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Pie In The Sky Tv Series Cookbook

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Introduction: A Culinary Mystery Worth Savoring

For fans of British television, the 1990s yielded a number of unforgettable series, but few blended the intrigue of a police procedural with the warmth of a professional kitchen as seamlessly as **Pie in the Sky**. Starring the late, great Richard Griffiths as Detective Inspector Henry Crabbe, the show follows a seasoned policeman who dreams of retiring to run a country restaurant. That dream becomes a reality, yet crime has a habit of finding him even among the saucepans and pastry dough. What many viewers may not realize is that the series inspired a real-world culinary companion: the **Pie In The Sky Tv Series Cookbook**. This cookbook is not merely a piece of memorabilia; it is a thoughtfully compiled collection of recipes that reflect the dishes featured in the show, allowing fans to recreate the comfort food that Henry Crabbe himself would serve at his fictional restaurant, The Pie in the Sky. In this article, we will explore the history of the series, the story behind the cookbook, its most notable recipes, and why it remains a cherished item for both cooking enthusiasts and television aficionados.

The World of Pie in the Sky: Where Crime Meets Cuisine

Before diving into the cookbook, it helps to understand the unique charm of the television series. **Pie in the Sky** originally aired on BBC One from 1994 to 1997, spanning five series and 40 episodes. The central character, Henry Crabbe, is a gifted detective who has grown weary of the bureaucratic side of policing. His true passion is cooking, and he longs to open his own restaurant with his wife, Margaret (played by Maggie Steed). When an opportunity arises to take over a countryside eatery, Crabbe jumps at the chance. However, his former boss, Assistant Chief Constable Freddy Fisher (played by Malcolm Sinclair), repeatedly pulls him back into investigations under the guise of "consulting." The result is a delightful mix of murder mysteries and mouth-watering food scenes.

The show was praised for its gentle humour, strong character development, and the palpable love for food that permeated every episode. Viewers watched Crabbe prepare everything from roast beef to elaborate desserts, often using his culinary intuition as a metaphor for solving crimes. The restaurant itself became a character, with a rustic kitchen and a menu that changed with the seasons. Naturally, this led to a demand from audiences: could they cook the dishes they saw on screen? The answer came in the form of the **Pie In The Sky Tv Series Cookbook**, a book that bridges the gap between fictional dining and real-world gastronomy.

The Genesis of the Cookbook: Bringing Fiction to the Kitchen

Published in 1995 by BBC Books, **The Pie in the Sky Cookbook**was authored by Richard Griffiths (with input from the show's creators and possibly a professional chef). It is important to note that Richard Griffiths, the actor, was himself an accomplished cook. He contributed to the authenticity of the series by often cooking many of the dishes seen on screen. The cookbook was designed to capture the essence of Henry Crabbe’s cooking

style: hearty, British, and rooted in traditional techniques, yet with a personal twist. The book contains over 100 recipes, each linked to specific episodes or character moments.

The cookbook is organized not just by course but also by the context in which the dish appeared. For example, "A Quick Supper for a Retired Detective" might preface a simple pasta dish, while "Fisher's Folly" could be a complicated dessert meant to impress the meddling police chief. This narrative approach makes the cookbook more than a list of instructions; it is a companion piece that enriches the viewing experience. Fans who own the **Pie In The Sky Tv Series Cookbook** often describe it as a way to step into the fictional world, to taste what it might be like to dine at Crabbe's restaurant. The book also includes notes on the show, character anecdotes, and production stills, making it a treasured collector's item.

Key Features of the Cookbook

- Episode-Linked Recipes: Each recipe is paired with a specific episode, including the context in which it was prepared.
- British Comfort Food Focus: The dishes emphasize classic British ingredients and techniques, from steak and kidney pie to steamed puddings.
- Practical and Approachable: Instructions are written for home cooks of varying skill levels, with clear step-by-step guidance.
- Behind-the-Scenes Content: The cookbook includes photography from the set and insights into how the food was made for the show.
- Seasonal Menus: Some recipes are grouped into suggested menus for different occasions, mimicking the restaurant's seasonal approach.

