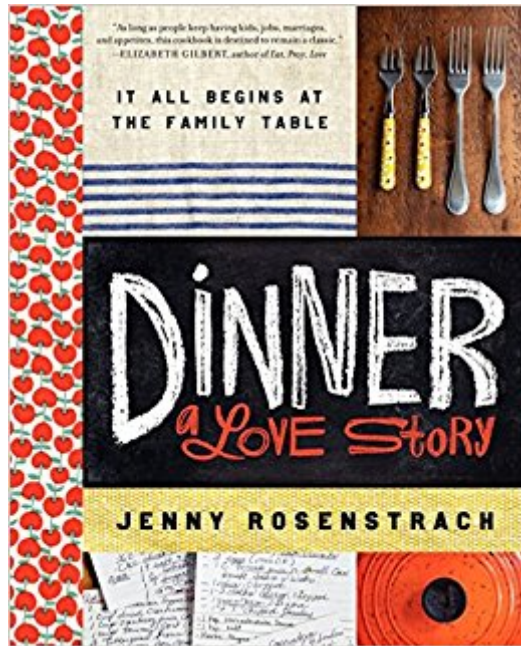


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# Dinner: A Love Story: It All Begins At The Family Table



## Synopsis

Inspired by her beloved blog, [dinneralovestory.com](http://dinneralovestory.com), Jenny Rosenstrach's *Dinner: A Love Story* is many wonderful things: a memoir, a love story, a practical how-to guide for strengthening family bonds by making the most of dinnertime, and a compendium of magnificent, palate-pleasing recipes. Fans of *Pioneer Woman*—Ree Drummond, Jessica Seinfeld, Amanda Hesser, Real Simple, and former readers of *Cookie* magazine will revel in these delectable dishes, and in the unforgettable story of Jenny's transformation from enthusiastic kitchen novice to family dinnertime doyenne.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Jenny Rosenstrach writes about food and family with such a marvelous spirit of warmth, friendship and-most importantly-pragmatism that you simply can't help but fall in love with her. As long as people keep having kids, jobs, marriages and appetites, this cookbook is destined to remain a classic." (Elizabeth Gilbert, Bestselling author of *EAT, PRAY, LOVE*) "Part cookbook, part survival guide, *Dinner: A Love Story* has all of Jenny's favorite meal ideas, supertime tips, and cook's secrets (read: cocktails) that help make dinner fun again." (Everyday Food) "[Rosenstrach] entertains with her wonderful writing skills, persuades by sharing her successful strategies, and educates via research and relayed experience| this book shines." (Library Journal) "A humorous and encouraging book for readers who believe in the importance of family dinnertime." (Kirkus

Reviews) “I can’t decide which I like more—reading this book or cooking from it. Jenny is that rare writer who can literally make you laugh and cry—and most importantly, she inspires you to stop just talking about dinner and start making it.” (Adam Rapoport, Editor in Chief, *Bon Appétit*) “Rosenstrach emphasizes her strong belief that the family who eats together stays together and combines stories and recipes in this essential collection.” (Publishers Weekly) “Dinner gives me hope that one day my family will also assemble around an actual table and eat an actual meal that was actually cooked by me; a meal not solely comprised of animal shaped cheese crackers dipped in hummus. Although those are good too.” (Samantha Bee, Most Senior Correspondent, *The Daily Show* with Jon Stewart, and bestselling author of *I Know I Am But What Are You?*) “Warm, funny, packed with recipes and photos, and reassuringly nonjudgmental, it will help inspire the most faint-hearted of cooks to pre-heat the oven.” (Gretchen Rubin, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *The Happiness Project*) “The family dinner, that forum for manners, taste-making, storytelling, and memorable arguments, is no small subject. Jenny Rosenstrach tackles it with gusto as she shares her fascinating story of learning to feed her family....[N]ot only a wonderful read, but a book studded with excellent recipes and tips.” (Amanda Hesser, co-founder of *FOOD52.com*) “A compelling—more than just another cookbook. We love Rosenstrach because her writing is natural, honest, and smart.” (Bon Appétit) “At first glance, it’s a cookbook, based on a blog, by Jenny Rosenstrach, a magazine columnist and editor who lives outside New York City. But really, it’s a memoir, and also a how-to manual: a smart, pragmatic, warm and thoughtful guide.” (Wired.com)

