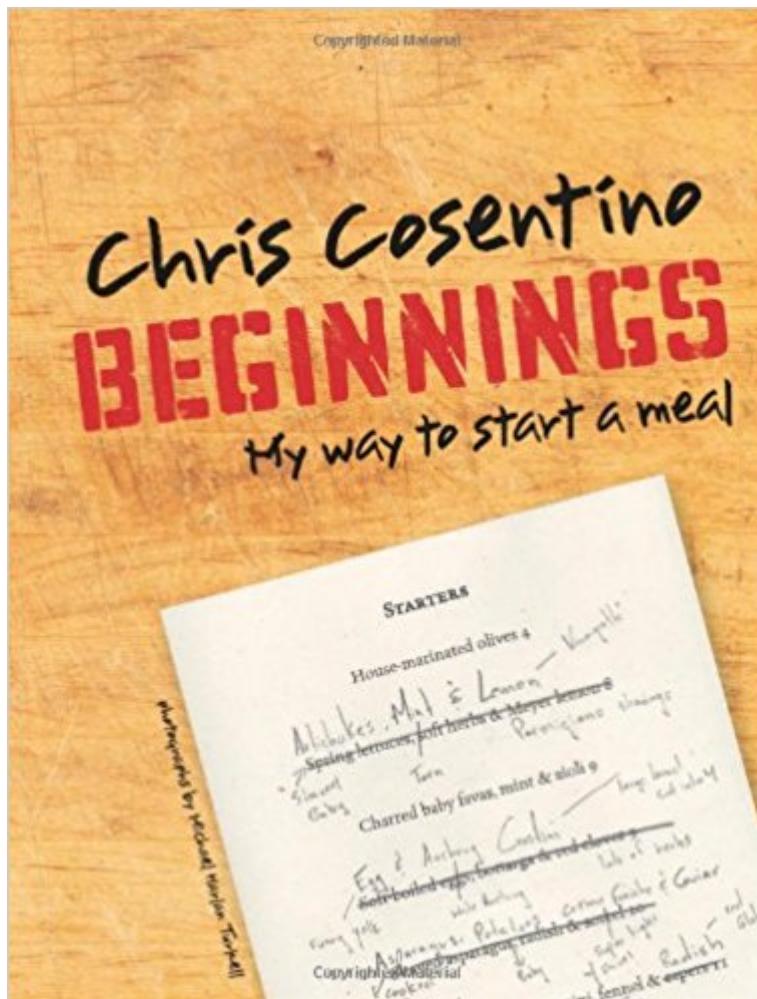


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# **Beginnings: My Way To Start A Meal**



## Synopsis

The first cookbook from innovative and highly regarded chef Chris Cosentino, this contemporary collection of mouthwatering Italian antipasti recipes, written for the home cook, is unlike anything on the market. Philosophy of book The seasonal and innovative ingredient combinations found in each of the Italian dishes in Beginnings exemplify Chris's style of cooking made popular at his highly regarded restaurant Incanto and make use of his love of Italian salumi from his popular salumeria Boccalone. The recipes are at once simple and rustic, yet contemporary and inspiring. The first cookbook from innovative and highly regarded chef Chris Cosentino, Beginnings presents more than 60 recipes for Italian-style first courses. Organized by season, the book draws upon Chris's years of experience cooking both at home and in restaurant kitchens. The seasonal, yet creative ingredient combinations found in each of the dishes exemplify the style of cooking Chris employs at his San Francisco restaurant, Incanto, and many of them make use of his love of Italian salumi from his artisan salumeria, Boccalone. Hand-rendered sketches of many of the dishes and personal stories throughout, combined with the simple and rustic, yet contemporary and inspiring recipes give you a rare glimpse into one of today's most exciting culinary minds.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Though long a fearless pioneer and innovator on the San Francisco Bay Area scene, Chris Cosentino's excellent book offers comfort, reassurance and an array of enticing possibilities. If you thought you had enough "Italian" cookbooks? You clearly don't." (Anthony Bourdain)"Chris cooks

with a lot of heart. And you see that in his restaurant, in his cured meats, and in this cookbook. He takes care with each and every ingredient and shows you how to make them astonishing."

(José Andrés)"When I met Chris, he was known as a chef with a peerless reputation for cooking offal and variety meats. Over the years of our friendship, I have come to love and admire him as a brilliant and creative technician, one of the best chefs in the country, a culinary daredevil without boundaries. That being said, the best thing he ever made me to eat was a humble bowl of noodles that remain the benchmark against which I measure all pasta courses. I am thrilled that Chris has put all of that genius into a book that is as satisfying for the food geek as it is for a family to pull weeknight dinners from. It's a stunning debut of workable recipe authorship from a thinking man's chef." (Andrew Zimmern)"Chris built his reputation on cooking hearts, brains, and kidneys, but it's the soul in his food that sets him apart from his peers." (Tom Colicchio)

