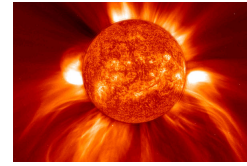




WHY COOK WITH SOLAR?



Solar cooking is the simplest and easiest way to cook food without the need for using fuel or heating up your kitchen. Many people choose to use solar for these reasons. In parts of the world where people use fire as their primary source for cooking, they often have to walk for miles to gather wood, or spend their small incomes on fuel, so the benefit of using a natural, free, resource of the sun is a wonderful blessing! ☺ The advantages of using solar are:

Improved Health and Nutrition

Food cooks slowly, evenly and gently in a solar cooker which helps preserve nutrients. Solar cookers use a lower heat method which doesn't break down vitamins and other nutrients the way high heat methods do. Smoking fires irritate the lungs and eyes and can cause diseases. Solar cookers are smoke-free. Solar cookers are safe for children to use without risks of fires or serious burns. With good sunlight, a solar cooker can be used to cook food or pasteurize water during emergencies when other fuels and power sources may not be available.

Cost Savings

After the initial purchase of your solar cooker, to use a solar cooker it is essentially free. No fuel needs to be purchased and the money saved by using this free resource, can be used for other things like education, clothing, etc. Think of all the money you will save on air conditioning alone by not heating up your home with your oven! There are no moving parts that might break on your solar often that require costly repairs as well.

Portable and Convenient

Solar cookers are portable and lightweight and can go anywhere you go, in the car, boat, by foot, etc. A solar cooker can be setup anywhere you go! Solar dishes are generally easy to prepare and convenient. They go into the cooker early in the day and require little or no tending. At dinner time, all you need to do is take your fully cooked meal from the cooker to your table.

Easy Cleanup

Pots used for solar cooking are easy to clean. Cleanup is easy because food isn't baked or scorched onto pots and pans.

▼ Many Uses

Solar cookers can be used to heat water for household chores, preserve fruits and vegetables, sanitize dishes and utensils, pasteurize water and milk, kill insects in grains, and many others! ☺

HOW DO SOLAR COOKERS WORK?

▼ Converts Sunlight Into Heat Energy

Most solar cookers convert sunlight into heat energy which is then retained for cooking. **Sunlight is the "fuel"** in your solar cooker. A solar cooker is placed in an outdoor spot that is sunny for several hours, and protected from strong wind, so food can be cooked safely. Solar cookers don't work well at night or on very cloudy days.

▼ Food Is Cooked In Dark Pots

Dark surfaces in your solar cooker get very hot in the sunlight and light surfaces don't. Therefore, **food is cooked in dark, thin pots with tight-fitting lids** to hold in heat and moisture.

▼ Transparent Heat Trap

A Transparent heat trap is used to retain heat in your dark pot with the use of a heat-resistant plastic bag or a large inverted glass bowl (in panel cookers) or an insulated box with a glass or plastic window (in box cookers). Curved concentrator cookers don't require a heat trap.

▼ Reflective Surfaces

Extra sunlight is captured with one or more reflective surfaces and this brings extra sunlight onto the pot and increases the heat.

▼ Solar Cooking Overview

See attached pdfs for a basic solar cooking overview. Go here for page 1: http://www.reynoldsnet.org/preparedness/Solar_cooking1.pdf and here for page 2: http://www.reynoldsnet.org/preparedness/Solar_cooking2.pdf

▼ Frequently Asked Questions

Go here for solar cooking frequently asked questions: http://solarcooking.wikia.com/wiki/Solar_Cooking:Frequently-asked_questions and here for a complete solar archive: <http://www.solarcooking.org/>

TYPES OF SOLAR COOKERS

Solar cookers come in a variety of designs, from those using expensive parabolic mirrors to those made from recycled materials found around the house. The three main types are: box cookers, curved concentrator cookers, and panel cookers. Go here to see images of these types of solar cookers:

http://solarcooking.wikia.com/wiki/How_solar_cookers_work

▼ **Boxed Cookers** - These cook at moderate to high temperatures and usually can accommodate more than one pot. These are most commonly used.

▼ **Curved Concentrator Cookers** - These cookers use "parabolic" reflectors and cook at fast, high temperatures. They require frequent adjustment, however, and need to be supervised for safe operation.

