

South Indian cooking

SAMAYAL: The pleasures of South Indian Vegetarian Cooking: Viji Varadarajan; Orient Enterprises, New No. 140, Peters Road, Royapettah, Chennai-600014. **Rs. 350.**

HOSPITALITY IS a way of life in Indian heritage and culture. The Indian housewives take time and meticulously plan and bring out elaborate and tasty dishes to the table and take pride in their cooking abilities.

The book under review is all about the joy of cooking and serving a loving meal.

“Samayal” in Tamil means cooking. In Indian cuisine, one can find distinct flavour and styles of cooking, according to the availability of the ingredients found there, like wheat dishes in Punjab, coconut, coconut oil and coconut milk dishes in Kerala, rice and other vegetable dishes in Tamil Nadu.

Here again each state has an array of cooking techniques according to the region like Palghat, Kongu Nadu, Chettinadu and Thanjavur.

You will find all this and much more in this book – a cook book with a difference.

The author is a housewife who has a passion for cuisine, dance and learning languages.

She loves to experiment with new ideas in cooking to bring out her gas-

tronomic talent. Viji desired that she should share her passion with the rest of the world, through her book, which has good illustrations.

The style of writing is simple and easy to follow, as the dishes are grouped into distinct categories making it easier to pick and choose.

The recipes range from the simple “Porial” to the complicated “Briyani” and the “Sugian” sweet which is coconut halwa fried in dosa batter.

The book caters to the novice and the expert, also to the health conscious, with its wide range of “Pachadis” and the “Kadalai Urundais”, for those who like a change in the breakfast and tiffin varieties.

The book has some unusual recipes like “Idly raitha” and “Navarathna raitha” to add to your table.

The collection of recipes is good with a glossary and the author’s experience to help the reader.

Going by the title of the book one would also expect some recipes from other Southern States which is not found here. It is a good book on Tamil Nadu’s cooking.

I am sure that every housewife will surely like to refer to it on a day-to-day basis.

SHOBHAA RAMJI