Esquire cookbook teaches men to cook

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Esquire food editor Ryan D'Agostino cooks a recipe from the cookbook “Eat Like a Man.”

Sorry, guys – you no longer have an excuse to stay out of the kitchen.

And with a copy of Esquire's "Eat Like a Man," the unapologetically male-centric guide to cooking, there's no reason to.

Billing itself as "the only cookbook a man will ever need," the collection, edited by Ryan D'Agostino, seeks to create a balance between culinary ambition and manageability.

Its mission: to give a man everything he needs to feed himself, his friends and his family.

But this isn't your "dude food" handbook. Recipes don't include Frito pie, beer-soaked hot dogs or pizza bagels. Nor is the book so complex that it'll make men cower behind their aprons.

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"It's not cooking school," insists D'Agostino, Esquire's articles editor. "It's cooking for fun and enjoyment and to feed who you love. There are other cookbooks for men out there, but I think the approach we take is not to treat men like they don't know what they're doing or that they don't belong in the kitchen."

Instead, D'Agostino, 38, believes men can and should cook, if only to satisfy their inner, testosterone-fueled urges.

"If you think about it, cooking lends itself to the things that men like to do," he laughs. "There are tools involved. There are open flames. There's some danger. You start to realize that this is just food and ingredients. It's not some magic formula."

From the finished products, it sure looks magical. Containing more than 100 recipes from top chefs including Eric Ripert, David Chang and Michael Symon, "Eat Like a Man" includes barbecue-spice-rubbed skirt steak, "Rich-Boy" sandwiches and breakfast-style red beans and rice grits.

It also has tips and tricks from the likes of Thomas Keller, Julia Child and Mario Batali, as well as essays on how food often defines a man's life.

For instance, when asked what his last meal would be, Batali responded, "the food would be much less important than the company."

D'Agostino agrees and believes food serves a much more significant function than simply satisfying our stomachs. The home cook vividly recalls making his father's favorite Italian red sauce for a family gathering.

"We sat down to eat it and I could see the look on his face. He couldn't believe it. He grew up with his mom cooking red sauce on Sundays, and I was kind of replicating that for him. And to see that come over his face was amazing. He was really impressed, and who doesn't want to impress their dad?"

Though he admits that a son impressing his dad with cooking is somewhat unusual, D'Agostino hopes "Eat Like a Man" can help men walk into any kitchen and feel confident.

"In a lot of ways this book is personal because it's what I wish I had," D'Agostino admits. "It gives you that confidence to understand that you can make it happen."

Recipe: Rich-Boy

Serves: 2

Ingredients

Chef Kevin Davis of Steelhead Diner, Seattle, Wash.
Difficulty: Easy

4 links chaurice (Creole chorizo) or spicy pork sausage (about ½ pound)
Unsalted butter, softened
Soft French-style long loaf of bread, split and cut into 2 (6-inch) lengths
Hot sauce aioli (recipe follows)
Iceberg lettuce, shredded
1 large ripe tomato, thinly sliced
Coarse salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 dill pickle, sliced lengthwise into long "planks"

**Hot Sauce Aioli**
- 4 large egg yolks
- Pinch of coarse salt
- Squeeze of fresh lemon juice
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons Louisiana-style hot sauce (or to taste)
- 1 cup canola oil

### Instructions
1. Halve the sausage links horizontally, remove the meat from casing, and flatten into long patties. (You will have 4).
2. In a skillet over medium heat, fry the patties until cooked through and browned on both sides, 6 to 8 minutes.
3. Lightly butter the bread and lightly toast in the skillet (buttered-side down).
4. Spread the bread (upper and lower halves) with aioli. Arrange the sausage patties on bottom half (2 per sandwich) and layer shredded lettuce, tomato slices (seasoned with salt and pepper to taste) and dill-pickle planks on the top half of the bread.
5. Close the sandwiches and press down lightly with the palm of your hand to flatten in place.

**Hot Sauce Aioli**
Put all the ingredients except the oil in a blender or food processor and blend to combine. Slowly add the oil, processing until thick and creamy. Makes about one cup.