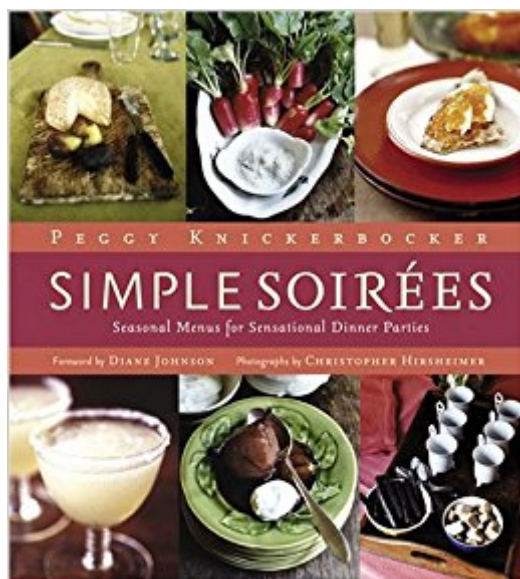


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# Simple Soirees: Seasonal Menus For Sensational Dinner Parties



## Synopsis

Peggy Knickerbocker lives in two of the greatest food cities in the world, Paris and San Francisco, and she loves to give dinner parties wherever she is. In *Simple Soirées: Seasonal Menus for Sensational Dinner Parties*, the food journalist, former caterer, and restaurateur shares her passion, her welcoming spirit, and her secrets for creating a memorable party, whether it's a romantic dinner for two, a birthday party for a special friend, or a cocktail fundraiser. The book includes 100 of the author's favorite recipes, organized into seasonal menus such as Warm Figs Wrapped in Serrano Ham, Roasted Salmon with Peas and Mint, and Heirloom Tomato Salad for summer, or Steak au Poivre, Braised Fennel and Garlic, and Double-Ginger Gingerbread for fall. With an emphasis on fresh, local ingredients, the menus are always stylish and often feature an element of surprise. Knickerbocker also offers planning and preparation suggestions, as well as time-saving advice to make entertaining easy and fun. With beautiful photographs that capture the essence of the simple soiree, this delightful book will appeal to food lovers and party lovers alike.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Anyone who loves gathering friends around the table would be grateful to receive Peggy Knickerbocker's new book. -- Fine Cooking, Holidays, December 2005  
Peggy convinces us that gatherings can be as appealing and effortless for the hosts as they are for the guests. -- Saveur, December 2005  
These delicious dinners are inspired by the beauty of real food... -- Alice Waters, Chef & Owner, Chez Panisse

Peggy Knickerbocker is a freelance food and travel writer who lives in San Francisco and Paris. She is a longtime contributor to *Saveur*, and has also written for *Gourmet*, *Food & Wine*, *House & Garden*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and the *New York Times*. She is the author of *Champagne: The Spirit of Celebration*, *Olive Oil: From Tree to Table* (nominated for an IACP Award), and *The Rose Pistola Cookbook*. Christopher Hirsheimer has photographed many cookbooks, including *Rick & Lanie's Excellent Kitchen Adventures (STC)*, *Authentic Vietnamese Cooking*, *The New Irish Table*, and *Fried & True*. Her work often appears in *Saveur*, which she co-founded.

This cookbook is amazing - I've made many things out of it for holiday feasts & get-togethers with family & friends - every one has been a hit.

Just what she wanted.

... I'm trying to edit my review as I feel I was overly harsh. But will not let me update the 1 star, to 2 (or 3). I realize that while this cookbook is definitely not for me, it might be ok for another type of cook. I want to hear about the FOOD, not about (what seemed to me) to be pedantic stories. I ordered this cookbook on a whim, and realized I had made a mistake. I found the author way to concerned with name dropping and using exotic ingredients. For me, Pamala Anderson's 'Great recipes for having people over' is elegant simplicity.

Although I have never done an entire menu from this book, every recipe I've tried from here has been delicious, super-easy and perfect, and I've tried several for my dinner parties. The desserts, especially, are delicious, impressive and simple. I love how the menus are all arranged seasonally, taking advantage of appropriate ingredients and cooking methods. Stick to the season you're in, and you can't go wrong. The author's suggestions for making a party special are fun to read, too. Admittedly, I am from San Francisco, and so is she, so she mentions foods and places that are near and dear to my heart. Her food sensibilities are right up my alley. If you're a *Saveur* reader, a couple of these menus will look familiar, as they are from articles she's written for them (the Gnafrons and the Old Stoves Dinner).

*Simple Soirees* is my new favorite cookbook. In December I lugged it to New Zealand to bring as gift to our hostess. After she opened it; I snuck it off to my room to read at night. It distinguishes itself by being the first cookbook that I have read cover to cover. It read like a novel. We spent the rest of our

stay making many of the dishes. Our favorite was the whole fish wrapped in herbs for Christmas Eve...it was extraordinary. My daughter and I have made several of the sweet things together like the heavenly fragrant geranium ice cream and the lavender and cardamom cookies. Everything we have made has turned out delicious. I think Peggy Knickerbocker is a genius. It is not only my favorite cookbook, but it is my favorite gift to give as well.

I love this cookbook. I was looking for a new seasonal cookbook with relatively simple recipes. The Alice B. Toklas Chicken with the roasted sage potatoes was wonderful and easy, the sauce with the ruby port and orange zest was superb. The photographs made unfamiliar recipes to me like the Tartiflette look really intriguing and approachable. If you're looking for fresh inspiration, you'll find it here.

I am an avid cook and I own many cookbooks. This book is a favourite that I return to again and again. Everything I have made from this book works! That is not something you can always rely on. Recipes are simple, straightforward and sophisticated. Usually, I consider myself lucky if more than one or two recipes become repeats. Simple Soirees contains many repeats-Favourites include: Poulet au Vinaigre, Orange Carpaccio, Pears Poached in Red Wine, Minced Chicken in Lettuce Cups, Steak au Poivre. There are still more ticked off to try (and I will!). I also really like the way the book is divided by seasonal menus. Although I have yet to put together an entire meal using these suggestions, they do add to the fun of planning a dinner party. Highly recommended!

Peggy Knickerbocker certainly knows how to plan the perfect seasonal menu. The breathtaking photographs caught my attention when I was looking for a new book with entertaining ideas. The menus are elegant and simple and show how to use fresh, seasonal ingredients when planning what to serve to friends for a dinner party. A simple Parisian dinner, a romantic dinner for two, and a Fall Harvest dinner were the first three menus that I used. You can even mix and match the different menus to create your own extraordinary evening at home. Even a roasted chicken and simple green beans become culinary delights with the recipes from Simple Soirees. I plan to use this book for ideas for my Thanksgiving dinner this year and for my annual holiday party. Thank you, Peggy, for this terrific book of entertaining inspiration!

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