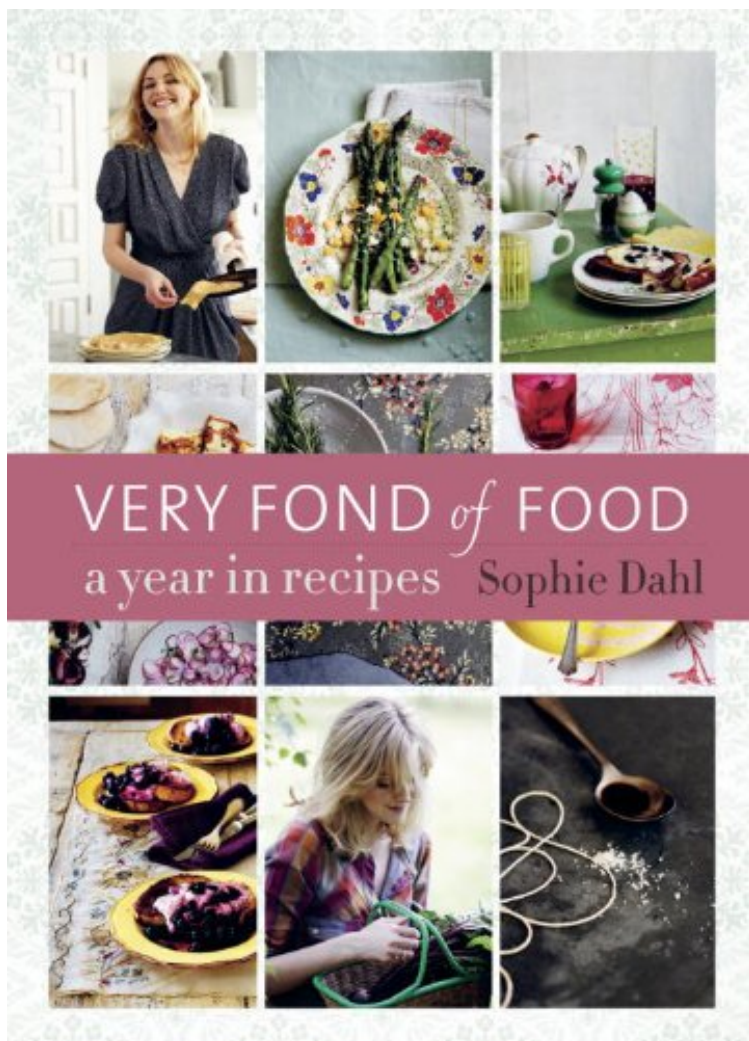


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# Very Fond of Food: A Year in Recipes



*Par Sophie Dahl*

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## Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurA stylish and charming cookbook from a rising food star that interweaves personal anecdotes about food and the good life with 100 simple and appealing seasonal recipes.Bestselling author Sophie Dahl offers up 100 wholesome recipes for health-minded home cooks who yearn for a bit of indulgence in her gorgeous second cookbook. Favoring natural sweeteners, minimal meat, and abundant produce, these dishes satisfy yet never feel ascetic. Recipes ranging from Roasted Pumpkin with Sauted Greens and Toasted Cumin Dressing to Rhubarb Rice Pudding are organized seasonally, and the book finishes with a full chapter of luscious desserts. But the recipes are only part of the story--Sophies food-filled memories and musings on the good life make this a book to treasure for its writerly charms as much as for its advice in the kitchen. Very Fond of Food will enchant the eye with evocative photography and whimsical drawings; inspire the mind with witty recollections on family, travel, and romance; and captivate the palate with recipes that comfort body and soul. Sophie Dahl invites you into a delightful world where every meal is

