

Cookbook Club Mich-Lib Feedback

My group did just make the recipe **as printed**, no doubling or halves.

I tried to **steer clear of potluck & casserole cookbooks** for the group.

Usually people were happy to share **leftovers** for anyone that wanted an extra serving to go home. I made sure to always have extra plates, bowls & foil to account for this.

We started one in Fall 2019, which only met a few times before the pandemic killed it. It was really popular, though, and a lot of fun!

I made the book a **reference item** for a month or so before the meeting, and then people would **photocopy the recipes and leave a bookmark in the ones they'd chosen to make**. Then everyone would show up with their dishes, we'd serve and sit down to eat. People would start off talking about their chosen recipes, **what worked and what didn't**, and then conversation flowed really naturally from there. It drew a wide spectrum of patrons of all ages, and was pretty low-key and easy on our end. I cooked for each session because I enjoy cooking, but really all we had to do was put out plates & cutlery and the patrons took it from there. Now that you mention it, maybe it's time we bring ours back 😊

We've run a Cookbook Book Group for several decades. Ours is called Tasty Reads. It's very popular!

Tasty Reads runs from Sept – May and we meet monthly at noon. Our meetings take at least **90 minutes**, as the food bit adds time to the discussion. The **library provides the room, tables, plates, silverware etc.** We ask folks to bring in their own – as it cuts down on waste, but many just rely on our supplies.

We choose our books over the summer and **put the list out early** so that folks have lots of time to get copies. We always try to have several copies of the books available in our collection, especially if it's a title that doesn't have many copies in our resource sharing libraries.

We maintain an **email listing for this book group** and about a week leading up to the meeting most folks will send an email with what they are planning to make. It's not 100% as several members NEVER email about what they are bringing...lol. But, it does help to keep duplicates to a minimum.

Our book group discusses **cookbooks, memoirs, fiction about cooking/restaurants/chefs**, etc. It's nice to have some variety, and our best discussions have been around memoirs and fiction! If it's a book without many recipes we encourage folks to **bring in items that are inspired by the book.**

Timeline:

Attendees bring in their food and set it up in our meeting room. We go around the table and everyone describes what they brought to eat (quickly). Then everyone fills their plates and we then take turns talking about what we liked, didn't like etc from the book.

We've tried to ask folks to bring in copies of their recipes, but that's not always successful.

😊 There is often an email or two after the meeting where folks send out their recipes.

I always try to find additional information about the author, chef, etc to put out to the group early. Some books have more additional information than others, but for the most part this information just adds to the discussion we have.

I encourage you to give this type of program a shot. It's really fun, and for those of us who are foodies by nature, it's not much work! The trickiest bit for me is planning food that can sit at work with me for several hours prior to our meeting. The Instant Pot has been a real lifesaver in that regard!

I think the best part of Meredith's program was the way people would open up around the table over food and you heard family stories around the recipes. My favorite one was when we did the Moroccan cookbook. I remember one gentleman who made a sort of cassoulet and brought it in a traditional Moroccan stone/clay cooking vessel, and there was a story around that. And another person talked about how they grew some of the items in their dish in their own garden, and it evolved into growing herbs and vegetables.

I organized and ran a cookbook club back in 2017 (maybe).

I usually picked a theme for the month and would find 1 to 3 cookbooks that related to the theme.

I did place holds on multiple copies in the system and had books available for folks to check out & take home, but always kept at least one copy of each book at the reference desk for photocopying in case everything was checked out.

The patrons loved it. We'd get together for our potluck meeting, discuss recipes, challenges, ingredients, their overall impression of the book, etc. The conversation was always lively and moved along in a very casual and organic way. I did always go to group with a few questions or talking points if we hit a lull.

Some of the themes we covered were fad diets, American standard cookbooks (Betty Crocker, Joy of Cooking and the like), newly published, we covered a few specific cuisines, but one of my favorites was celebrity cookbook showdown.

I chose 2 popular celebrity cookbooks at the time and as a group we evaluated and rated the recipes/books.

I think they did – with everyone bringing something (and most people bringing more than one dish, because cooks are going to cook), people took portions that were more sample-sized than full servings.