▼ **Panel Cookers** - These cookers use incorporate items from both box and curved concentrator cookers. They are simple and relatively inexpensive to buy or make.

SOLAR COOKING TIMES

Most foods take approximately twice as long to cook then in a conventional oven. Cooking time depends on the time of day. Most foods need some time in the cooker while the sun is high in the sky. In general the higher the sun, the higher the cooking temperature, so food for the evening meal should go in at least by early afternoon. Foods cook faster in several small, dark, thin metal pots, and slower in large, heavy and/or light-colored pots.

Foods cook more slowly with a large amount of liquid added (like soups) and when food is in large pieces. Cooking is slower when shadows are longer, as in the wintertime or early or late in the day, when you can do some heating but not full cooking.

After food is cooked it can be left in the cooker for several hours and will not spoil or burn.

For a list of cooking times for various foods go here:

http://solarcooking.wikia.com/wiki/Solar_cooking_hints or see attached COOK TIMES pdf here: http://www.reynoldsnet.org/preparedness/Solar_cook_times.pdf

COOKING HINTS AND RECIPES

You can use your own recipes and spices in your solar cooker. By making small adjustments in time or the amount of water, your favorite foods taste as good or better than ever! Go here for a pdf version of cooking hints:

http://www.reynoldsnet.org/preparedness/Solar_cook_hints.pdf

Some solar cooking hints include:

- Most recipes take slightly less liquid when cooked in a solar oven.
- Time for cooking depends on the temperature of the food as it is placed in the oven, as well as the brightness of the day.
- Allow plenty of time. Foods hold well in the solar oven without scorching or drying out.
- Focus oven and check food about once an hour when you're just getting started. Later on you can relax and tend to the oven only every 2-3 hours.
- Most recipes calling for a higher temperature will do fine if you give them more time.

Go here for an on-line list of solar cooking recipes:

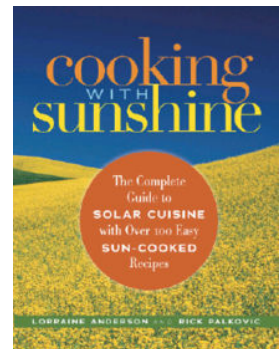
<http://solarcooking.wikia.com/wiki/Recipes>

BOOKS AND OTHER RESOURCES

▼ Cooking with Sunshine- is your definitive guide to making a variety of tasty sun-cooked meals. Solar cooking experts Lorraine Anderson and Rick Palkovic provide everything you need to get cooking, including:

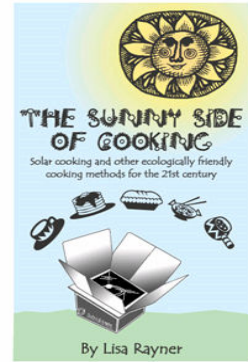
- Clear explanations of how solar cooking works and its benefits over traditional methods.
- Instructions for building your own solar cooker using inexpensive, easy-to-find materials—and information on where to buy a ready-made solar cooker.
- A selection of fun and super-easy recipes to get you started.
- A wide variety of recipes for main dishes, accompaniments, and desserts for both vegetarian and omnivorous diets.
- Creative menu ideas for special diets, tastes, and occasion...and much more!

So what are you waiting for? It's time to cook with sunshine!



▼ The Sunny Side of Cooking- is a practical, easy-to-follow guide for both beginning and experienced solar cooks. Lisa Rayner includes:

- How to choose the right solar cooker for you based on your climate and lifestyle needs.
- How different types of solar cookers work.
- How to use a solar cooker for baking, steaming, simmering, sautéing, toasting, broiling, and more.
- More than 100 vegetarian solar recipes and cooking tips (animal free).
- The only solar cookbook that explains in detail how to solar cook tofu, seitan and tempeh.
- How to bake crepes, flatbreads and tortillas, pancakes, polenta, muffins, yeast breads and pastries.
- How to adapt slow cooker (Crackpot) recipes to a solar cooker.
- How to adapt your favorite recipes to a solar cooker.
- How to can foods in a solar cooker using USDA safe canning guidelines.
- How to create a year-round sustainable cooking system by combining the use of solar cookers, fireless cookers, pressure cookers, and biomass-fueled stoves and earth ovens.



▼ Go here for a complete list of solar books on the market:
<http://solarcooking.wikia.com/wiki/Books>