Exploring the Recipes: From Starters to Desserts

Let's take a closer look at the culinary landscape of the **Pie In The Sky Tv Series Cookbook**. The recipes are predominantly British, but they also include international influences that reflect the eclectic taste of Henry Crabbe. For instance, there is a recipe for "Crabbe's Prawn Cocktail" – a retro classic that was a staple of British dining in the 1970s and 80s. The book also features a rich "Game Pie," made with venison and pheasant, a nod to the show's title. The pies themselves are a recurring motif, with variations including a "Chicken and Leek Pie" and a "Steak and Kidney Pie with Mushroom Ketchup."

One standout recipe is the "Lemon Tart with Wild Thyme," which appears in an episode where Crabbe uses the tart to win over a difficult food critic. The cookbook provides the exact method, including the trick of infusing the custard with fresh thyme. Another fan-favorite is "Fisher's Favourite Fish Pie," a creamy, comforting dish that the character Freddy Fisher often tries to steal from the kitchen. The cookbook also includes a section on side dishes and sauces, such as "Crabbe's Roast Potatoes" – famously crispy on the outside and fluffy within – and a "Red Wine Jus" that is used in multiple episodes.

Desserts are a highlight, with puddings like "Sticky Toffee Pudding with Butterscotch Sauce" and "Apple and Blackberry Crumble" capturing the essence of homely British cooking. The **Pie In The Sky Tv Series Cookbook**does not shy away from ambitious recipes either; there is a "Chocolate and Orange Marquise" that requires multiple steps and a bain-marie, but the results are well worth the effort. For those who love baking, the book includes a "Basic Shortcrust Pastry" recipe that is used in several pies, along with tips for achieving a perfect golden crust.

A Sample Menu from the Cookbook

1. Starter: Smoked Mackerel Pâté with Melba Toast
2. Main Course: Henry's Lamb Hotpot with Root Vegetables
3. Dessert: Elderflower and Gooseberry Fool
4. Beverage: A pint of Henry's favourite ale (or a cup of strong tea)

This menu embodies the rustic, seasonal philosophy of the fictional restaurant. The cookbook encourages readers to adapt ingredients based on availability, a principle that aligns with modern sustainable cooking trends.

Cultural Impact and Lasting Legacy

Although the series ended in 1997, the **Pie In The Sky Tv Series Cookbook** has enjoyed enduring popularity. It is often sought after by collectors of British TV memorabilia and by home cooks who appreciate its no-nonsense approach to comfort food. The cookbook has been reprinted occasionally, and used copies can fetch a premium price online, especially those in good condition with the original dust jacket. The show itself has found a new audience through streaming services and DVD releases, which has reignited interest in the cookbook.

Furthermore, the cookbook has been praised for its authenticity. Unlike many television tie-in cookbooks that are rushed to market, this one feels genuine – a reflection of Richard Griffiths' own love for cooking. In interviews, Griffiths mentioned that he insisted on testing every recipe himself, and the book's straightforward tone reflects his personality. For fans, the **Pie In The Sky Tv Series Cookbook** is more than a cooking guide; it is a way to reconnect with a beloved character and to experience the warmth and charm of the series in a tangible, delicious way.

Where to Find the Cookbook Today

If you are looking to purchase the **Pie In The Sky Tv Series Cookbook**, your best bets are second-hand bookshops, online marketplaces like eBay and AbeBooks, and dedicated collectible book retailers. Due to its rarity, prices can vary widely depending on condition. Some fans have also scanned and shared recipes online, though the full experience of the book – with its photographs and episode notes – is best enjoyed in the original print format. Additionally, libraries in the UK may carry copies in their special collections. It remains a delightful piece of television history.

Conclusion: A Taste of Nostalgia

The **Pie In The Sky Tv Series Cookbook** stands as a unique testament to a show that understood the power of food as storytelling. At its core, the series was about a man torn between his duties and his passions, and the cookbook allows us to partake in the passion. Whether you are a longtime fan of Henry Crabbe or a newcomer curious about British television of the 1990s, this cookbook offers a warm, inviting journey into a world where every meal is made with care and every recipe has a story. So preheat your oven, dust off your rolling pin, and prepare to cook your way through the episodes. After all, a little bit of pie in the sky is never out of reach when you have the right recipe in hand.

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