a story, and theres always an excuse for cake.ExtraitAutumn is all about nostalgia. For me it will forever be the season of back to school, first loves, and bonfire night. The food of autumn captures all of that in a net. Even the scent of autumn is sweet, smoky, and wistful. From ages four to seventeen I attended quite a few schools, from the call your teacher Bob and do yoga as a sport sort, to the white gloves and curtsying to the headmistress after prayers, draconian institute that is particular to England. The one constant in the merry-go-round was the familiar feeling that flooded to the surface during the last week of August, the week before the autumn term began. It was a cross between an itch and a promise, as the evenings grew colder and supper was suddenly hot soup or a baked potato. It was furthered by buying tights and the accoutrements of junior academia: shiny pencil cases, as yet unmarred with the initials of the boy who we all had a crush on, scratched on with a compass, and virginal geometry books, so hopeful without the vivid red crosses that were sure to come. If it was boarding school, which it was for a bit, there was the heart-plunging goodbye at the train station on a Sunday evening, the inevitable pall of rain steaming up the windows, staining the summer with a tearful goodbye. At day school, the first-day rain ceased to be a symbolic backdrop for all that was ill in the world, and more of a vanity irritant, mussing up the fringe that was so carefully straightened the night before, in honor of the sixth form boys. Your classmates felt new like pennies, and you saw them with new eyes, at least for a day or two. Chloe now had a chest to rival Jane Russell; Joes voice had broken and he had freckles from some faraway sun. Lola had a worldly weariness that could have some-thing to do with a Greek waiter, and fat Robert was now thin and mean with it. Our teachers struggled with the new us, trying to gauge our emotional temperature with the old jokes that used to work, before we went and grew quietly behind their backs. So much can happen in ten weeks. Long gone from school, I still know that much can shift in a summer. Maybe this is why autumn makes me so nostalgic. The tangible chrysalis effect of whats changed. I watch it now with my younger cousins and the children of friends. Fun fairs and postgraduation nights of camping in places that parents would balk at, sangria and sunburn, and thinking youre in love with a person who can barely say hello in your language. Discovering that some friends wont, as you thought, walk into adult life with you, that all of those nights spent whispering secrets when the lights were out will be instead relegated to the yellowing pages of a diary. During the summer I was in Los Angeles, far, far away from the thought of rain, tights, or cozy autumnal food. I stayed at my aunts house, which was filled with kids home from college for the summer and her menagerie of animals, including a bowl of violently colored jellyfish and Frances Bacon, her potbellied pig. Frances is of variable temper, enormous, and partially blind; she hates babies and cats in no particular order. She is very fond of strawberries, bed, and sitting on the dogs, who live in mortal fear of her. We have always got on reasonably well. This all changed when my aunt went away for a week. Although I did all the things Frances likes--scratching her ears, rubbing sunscreen on her broad scaly back, feeding her banana skins, and tucking her in at night--I think she connected my arrival with my aunts disappearance and decided, like an errant stepchild, to make my life complicated. She crept stealthily into the larder (my favorite place) and trapped me there daily, blocking my exit with her two-hundred-pound bulk, trying to bite me if I attempted to get past her. We engaged in a ridiculous game that involved me holding a spoonful of strawberries aloft, dancing from the kitchen into the garden like a pig Pied Piper, depositing the fruit into her open milky mouth, and running as fast as I could to lock the door behind me to the sound of porcine fury. In defeated distress, I called my aunts assistant Sharon and explained the situation. Heres the thing, she said, in dulcet Zen tones. I took a deep breath and wondered what Doctor Dolittle trick she was going to impart, Its very simple. Frances doesnt like change. In the spirit of change, I give you the following. Its for leaf-sodden days and misty mornings. Tapioca with stewed apples and apricots Tapioca, like semolina, is one of those things that a school kitchen could have turned you off for life. I couldnt eat it for years, having been force-fed it at primary school aged six, with tinned jam, as it oozed like frogspawn out of the bowl and I wept and retched. For years I had the same malicious feeling toward beets and mashed potatoes, which were instant and came in lumpy granules. My teacher and I had a silent war every lunchtime; a war that eventually came to an end after my parents removed me from the school. Made to your own wont, in your own kitchen, tapioca is ambrosial, and worth being a grown-up for, as is semolina. This could also be a pudding, not a breakfast, just dont serve it with dog food-like tinned jam. Try a lovely homemade compote instead. Pictured on page 8. SERVES 4 1/2 cup/70 g tapioca (soaked overnight in plenty of water) 1 1/3 cups/350 ml milk 1 teaspoon vanilla extract 1 tablespoon butter, plus more as needed 2 tablespoons runny honey, agave nectar, or brown sugar For the apples and apricots 12 dried apricots (like the tapioca, soaked overnight, but in about 1 cup/250 ml orange juice) 1 cup/250 ml or so water 1 cinnamon stick A few tablespoons of orange juice 1 tablespoon agave

nectar or honey 2 eating apples, peeled, cored, and sliced Having soaked the tapioca overnight, drain and place it in a saucepan with the milk, vanilla extract, and butter. Bring to a boil, turn to low, and simmer, stirring in the honey, agave, or sugar, for another 10 minutes. Cut your overnight magically plumped apricots into halves or quarters, if desired. In another saucepan, place the water, cinnamon, orange juice, agave or honey, and apples and bring to a boil, giving it a good stir now and then. Simmer for about 10 to 15 minutes, or until the apples are tender. Now, here you can do one of two things. Serve the stewed fruit as is on top of the tapioca or put the tapioca in a small ovenproof dish with another tablespoon of butter, pour the apples and apricots on top, and bake at 350F/180C for 15 or so minutes. The choice, Cilla, is yours.

