

BUT DELICIOUS

也好吃

When a music critic heads into the kitchen, remembered flavors and an experimental spirit turn a trip down memory lane into a series of delicious dishes. Not just recipes for the home cook, this is also a food memoir brimming with love and nostalgia.

Shihfang Ma is a music critic who excels at translating sensory experiences into words. He has loved to eat since childhood, but cooking wasn't a significant part of his life until middle age and the COVID-19 pandemic. A record of his experiments in the kitchen, this book is also a memoir of family history and family meals. Whether it's a culinary theme or cooking method, his principle remains the same: home cooking has no one-size-fits-all answer, and small changes can create flavors and memories unique to a family.

The book has three parts. Part one, "Impressions", contains twenty-one essays on the author's food-related memories, such as the Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Taiwanese dishes on the family dining table during his childhood and his youthful first impressions of a cappuccino. Part two, "Cooking", includes seventy-two home-cooking recipes that have stood the test of time, from noodles, stew, and chicken soup to sauces, featuring meticulous technique and humor throughout. In the two-part appendix, "Arsenal" offers indispensable seasonings for every dish, and "Weapons List" itemizes the author's favorite pots and pans. In these pages, everyday routine is filled with extraordinary emotion.

But Delicious is written in an easily understood style yet conveys tremendous warmth and depth of feeling, using memory to explore the possibilities of food without bogging the reader down in overly detailed cooking steps. Because the author emphasizes the impossibility of ever fully replicating a dish, we are encouraged to cherish and enjoy the present – in commemorating the past, we may end up altering a cooking method to create something a bit different But delicious. As a result, readers get to sample miscellaneous thoughts on food, recipes, and profound cultural observations in a masterpiece of literary food writing.



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Shihfang Ma is a well-known music critic, award-winning broadcaster, and music program television host in Taiwan. He is the author of several essay collections on music, including *Subterranean Homesick Blues* and *Lend Me Your Ears*. He is also the editor of several books, including Bob Dylan's *The Lyrics 1961–2012* (translated edition) and *Taiwan's 200 Best Pop Music Albums*. *But Delicious* is currently his only food-themed book.