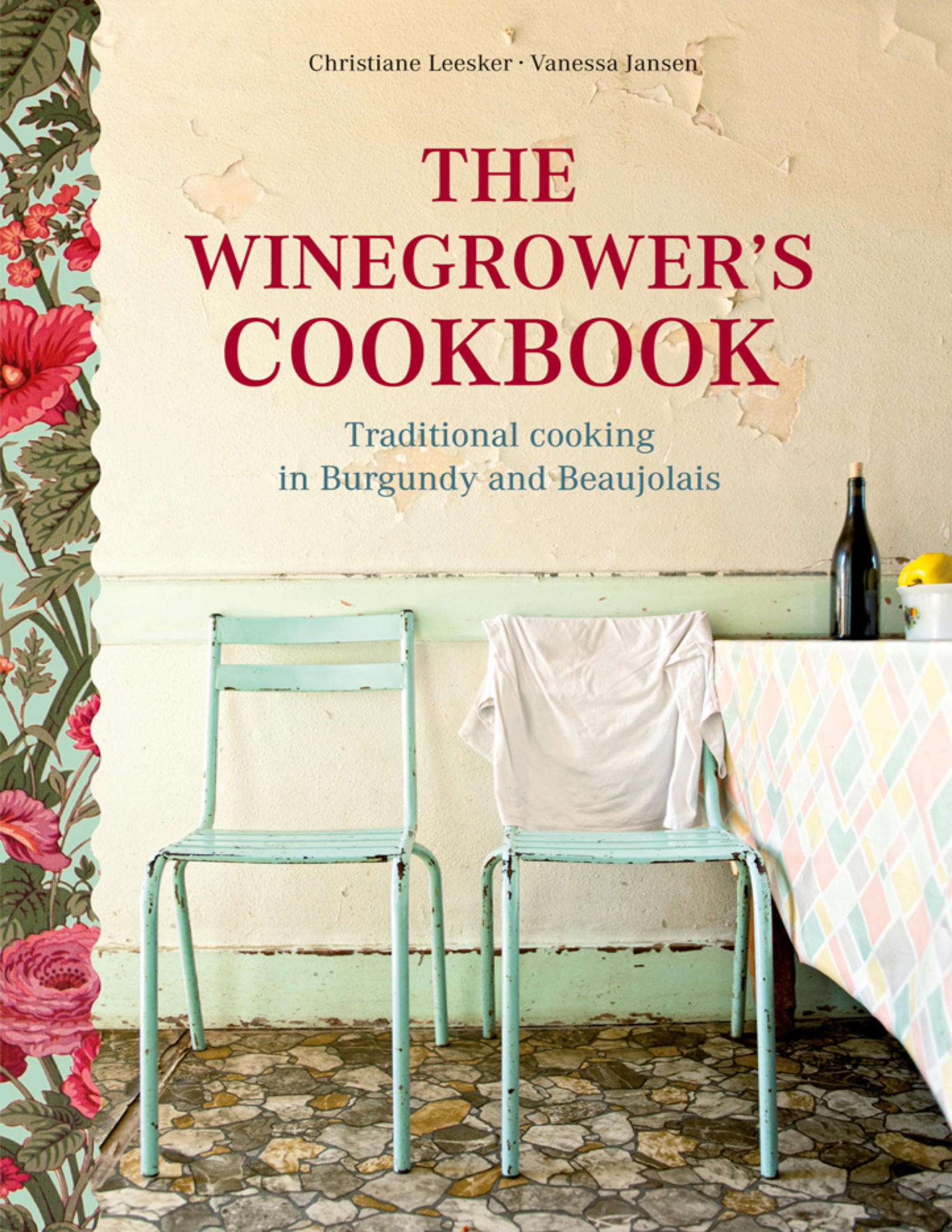


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THE WINEGROWER'S COOKBOOK

Traditional cooking
in Burgundy and Beaujolais



Note:

For all recipes, quantities are given in both metric and imperial measures and, when appropriate, in standard cups and spoons (US).