Chris Cosentino graduated from the culinary program at Johnson & Wales University in Providence, Rhode Island and went on to build his résumé at several top restaurants in Washington, DC and in the San Francisco Bay Area, where he resides today. Chris took his first executive chef position at Incanto restaurant in 2002 where he continues to create inspired and innovative interpretations of rustic Italian fare. Chris is also the co-founder of Boccalone artisanal salumeria and has gained international acclaim as a leading expert and proponent of offal cookery. Chris has appeared on numerous television cooking shows, has been featured in many national publications, and has consulted on a line of clothing, shoes, and knives, to name just a few of his many ongoing projects. Michael Harlan Turkell is a once-aspiring chef and now freelance photographer. Based in Brooklyn, he is the former photo editor of Edible Brooklyn and Edible Manhattan, and captures the inner workings of kitchens for his award-winning "Back of the House" project, which documents the working lives of chefs. Michael's work has garnered industry awards and has been published in an array of magazines and books. He also hosts a show on HeritageRadioNetwork.com called "The Food Seen," which touches on the intersections of food and art.

I ordered this book after finding "Surf & Turf" Bone Marrow, Caviar & Herbs" online while researching marrow bones. Somehow my memories of taking the marrow from the bone in round steak as a child wasn't sufficient instruction. I find that Beginnings is every bit as innovative as that first recipe but decidedly more approachable and affordable. The book contains rather traditional introductions to Italian cheese trays and Italian cold-cut trays but the real value is in the seasonal

recipes. I will give you a sense of the book by illustrating some of the problematic aspects. It's winter. Do you know where your rose thyme is? There is this wonderful sounding recipe for "Asian Pear, Lardo & Rose Thyme" that I really want to try but I'll have to wait to plant rose thyme (assuming I can find it), let it grow and then either drive into the city or find a mail order source for high quality lardo. (Or a nice flight to San Francisco may be in sight.) ... It makes the simple recipe take significant effort to actually achieve. On the other hand "Acorn Squash, Stracciatella & Sage" is entirely obtainable ingredients although I might choose to make the cheese rather than make a special run to the cheese monger. Need to hone your butchering skills? "Roasted Squab. Ancient Spice & Pickled Grapes" uses easily obtainable ingredients and I fell in love with the ancient spice mix (Aleppo pepper, cloves, juniper, allspice, cinnamon, long pepper). However, if you are not used to disassembling your own meat, the preparing of the squab is an interesting adventure in anatomy. Once you understand what you are going for it is not difficult ... but you must read and reread the instructions until you are certain you know what to do. Want to show off the local grapes, assuming they are available? Consider "Pan-roasted grapes, Turnips & Grape Leaves". First, there is the trip to the greengrocer for Red Flame, Thompson, muscat and Nebiolo (or Concord) grapes. Then you need young grape leaves ... wait if the grapes are ripe how many young leaves are there? Then there is the 2 tablespoons of Brovada. I hope you planned ahead as this component is among the staples at the back of the book and requires a minimum of 10 days. I hope you love to scour farmers' markets. The enticing "Cucumber, Radishes & Bottarga" looks like a wonderful way to introduce Bottarga (hey if it was in a "Chopped basket" we all have it in our fridge, right?) but the cucumbers are Armenian, lemon and Mediterranean ... So is the cookbook usable? Very much yes. Most of the recipes have ingredients most of us can obtain easily. Most of the recipes are not time consuming although you need to read the recipes carefully to estimate how long it will take you personally. None of the recipes require kitchen skills that are outside an experienced home cook's skill set. Nearly all the recipes will inspire you to consider variations on what you already cook, to play with a few new flavor combinations, to think of "Italian" not as Italy but as an Italian cook living in your locale. And this makes it an excellent cookbook for any household.

This book is great and I was really upset no one else has reviewed it yet. Several really nice recipes. Great little blurbs from the author. You expect more offal recipes but there are a few foie gras and one tripe. The rest of the recipes are more focused on seasonal ingredients and really approachable. If you are familiar with the author you may wish for more salumi an offal dishes. But, one believes that those books will come. There is really nice section in the front of the book about

different cured and aged meats. Also, I really enjoyed the section on cheeses. Overall a good book and I am looking forward to others from Chris Cosentino.

I had the pleasure of living blocks away from Chris' last restaurant, Incanto, eating there sometimes twice a week for almost a decade. His food is simply incredible. His menu changed almost daily, so I've sampled - more than once - many, if not most, of these recipes. It is great to see all those amazing dishes consolidated into one book. I pull this book from my shelves often. I lend it out to friends until they are convinced to buy a copy for themselves. I remind them that Chris won Top Chef Masters cooking many of these dishes. As far as I am concerned this is an essential arrow in your cookbook quiver. Make it happen people. Buy this book and dig in.

very chill approach to entertaining. Chris manages to bring his style through without discouraging your own creativity. A very cool book for all levels of talent in the kitchen.

I've always been a fan of Chris Cosentino's cooking (and Twitter feed) so I was excited to finally have a cookbook from him. This book reflects his signature style and will make a welcome addition to your cookbook shelf.

Great little cook book by an American contemporary master.

A very different cookbook. It is all about Italian appetizers or first courses. A good addition to my cookbook library with over 2, 000 books.

This was a Christmas present for my son who is in Culinary School studying to be a Chef. He is awesome and he's already read this book!!!

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