Jenny Rosenstrach, and her husband, Andy, regularly, some might say pathologically, cook dinner for their family every night. Even when they work long days. Even when their kids’ schedules pull them in eighteen different directions. They are not superhuman. They are not from another planet. With simple strategies and common sense, Jenny figured out how to break down dinner—the food, the timing, the anxiety, from prep to cleanup—so that her family could enjoy good food, time to unwind, and simply be together. Using the same straight-up, inspiring voice that readers of her award-winning blog, *Dinner: A Love Story*, have come to count on, Jenny never judges and never preaches. Every meal she dishes up is a real meal, one that has been cooked and eaten and enjoyed at least a half dozen times by someone in Jenny’s house. With inspiration and game plans for any home cook at any level, *Dinner: A Love Story* is as much for the novice who doesn’t know where to start as it is for the gourmand who doesn’t know how to start

over when she finds herself feeding an intractable toddler or for the person who never thought about home-cooked meals until he or she became a parent.Â Â This book is, in fact, for anyone interested in learning how toÂ Â make a meal to be shared with someone they love, and about how so many good, happy thingsÂ Â happen when we do.

Another cover to cover reader who absolutely loved this book! AND, I believe I am the antithesis of the demographic for this book being that I am a 57 year old woman, have no children, am single, live rurally, am an accomplished and confident cook AND have worked from a home office for 27.5 years. I was following links here and there and ended at the DALs blog. I fell in love with the writing as well as the theme/mission and wanted more so bought the book (kindle version). Although I do not have to solve the problem of gathering others around the dinner table, I cook varied meals and love trying new things. The story resonated and inspired. Growing up, the family dinner was as Jenny describes - that time when the matters of the day in my family were shared and discussed. I have vivid and fond memories of many dinner conversations although growing up in the midwest, in the 1960's, the fare was plain and simple and a fairly standard rotation. This book both rekindled those memories and inspired me to use a diary-like tool to keep on track with some time management issues in my household which consists of me, my dog and cat, a small house and 8 acres of woods. I have also earmarked a number of recipes to try and the first will be the beluga lentil and anchovy soup!

Love, love, love. For a mid-20s newlywed who is starting to think about growing our family in the next couple years, this was just what I needed. What I appreciate most about this book is the philosophy behind it: prioritizing dinner, and thus, family time. I'm finding myself talking about this book to all of my female friends and family in their 20s and 30s-- there really is something in this book for everyone, but especially for people who have babies on the brain or are already growing their family. In lieu of a Bride and Groom cookbook, I gave this book as a gift to one of my closest friends. I think it holds much more value than just another cookbook. I'm also giving a copy to my cousin who is expecting a baby in December and expressed wanting to get a better hold in the kitchen before the little one gets here. The day I got this book as a birthday present (I had originally borrowed it from the library), I immediately lent my copy to a friend who was looking for more work-life balance. I can't speak for everyone, but I will say that Jenny Rosenstrach spoke to me and inspired and encouraged me through this book. I did not find her preachy or pretentious in any way-- I found her very human, and now I want her to be my friend.

Loved the honest and straightforward manner in which she explained her recipes and her husband's role in her endeavors. The recipes are good, some better than others, some I won't try. Bottom line, I'm happy I purchased this book, it was a pleasure to read.