Crab cakes with poached eggs and spinach Perhaps the thing I miss most about living in the United States is the ubiquity of brunch, or the ready availability of breakfast foods in a restaurant, long after breakfast is normally finished. Crab cakes are such a thing, perfectly so with eggs on top. If the mountain cant come to Mohammed . . .

**SERVES 2** For the crab cakes 1 pound/450 g cooked crab meat 1 tablespoon homemade or good mayonnaise 1 teaspoon mustard A few drops of Tabasco sauce A small handful of chopped mixed fresh herbs--dill, chervil, and parsley Salt and pepper 1 egg 2 tablespoons olive oil A handful of spinach A dash of vinegar Salt 2 eggs Get the crab cake mixture ready by mixing all the ingredients, bar the egg and olive oil, and forming into little cakes. Beat the egg and brush the crab cakes with it, then heat the olive oil in a nonstick frying pan. Throw on the crab cakes and cook them for a few minutes on each side until golden. You can also wilt the spinach in the same pan for a few minutes. Plate, with the spinach around the crab cakes. In a saucepan, boil some water with a dash of vinegar and some salt. When it is simmering away, carefully crack in your eggs and poach for 3 minutes. Remove the eggs with a slotted spoon and put them on top of the crab cakes. Eat immediately.

Spelt French toast with smashed blueberries and blackberries Another very happy childhood food memory. French toast is as comforting as a feather-filled bed. Pictured on pages 12-13.

**SERVES 4** For the smashed blueberries and blackberries 2 generous handfuls each of blackberries and blueberries 1 tablespoon water 3 tablespoons agave nectar or honey A day-old spelt loaf 4 eggs, plus 1 egg yolk 1/2 cup/125 ml milk 1 teaspoon vanilla extract 2 tablespoons agave nectar or brown sugar Pinch of salt 1 tablespoon butter 4 heaping tablespoons Greek yogurt Put the berries in a saucepan with the water and agave or honey. Bring to a boil and simmer for a few minutes, or until the berries begin to split into a big, jammy autumnal mess. Slice the stale loaf into manageable toast-sized pieces. In a mixing bowl, beat together the eggs and egg yolk with the milk, vanilla, agave or sugar, and salt. When well incorporated, pour this mixture into a shallow baking dish. Start putting the bread in it, making sure its fully dunked. You need to let the bread sit in this eggy bath for at least 20 minutes, so it can really soak it up. If the bread needs help, prick it with a fork to help the egg mixture permeate. Take a big griddle pan or large heavy-bottomed frying pan and melt the butter. Put the egg-soaked bread in, working in batches if need be. Cook it for about 4 minutes on each side, until the bread is bronzed on the outside and soft on the inside. Serve on warmed plates, with the smashed berries and yogurt on top.

Revue de presse Readers will be itching to get into the kitchen--and out to the table--but will also be called to a more mindful way of cooking throughout, one based on sustainability, simplicity and love. Shelf Awareness, 4/13 Fans of stylish, anecdote-wielding celebrity chefs will find plenty to love in this collection, which favors vegetables, grains, legumes, seafood, and dairy. Library Journal, 2/15/12 In Very Fond of Food Sophie shares a world where everything (including the food) is pretty but not overly precious. Her cooking style is relaxed and easygoing, her recipes approachable, wholesome, and interesting. This is a book that makes you feel like being in the kitchen, making lovely food, is exactly where you want to be. Heidi Swanson, author of Super Natural Every Day Devour this book. Take it to bed with you and flip through it as you would a treasured novel. Sophie Dahls words speak honesty and humility, love and malady. Its the sort of cookbook that will make you fondly think of your grandmother and have you checking the fridge for leftover beef stroganoff. An absolute treasure of a book. Joy Wilson, creator of Joy the Baker