Quantities and terms after slash are intended for North American readers.

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Thanks!
Merci!







The village is
called Saint Vérand,
but the wine
is spelled St Véran.

GRAPE HARVEST COOKING

La cuisine des vendanges

Excitement is in the air as wine growers study weather reports and assess the sugar content of the grapes to determine the best moment for harvest. Busy activity is everywhere, the harvesters arrive, the vineyards fill with tractors and people. The smell of grapes and must, of wood smoke and damp earth is in the air. The excitement continues until the last vineyard is harvested, the last grapes are brought in, and finally culminates in the “R’voule”, the final celebration of the grape harvest: Tractors are decorated, the “Ban bourguignon” is sung, and vintners and helpers celebrate exuberantly together.

Winegrowers and cooks swear by their old-fashioned, wood-fired ovens when they feed four courses twice a day to their teams of twenty to thirty people. These ovens are not used for the rest of the year, but for the six to twelve days of the grape harvest they never cool down and really come into their own. Where the harvest workers – students, family members, neighbours, friends – are still given board and lodging the culinary traditions surrounding the grape harvest are particularly alive. We saw carefully preserved menus from fifty years of grape harvesting. The ones in the picture above left are from the Guillot family from Cruzille. In past days, the harvest sometimes did not start until October but now, it ususally begins in September, and

sometimes in August if the grapes are ready. Timing the perfect moment to pick is part of the wine makers' art.

BREAKFAST

Le petit déjeuner

“Allez! Debout les gars!” Fists pound on the shutters. Outside dawn is breaking. Mist hangs above the vineyards in the valleys. The air is fresh and smells of wet stones and wood smoke. In the room where we take our meals, it is as warm as toast. Saucepans with hot milk and huge pots of freshly brewed coffee steam on the long tables. Thick slices of crusty bread are stacked next to the yellow bulk pack of Poulain cocoa.

In front of each of us is a bol, a coffee bowl, the glaze cracked, the edges chipped, worn down by generations of grape pickers. At the head of the table a single soup bowl is set. The patron, our winemaker, sits behind it, strokes his stubbly cheeks mischievously and pours himself a good gulp of red wine into the vegetable soup. He eats bread with “fromage fort”, a sharp cheese spread, asking everyone: “Alors, vous êtes en forme?”, so are you fit and ready? We spread our bread thickly with butter and jam, dip it in our hot latte, spill coffee and crumbs on the plasticised tablecloth, chew and nod sleepily.









Peach jam

confiture de pêches

For approx. 5 jars:

1.2 kg|2 1/2 pounds peaches

juice of 2 lemons

700 g|3 1/2 cups sugar

Rinse the peaches in cold water, remove the stones, cut the peaches into small pieces and mix them with the lemon juice and sugar in a large saucepan. Leave to infuse overnight.

The next day, boil everything for 20-30 minutes, stirring with a wooden spoon, until the jam leaves a film on the spoon when lifted out of the saucepan. Then pour the boiling hot jam into sterilised screw-top jars, seal immediately and turn upside down for a few minutes.

Tip:

In France it is quite usual for jam to be made without any gelling agent. Try it out, it works!

Fig jam

confiture de figues

For approx. 5 jars:

1 kg|2 1/3 pounds ripe, firm figs

400-500 g|2-2 1/2 cups sugar

juice of 2 lemons

1 vanilla pod

Cut the figs into quarters, removing the stalk. Mix the fruit in a large saucepan with the sugar, lemon juice and the vanilla pod cut into pieces and leave to infuse for 4 hours. Then bring everything to the boil and simmer over a low heat for 20-30 minutes, stirring with a wooden spoon. Pour the boiling hot jam into sterilised screw-top jars, close immediately and leave upside down for a few minutes.

Tip:

Fig jam tastes great on fresh bread, but is also excellent with goat's cheese!