When I first started reading this cookbook (because yes, there is lots of potential for reading here), I was in love. I like the blog that started it all, so decided to check out the cookbook. Reading it is a delight- so many stories that tell you that the author has really been in the trenches when trying to put dinner on the table for her family with two kids under two years old. She specifically mentions that she counted it as eating around the table if one spouse was walking around the table holding the baby and the other spouse is sitting at the table trying to get the toddler to eat. I definitely laughed in recognition and then made my husband read the "Two under Two" section. I easily made a whole week's meal plan using recipes from it. The book is mostly recipes for main dishes- if you are looking for lots of dessert recipes or sides, I think you will be disappointed. The recipes are organized into three sections: 1) recipes that are great when you don't have kids but have more time to craft a delicious meal 2) recipes that are suitable when you are just barely surviving with tiny kids and the idea of organized dinner seems to be a laughable pipe dream 3) recipes that are better when the kids are older and you have a little more time back, and the idea of everyone eating around the table seems doable. Each section has lots of stories and anecdotes that really add to the loveliness and warmth of this book. The third section also has lots of tips and strategies that the author has put into place to avoid being a short-order cook for her children (one of whom is very picky). None of these tips involve hiding vegetables. The author makes it clear that this is what works for her (one suggestion is assembly-line meals where kids can add what they want), but we're all doing what we can do to get by. Unfortunately, not all the recipes I have tried have been winners. When evaluating a recipe, I like to follow it fairly closely initially. I am mostly cooking out of the second section of the book - the barely making it section - because that is where I am right now. Lazy Bolognese was a huge fail at my house- we usually use a different recipe that really isn't any harder but comes out much better. The pasta with caramelized onions and spinach was pretty good to me, but my husband and toddler daughter weren't nuts about it. The sausages with potatoes, onions, and apples was very successful. I don't even like potatoes that much, and I LOVED the potato, onion, and apple mixture. Downside about that recipe is that it takes a while to cook - not a lot of hands-on time, but waiting time, so if you are trying to really throw something on the table pretty quickly, it might not be for that kind of night. We do sausage a lot at our house, and it is

definitely faster to just throw it in the oven and then boil potatoes or "bake" them in the microwave. Does it taste as good as the potatoes/apples/onions? No, it does not. But it is fast. The sausage, kale, and white bean stew was INCREDIBLE. That said, there are other recipes that I still want to try - like the Swedish Meatballs, the pork shoulder ragu, and the pizza dough recipe. The recipes definitely lend themselves to improvisation and adjustment. I am not sure if all the recipes are on the website - some of them definitely are. Who will like this cookbook:- People with small children who feel totally alone and frustrated in their attempts to eat something approximating a real dinner. I love the precision and delicious reliability of Ina Garten's cookbooks, but this is so not where I am at this point right now.- People who eat meat and/or animal products - there are vegetarian recipes and some veganish recipes,- People who eat a dairy-free diet (many of the recipes are easily adaptable to be dairy-free, not the case with some of my other favorite cookbooks like Ina Garten's or the Pioneer Woman)- People who like the blog- People who believe strongly in the family eating meals together- People who need new ideas for dinner Who probably won't like this cookbook:- People without kids who are uninterested in reading stories about trying to eat dinner with kids or who feel frustrated at the standard definition of family as parents + kids. In the author's defense, this is what her family looks like, and the book is written from her perspective. She never says that all families should or do look this way, but I know people who are very sensitive to this kind of thing. So if this is you, you might want to try a different cookbook.- People who like standard "meat and three" kinds of meals. I think my husband is in this category, which is why the recipes are less of a hit than I would have hoped.- Vegans (again, you will find some appropriate recipes, but most of the recipes have some kind of animal product in it).- People who like to rely on processed and packaged foods when cooking- People who do a lot of crockpot cooking (you could adapt some recipes for the crockpot, but I don't think the author mentions using a crockpot once in the book)- People who want dessert recipes

One of my go-to cookbooks. Great recipes that I turn to again & again. I do wish the book was organized a little more like a traditional cookbook. She's a good writer & I enjoyed reading this book (as well as her blog) but I wish that portion of the book somehow separated from the recipe content.

A lovely book about cooking delicious recipes a lovely ode to spending time with your family & eating a delicious meal that has been lovingly prepared

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