

Food and drink guides

The Complete Interactive Cookbook

10,000 Recipes

Elle 2,000 Recipes

Key Home Gourmet

The Ultimate Guide to Cooking Around the World

The Tastes of Italy

Rhodes on Rom

The Art of Making Great Pastries

Chocolate Chocolate Chocolate

Roux Brothers Desserts

Vegetarian Delights

Lynn Fischer's Healthy Indulgences

Oz Clarke's Wine Guide

The Interactive Wine Cellar

Know Your Stuff: Wines

World Drink Dictionary

Cocktail Classics

Cocktail Hour

Classic Pleasures: Guide to Cigars, Brandies, Cognacs and Coffee

Michael Jackson's World Beer Hunter

Bon

Gluttons, gourmets, boozers and wine buffs will find a feast of fun on CD-ROM. We round up the recipes and sample the drinks trolleys on a host of interactive guides to food and drink

As little as 10 years ago it could be written – as gastronaut Keith Floyd indeed wrote – that British cookery ‘just doesn’t exist’. True, when he wrote these words he was despondently about to embark on what became an enthusiastic quest of discovery for great British dishes, but his words reflect the general view throughout Europe that the British simply had no interest in the delights of the table. How times have changed.

Not only is British cookery now recognised as delicious and distinctive, the British people themselves have become almost obsessed with good food and cooking. There’s an abundance of cookery programmes on television, and leading chefs such as Keith Floyd, Gary Rhodes and Delia Smith are as famous as movie stars. There are rows of cookery books in the bookshops, every high street seems to have at least one specialist cookware shop, and the average supermarket contains an abundance and extraordinary variety of meat, fresh fruits and vegetables.

This huge interest in eating and drinking has spilled over into the software market, and there are now dozens of food-related titles to choose from. There is something for everyone, from plain and simple recipe collections through to multimedia guides backed by celebrity chefs, such as Gary Rhodes and the Roux Brothers.

The booze guides are growing too. There are several wine guides, the most famous of which is the Microsoft Wine Guide hosted by Oz Clarke. But now there are guides to cocktails and beer from around the world. There is even a wonderful CD-ROM called Classic Pleasures, which only costs a tenner and tells ➡



appétit



you everything you ever wanted to know about the after-dinner delights of coffee, brandy and cigars.

PC cooking?

At first, the idea of a recipe book or cookbook on your computer seems stupid. Who has their computer in their kitchen? But it isn't quite as daft an idea as you might think.

With a recipe database on your computer you can say goodbye to tedious searching through cookery books. If you want to cook a chicken, simply type in 'chicken' and choose from one of dozens of recipes that appear.

If you open your cupboard and discover it somewhat bare, type in the ingredients you have to hand, and in no time at all you will be presented with a list of recipes using those ingredients. So searching for recipes is quick and easy.

Many cookery programs, notably The Complete Interactive Cookbook and Key Home Gourmet, let you add recipes, giving you somewhere to store your favourites and where you will easily find all those recipes handed down through the family, collected from friends or culled from the colour supplements.

A computer or electronic recipe book is also more hygienic. You can print out a recipe and throw it away as soon as you have finished cooking – no more food stained and splattered cook books! If you want to, you could store the printout in a wipe-clean plastic cover and keep all your most used recipes in a single ring-binder in the kitchen. Your cookery books can then be moved elsewhere and free a little extra and always welcome space in the kitchen.

Things to look for

There are some things you need to be aware of when buying a cookery disc. Perhaps the most important is that most electronic cookbooks, like most software, are American. They may give American measurements and contain American ingredients. A table showing the UK equivalents of US measurements should be easy to find, and you probably already have one in a printed cookery book.

American ingredients present more of a problem. Not only do they use strange names, such as eggplant for aubergine, but in some cases the ingredient may not be readily available outside the US. In the main, though, it isn't too difficult to locate an equivalent.

Many electronic cookery books have features that make them superior to their paper-based counterparts. For example, The Complete Interactive Cookery Book

Gourmet on the Net

There are nearly 8,000 food-related sites on the Internet. It's a treasure trove of recipes of every type and description from all around the world, along with food advice and news. The Internet is also a superb resource for anyone with special dietary needs, such as diabetics. Most sites catering for special needs such as these provide all sorts of advice from people with the same requirements.

The place to start investigating food sites is The Kitchen Link (www.kitchenlink.com), which has loads of links, an almost overwhelming amount of information and the opportunity to subscribe to a free monthly newsletter updating you on new sites, providing recipes and generally keeping the food curious up to date. A little more basic but equally comprehensive is Amy Gale's List of Food and Cooking Sites (www.cs.cmu.edu/~mjw/recipes/other-sites.html), and a personal favourite is Mimi's Cyber Kitchen (www.cyber-kitchen.com).

