing to the eye and simple to work with. Bodrug is passionate about her work and says, “I’m here to make [eating plant-based] easy, delicious, and empowering.”

Love Real Food offers a fresh approach to cooking from *Cookie and Kate* founder, Kathryne Taylor. Based off her popular blog, and named for Kathryne and her canine sidekick, Cookie, the site offers a celebration of good food; “real, sustainable food that delights the senses and nourishes the body” and carries that approach into the cookbook. As a vegetarian and supporter of all-natural food, Taylor grew her blog from a hobby to a business that now caters to millions of site visitors every month. A self-taught cook, Taylor believes good food and good company go hand in hand and that recipes should be fun and flexible which is evident in the recipes her book offers including soups, slaws, dips, and even sweets for the “occasional indulgence.”

Inspiring a love for food and the “courage to try something new” is the thought behind Tieghan Gerard’s *Half-Baked Harvest*. Having grown up in a big family, Gerard enjoyed pitching in when it came to meals, and soon found a natural love for cooking, eventually taking over her family’s kitchen. When her family moved to Colorado, Gerard found new inspiration working out of a converted horse barn where she now keeps her studio, specially designed around her lifestyle that allows her to “spend my days experimenting with new recipes, photographing my creations, feeding my family, and making one giant mess in the process.” Having appeared on numerous cooking shows and featured in a variety of magazines, Gerard has several cookbooks to her name and has built a successful business doing what she loves.

Having started as a hobby to distract from the demands of grad school, Chungah Rhee's *Damn Delicious* has grown into one of the top food blogs, reaching millions every week. Rhee uses "simple, fresh ingredients and [transforms] them into sophisticated and elegant meals for the everyday home cook." Her recipes are designed to be simple, easy, and full of flavor and allow for less time in the kitchen and more time enjoying the food at the table. From one-pot dishes and slow cooker meals to copycat recipes and last-minute dessert ideas, all one hundred recipes make for some damn delicious food.

NY Times bestselling author Deb Perelman has built her brand around fearless, unfussy cooking. What began in 2006 as a way to share simple recipes that will lead to success in the kitchen, ultimately turned into the wildly successful *Smitten Kitchen*, a brand that caters to home cooks looking for simple yet delicious recipes and kitchen tutorials that can provide guidance and "keepers...recipes you'll keep around for good." With three cookbooks to her name, all consisting of recipes designed to be relied on for years, Perelman is a welcome presence to home cooks looking to take the guesswork out of cooking and be put at ease in the kitchen.

For Carrian Cheney, one half of the husband-and-wife team behind *Oh Sweet Basil*, time in the kitchen is a family affair. Having built their brand to cater to families low on time but who want to not only create fresh, family-friendly food, but also memories through family togetherness in the kitchen, the Cheneyes offer tried and true recipes—sometimes with a twist--designed to bring the whole family together at the table. Their two cookbooks, *Our Sweet Basil Kitchen* and *Raised in the Kitchen*, aim to make "memories from scratch one recipe at a time."

What began as a way to slim down a few favorite recipes quickly turned into a "highly rewarding labor of love" for *Skinnytaste* founder Gina Homolka. The *Skinnytaste* philosophy centers around creating flavorful, nutritious recipes designed to cater to everyone; whether looking to "shed a few pounds, eat a little healthier, or meal prep," the hundreds of healthy recipes found in her five cookbooks will provide the inspiration to prepare quick, simple, and healthy recipes all while saving time and money.

For many, what's a meal without dessert? Sarah Fennel, founder of *Broma Bakery*, believes bakers of all levels can create delicious and satisfying sweets and treats as long as one has "a deep, unwavering love for dessert." Fennel's website stemmed from a passion that combined her love of baking with an interest in photography and began when she was a homesick college student craving her mom's mouth-watering desserts. Today, her success is evident in the millions of visitors to her site weekly as well as in her cookbook, *Sweet Tooth*, a collection of recipes she hopes will bring happiness, provide a bit of childhood nostalgia, or inspire one to drop everything and bake to satisfy a sweet craving.

Turning passion into success, these female entrepreneurs continue to bring a variety of recipes, cooking skills, and pure joy to readers and food enthusiasts everywhere. For the above cookbook titles and so much more, stop by the Wyckoff Library to peruse the shelves or check out the e-offerings on Libby and Hoopla and start planning your next meal!

