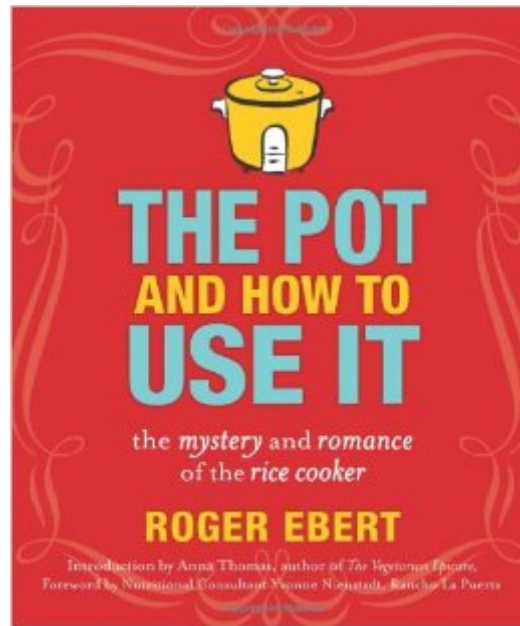


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# The Pot And How To Use It: The Mystery And Romance Of The Rice Cooker



## Synopsis

In *The Pot and How to Use It*, Roger Ebert—Pulitzer Prize-winning film critic, admitted “competent cook,” and long-time electric rice cooker enthusiast—gives readers a charming, practical guide to this handy and often-overlooked kitchen appliance. While *The Pot and How to Use It* contains numerous and surprisingly varied recipes for electric rice cookers, it is much more than a cookbook. Originating from a blog entry on Roger’s popular Web site, the book also includes readers’ comments and recipes alongside Roger’s own wry insights and observations on why and how we cook. With an introduction by vegetarian cookbook author Anna Thomas and expert assistance from recipe consultant and nutritionist Yvonne Nienstadt, *The Pot and How to Use It* is perfect for fans of Roger’s superb writing, as well as anyone looking to incorporate the convenience and versatility of electric rice cookers into his or her kitchen repertoire. Roger Ebert has been all over the news recently. An in-depth interview in *Esquire* in February 2010 revealed how drastically Ebert’s life has changed since his recovery from life-threatening surgery in which he lost his ability to eat, drink, and talk. He also appeared on Oprah, telling even more of his love of life and debuting his computer generated voice, made up of clips from old TV shows and DVD reviews. In *The Pot and How to Use It*, Roger Ebert—Pulitzer Prize-winning film critic, admitted “competent cook,” and long-time electric rice cooker enthusiast—gives readers a charming, practical guide to this handy and often-overlooked kitchen appliance. While *The Pot and How to Use It* contains numerous and surprisingly varied recipes for electric rice cookers, it is much more than a cookbook. Originating from a blog entry on Roger’s popular Web site, the book also includes readers’ comments and recipes alongside Roger’s own discerning insights and observations on why and how we cook. With an introduction by vegetarian cookbook author Anna Thomas and expert assistance from recipe consultant and nutritionist Yvonne Nienstadt, *The Pot and How to Use It* is perfect for fans of Roger’s superb writing, as well as anyone looking to incorporate the convenience and versatility of electric rice cookers into his or her kitchen repertoire.

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## Customer Reviews

This is not your usual cookbook. First, it lets you know that you really can cook other foods besides rice in the most basic (or fancy) rice cooker. Second, it's not an extensive recipe book. There are some recipes, yes, but the book encourages you to try your own ideas. Third, the text is lively, witty, and entertaining. Roger Ebert's voice is not stilled. Fourth, buy it just to read it as a book, but you'll probably end up also buying a rice cooker or using the one you have for more foods than rice.