If you want to keep up-to-date with the world of food, the place to turn is the Food Channel (www.foodchannel.com) or Eating Well Magazine (www.eatingwell.com). The Epicurious site (<http://food.epicurious.com>) features more than 7,000 recipes, plus news, views and advice. And for international recipes, the place to head is the Global Gastronomer (www.cs.yale.edu/HTML/YALE/CS/HyPlans/hupfer/global/gastronomer.html).



and The Art of Making Great Pastries, among others, contain a feature that lets you scale a recipe for the number of people for whom you are cooking. Others – Cooking Around the World and, again, The Ultimate Interactive Cookbook – allow you to modify the recipes, perhaps changing one ingredient for another, such as changing dark soy sauce to light soy sauce, or changing ingredients to suit your own personal diet. Another feature in some programs is the ability to add notes to a recipe.

Key Home Gourmet and the feature-rich Complete Interactive Cookbook also let you print out an ingredients list to take to the shops. The Complete Interactive Cookbook even combines ingredients. For example, if one recipe requires 1lb zucchini and another requires 1.5lb of zucchini, it will list the total amount of zucchini you require as 2.5lb.

These days, health is of paramount importance. Several of the cookbooks, such as the Key Home Gourmet, provide you with an extraordinary amount of nutritional information, including the calories, fat grams, percentage of fat, cholesterol, sodium, protein and so on, in a recipe.

Turning to booze, the Oz Clarke Wine Guide (formerly the Microsoft Wine Guide) has been around for a few years and is currently in its third incarnation. It is the most comprehensive wine encyclopaedia on CD-ROM, covering everything from the grape on the vine to the taste of the wine itself.

Very similar in concept but by no means as comprehensive is The Interactive Wine Cellar, a budget CD-ROM that contains numerous valuable tips from wine expert Robert Mondavi and other noted wine aficionados. It includes an A-Z guide to wine terms, an atlas to the wine-producing regions, a descriptive guide to all manner of wines, plus some video and audio.

The World Drink Dictionary is another excellent CD-ROM. Based on a world-famous drinks guide by Nestore Venturini, it is a fairly comprehensive general guide to all the world's drinks – wines, liquors, cocktails and beers – and includes a fantastic database of 1,000 drink recipes and an extensive glossary of terms. Included with The Dictionary is another CD-ROM – absolutely free – and a truly sumptuous one it is too. Called The World of Italian Wine, it is as close to a comprehensive guide to Italian wines as you are ever likely to find.

Curiously, one or two years ago we wrote that there was a paucity of CDs about cocktails. Now we have two – Cocktail Hour and Cocktail Classics. Recipes, myths and trivia abound on these CDs.

And finally, dear old beer, the most drunk booze in the world and brewed absolutely everywhere. Michael Jackson is to beer what Jilly Goolden and Oz Clarke are to wine, and his World Beer Hunter will delight anyone who is seriously into the delights of this often under-rated beverage.

Bon Appétit!



Food and drink guides



Food guides

	The Complete Interactive Cookbook	10,000 Recipes	ELLE 2,000 Recipes	Key Home Gourmet	The Ultimate Guide to Cooking Around the World	The Tastes of Italy
Manufacturer	Comptons	Focus Multimedia	Grolier Interactive	The Learning Company	Koch Media	Europress
Telephone	0181 246 4000	01889 570156	01865 264800	0181 246 4000	01256 707767	01625 855000
Price	£24.99	£9.99	£24.99	£19.99	£19.99	£19.99
Minimum requirements	Win 3.1/95, DOS 5.0 or later, 8Mb of RAM, 8Mb of hard disk space, 2x CD-ROM SVGA graphics, Sound Blaster-compatible sound card	Win 3.1/95, 486SX 25MHz, 4Mb of RAM, 1Mb of hard disk space, 2x CD-ROM, SVGA graphics	Win 3.1/95, 486SX 33MHz, 8Mb of RAM, 2x CD-ROM, SVGA	Win 3.1/95, 386DX 33MHz, 4Mb of RAM, CD-ROM drive, SVGA graphics	Win 3.1/95, 386DX 33MHz, 4Mb of RAM, CD-ROM drive, SVGA	Win 3.1/95, 486, 4Mb of RAM, CD-ROM drive, SVGA graphics, sound card
Product						
Number of recipes	2,532	10,000	2,000	10,000	1,000+	100
Search facilities	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★	★★★	★★★
Scale ingredients	●	●	○	●	○	○
Change recipe details	●	○	○	○	●	○
Add notes	●	○	○	○	●	●
Add recipes	●	○	○	●	●	○
Nutritional values	●	○	○	●	Calories only	○
Create/suggest menu	●	○	●	●	●	○
Shopping list	●	○	○	●	○	○
Glossary	○	○	●	○	○	○
US/UK measurements	Optional	UK	UK	Metric	UK and Int	UK
US/UK ingredients	Some US	Some US	UK	US	UK and Int	UK
Video	●	○	●	○	○	●
Illustrations	●	●	●	○	●	●
Features						
Ease of use	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
Presentation	★★★★★	★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
Overall	★★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
Ratings						



