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FLAVORS OF THE MAGHREB & SOUTHERN ITALY

Recipes from the Land of the Setting Sun

The Arabic word *Maghreb* means “land where the sun sets.” The Maghreb is a multicultural Mediterranean region of North Africa which includes Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania, and Libya, and in ancient times, it included Spain, Sicily and Malta. It is bordered by the beautiful Mediterranean Sea. The history of this region is completely different from that of the rest of Africa, and today’s Maghrebi cuisine reflects those differences.

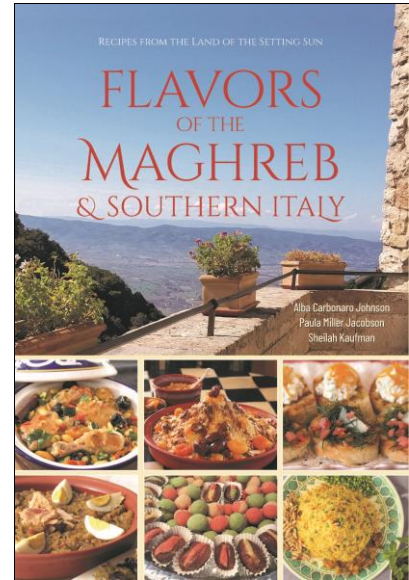
Before the Arab conquest, the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, and later the Italians and French, colonized the Maghreb. Each new culture that entered the region left unique influences and together they created a multicultural cuisine using aromatic spices, fresh herbs, citrus, dried fruits, nuts, fresh fish, lamb, chicken, pasta, rice, and copious fresh vegetables. Ancient civilizations such as Phoenicians and Romans spread the cultivation of wheat. The Moors brought citrus and olives from Spain. The Berbers gave birth to couscous. Fennel, peas, and artichokes arrived with the Italian settlement, and the baguette, salad Niçoise, and mayonnaise were brought by the French when they colonized the area. Thus, the food of the Maghreb became a *mélange* of Sicilian, French, Spanish, Arabic, and Berber cuisine.

Three generations ago, Alba Carbonaro Johnson’s family emigrated from Sicily to Tunisia. With this unique cultural vantage point, she learned to cook traditional Maghrebi dishes as well as the southern Italian specialties of her family. This book brings the best of both Mediterranean cuisines together in simple, delicious recipes that readers will turn to again and again.

Alba Carbonaro Johnson was born in Naples, Italy and raised in Tunisia. She has worked as a personal chef, culinary instructor, and editor, and has also made numerous television appearances, conducting live cooking demonstrations. Alba also leads annual culinary trips to Umbria and Tuscany. Visit her at EasyCookingwithAlba.blogspot.com. She resides near Annapolis, Maryland.

Paula Miller Jacobson has been editing cookbooks, testing and developing recipes, as well as catering and teaching cooking for over thirty years. She is an active member of Les Dames d’Escoffier International, International Association of Culinary Professionals, and Culinary Historians of Washington. Paula and Sheilah are partners in Cookbook Construction Crew (CookbookConstructionCrew.com), mentoring authors through the publishing process. Paula resides in Rockville, Maryland.

Sheilah Kaufman is the author of twenty-eight cookbooks and has been a food editor and writer, culinary lecturer, and cooking instructor for more than forty-five years. Sheilah trained at L’Academie de Cuisine in Bethesda, Maryland. She is a founding member of International Association of Culinary Professionals and an active member of Les Dames d’Escoffier International and Culinary Historians of Washington. She resides in Potomac, Maryland. Visit her at CookingwithSheilah.com.



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