You're most likely to enjoy this book if you buy it understanding what it is: It's a blog entry. The book's first section is the long blog entry from Ebert's blog about how to use a rice cooker to make all the food you need to eat. It's a great blog entry. It's funny, and informative, and it really will expand your vision of how you can use your rice cooker. It's well worth reading. The second section is a bunch of rice-cooker recipes, submitted by Ebert's readers in the blog entry's comments section. So definitely buy it, if you'd like to read an entertaining essay on how you can eat healthily and well using nothing but a rice cooker and your imagination, and some specific ideas expanding on that idea. You'll probably enjoy it. But be aware that it isn't very long, it isn't really a 'cookbook' in the traditional sense, and it's all also available on his blog. I bought it, though, and I have no regrets. And it occurred to me to come write a review because I'm just finishing eating a very tasty supper that I cooked in the rice cooker using what I learned from this book.

I love Roger Ebert and his writing. It's his wonderful writing that make this an engaging book. If, however, you are looking for hard core recipes, this is not the book for you. Most of the recipes are supplied by posters on his blog. I would have loved more recipes, but that would have gone against Ebert's philosophy of a little of this and a little bit of that. It's all very loose.

This is definitely NOT a step by step, add these ingredients, follow these steps kind of cookbook.

And I imagine that more than a few purists and self-styled gourmets will turn their noses up at it, but it is very entertaining and informative. If you enjoy Ebert's writing style (and share or at least understand his world view) I can almost guarantee you will enjoy this (cook)book. In a nutshell, this is a book about how to make good food easily, with a minimum of fuss or equipment. And at least 90% of the time, that is all I have time (or energy) to do. The overriding theme seems to be shortcuts and simplicity, and at least in my opinion, that is a very good thing.

Like a new guide on an African Safari this book tells you everything you needed to know, but nothing particularly useful! It is cleverly written but spends entirely too much time telling you why you need to have the pot, and of course why you need to have the pot, not to forget why you need to have the pot. I bought the book knowing I needed the pot, I didn't need to be told why! After I got half way through I figured I could be my own Safari guide, particularly when I got to the multiple pages of people just like you who had bought the pot and decided they needed to say something... I skipped to the end, I'm sure there was useful information in there but I had already been told why I needed to have the pot. There was around 20 pages of recipes, in a 128 pages of book. For an entertaining read I'd borrow this one from the library, and buy an actual cook book for the pot.

I love this--it is not so much a cookbook as a celebration of the possibilities of the humble rice cooker recounted by someone whose love of cooking and entertaining has not been diminished by the fact that cancer surgery has forever robbed him of the ability to actually eat anything--I stumbled upon it in a reference on Ebert's blog and it is in fact like a lengthy blog entry that is inspirational and up-lifting; but if you are looking for a typical one tbsp of this, half a cup of that cookbook, there are probably other ones that will make more sense. I have already bought a second one for my son and will probably be purchasing many more as gifts, along with a rice cooker of course.

I'm single and not a cook and pre-ordered this thinking it would be right up my alley. Not so. Most of the book is very general narrative about the pot being fun and good and trying things out. The few recipes there are require a giant rice cooker, not the 3 cup version I have at home. I ended up making the split pea soup in a large deep pan on my stove and it's tasty, but it wasn't a one step throw it in the pot deal. I also tried the rice pudding, which lacked any pudding element whatsoever. It came out pretty dry, even before baking. I don't recommend this book for recipes for any level of cook.

I gave this book five stars because it prompted me to buy the cheapest rice cooker I could find (as recommended therein) and follow a few directions and experiment. Experiment I did, combining one of the suggestions from the book with a recipe I found on the web and then changing ingredients to match what I had on hand. Result? A delicious meal for family of 4 with little effort on my part. (In fact I dictated the instructions to my 14-year-old grandson over the phone so all I had to do at home was finish the preparation by throwing in a few handfuls of egg noodles and some fresh broccoli and waiting about 20 more minutes.) Yummy. Chicken drumsticks in sauce with noodles and broccoli cooked in rice cooker. Who knew?

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