

Children's Literature Reviews

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Cooking up a storm

Sam Stern, with Susan Stern.

[Contributor biographical information](#)

[Publisher description](#)

Cambridge, Mass. : Candlewick Press, 2006, c2005.

128 p. : col. ill. ; 27 cm.

Annotations:

Includes index.

Introduction -- Brilliant breakfasts -- Cool, quick lunches -- School recovery -- Evening chill-out -- Impress your crowd -- When friends stop by -- Weekend family meals -- Desserts, yum! -- Party, party, party -- Exam survival -- Essential extras -- Sam's top 20 tips -- Index.

Sam Stern is a fourteen-year-old student who excels in drama and creative writing. Like many of his friends -- and his mother and mentor, Susan Stern -- he loves to cook and eat. Sam enjoys sports, fishing, climbing with his older brother, and going out to hear all kinds of music, including indie rock and jazz. He is rarely seen without an iPod. What's cooking? An enthusiastic young chef shares his teen-tested tips and recipes for everything from breakfast to dinner, desserts to brain-boosting snacks. A kid's gotta eat -- and what better way to make sure that the food on your plate hits the spot than to make it yourself? Fourteen-year-old Sam Stern, with a bit of help from his mom, Susan, is more than happy to share dozens of his favorite recipes for all occasions. There are pancakes for breakfast and easy lunches like soup or salad to pack up for school. Quick meals like spaghetti or omelette's are best for busy school nights; for weekends there are serious dinners like homemade lasagna or whole roasted chicken. And don't forget fancy, mouth-watering desserts; addictive but healthy snacks; and even special menus and suggestions to help keep your brain awake during dreaded exam time. Especially geared toward teen readers is the lively running commentary from Sam, plus colorful photos of food preparation and the ultimate chef's reward: feasting with friends.

Best Books:

[Senior High Core Collection, Seventeenth Edition, 2007](#) ; The H. W. Wilson Co.; United States

Reviews:

Gillian Engberg (Booklist, Jul. 1, 2006 (Vol. 102, No. 21))

In a year when two young chefs, ages 8 and 10, were nominated for the James Beard Award, it's clear that kids are increasingly comfortable in the kitchen. English teen Sam Stern, with his mother's help, offers this slender, photo-packed cookbook, unusual not only because of its author but also because it focuses on guys, with chapters such as "Impress the Girls." That said, the recipes, presented in a casual but clear voice, will draw both genders. An opening section presents some insight into cooking's appeal for teens: "It's brilliant to know that you can be independent," Sam says of the ability to cook what he wants, when he wants it. Suggestions for breakfast, dinner, and snacks are included, as are dishes for parties and for boosting brainpower during exams. Although the recipes aren't technically difficult, kids without any kitchen experience will need lots of help. Still, the bright, energetic text and color photos of Sam and his photogenic friends and family will easily pull in aspiring foodies. Category: Books for Older Readers--Nonfiction. 2006, Candlewick, \$16.99. *Gr. 6-9.*

Gwynne Spencer (Children's Literature)

This is Sam Stern's first cookbook. Sam (born August 1990) is a British celebrity chef and also author of *Real Food, Real Fast*. He lives in Yorkshire, England, where he writes a column, "Sam's Super Kids" and has appeared alongside chefs like Jamie Oliver, Rik Stein, Gordon Ramsay, and Anthony Worrall Thompson. He has

also appeared on *The Today Show* with a cooking demonstration. So, now that we know who he is, let us look at the range of recipes in this book, which are in eye-pleasing “Hot Dog” type (large print, too) and range from “Brilliant Breakfasts,” “Cool Quick Lunches,” “School Recovery” (snacks), “Evening Chill-out” to party recipes, exam survival cookery, and “Sam’s Top 20 Tips.” Recipes are geared for one person, with lots of variations offered in sidebars with lavish photographs of Sam and his friends, finished recipes, and processes like wokking and baking. A good basic cookbook, especially appealing to the guys, this would be a great addition to the high school library or classroom, and a wonderful cookbook for the off-to-college-learning-how-to-cook kid. Best of all, Sam is definitely not a junk food kid! 2006, Candlewick Press, \$16.99. Ages 12 up.

Subjects:

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