Drink guides

	Oz Clarke's Wine Guide	The Interactive Wine Cellar	Know Your Stuff: Wines	World Drink Dictionary	Cocktail Classics
Manufacturer	IDP	Focus Multimedia	10 Out of 10	CD Imports	The Learning Company
Telephone	0990 084201	01889 570156	0113 239 4627	01525 374747	0181 246 4000
Price	£24.99	£9.99	£14.99	£9.95	£ 9.99
Minimum requirements	Win 3.1/95, 386, 8Mb of RAM, 256-colour display, 2x CD-ROM, sound card	Win 3.1/95, 386/33MHz, 4Mb of RAM, 256-colour display, 2x CD-ROM, sound card	Win 3.1/95, 8Mb of RAM	Windows 95, 486/66MHz, 8Mb of RAM, 256-colour display, 2x CD-ROM, sound card	Win 3.1/95, 486/66MHz, 8Mb of RAM, 256-colour display, 2x CD-ROM, sound card
Product					
Video	●	●	○	●	●
Illustrations	●	●	●	●	●
Feat					
Ease of Use	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★
Presentation	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★
Value for Money	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★
Overall	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★
Ratings					

★ = Poor ★★ = Below average ★★★ = Average ★★★★ = Good ★★★★★ = Excellent ○ No ● Yes

Food and drink guides



When it comes to cooking, it is difficult to nominate a single Best Buy, simply because there so many different products are available. However, for a good balance of features, presentation and a large and sumptuous collection of recipes, you can't beat The Complete Interactive Cookbook. Choosing a Best Buy in the drinks category is doubly difficult – it is impossible to compare a wine guide with a

collection of cocktail recipes. This said, for being a comprehensive guide to wine in a format that even the complete novice – both wine and computer – can understand, the Oz Clarke Wine Guide remains the Best Buy.



We only chose a selection of the available food titles on CD-ROM for this feature, and those we selected are here were chosen because they are all good. It follows that every one of them comes recommended. But the two that are worthy of special mention are The Art of Making Good Pastries, which is well presented, has excellent recipes and a great price tag, and the more expensive, The Roux Brothers' Desserts, which is a masterclass with the master chefs. Turning to drink, Classic Pleasures is an informative and inexpensive guide to those after-dinner luxuries, but it is beaten by Michael Jackson's World Beer Hunter.

Paul Begg

Rhodes on Rom	The Art of Making Great Pastries	Chocolate Chocolate Chocolate	Roux Brothers Desserts	Vegetarian Delights	Lynn Fischer's Healthy Indulgences
Anglia Multimedia	Europress	The Learning Company	Macmillan Interactive Publishing	Europress	The Learning Company
0500 600191	01625 855000	0181 246 4000	0171 881 8070	01625 855000	0181 246 4000
£29.99	£9.99	£9.99	£29.99	£9.99	£39.99
Win 3.1/95, 486DX, 4Mb of RAM, CD-ROM drive, SVGA graphics	Win 3.1/95, 486DX, 8Mb of RAM, CD-ROM drive, SVGA 256-colour, sound card	Win 3.1/95, 486 66MHz, 8Mb of RAM, CD-ROM drive, SVGA 256-colour, sound card	Win 3.1/95, 486 66MHz, 8Mb of RAM, CD-ROM drive, SVGA 256-colour, sound card	Win 3.1/95, 486 66MHz, 8Mb of RAM, CD-ROM drive, SVGA 256-colour, sound card	Win 3.1/95, 386, 4Mb of RAM, 6Mb of hard disk space, CD-ROM drive, SVGA 256-colour, sound card
500	101	101	40+	200+	260+
★★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★	★★★	★★
○	○	○	○	●	●
○	○	○	○	○	○
○	●	○	○	●	○
○	○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○	○
○	Limited	○	●	○	○
UK	Either	US	UK	UK	US
UK	UK	US	UK	UK	US
●	●	●	●	○	●
●	●	●	●	●	●
★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★
★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★
★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★	★★★★★



Cocktail Hour	Classic Pleasures: Guide to Cigars, Brandies, Cognacs and Coffee	Michael Jackson's World Beer Hunter
Europress	The Learning Company	Discovery Channel/BMG
01625 855000	0181 246 4006	0171 384 7800
£9.99	£9.99	£19.99
Win 3.1/95, 486/66MHz, 8Mb of RAM, 256-colour display, 2x CD-ROM	Win 3.1/95, 486/33MHz, 8Mb of RAM, 256-colour display, 2x CD-ROM, sound card	8Mb RAM, 256-colour display, 2x CD-ROM drive, sound card
●	●	●
●	●	●
★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
★★★★	★★★★	★★★★