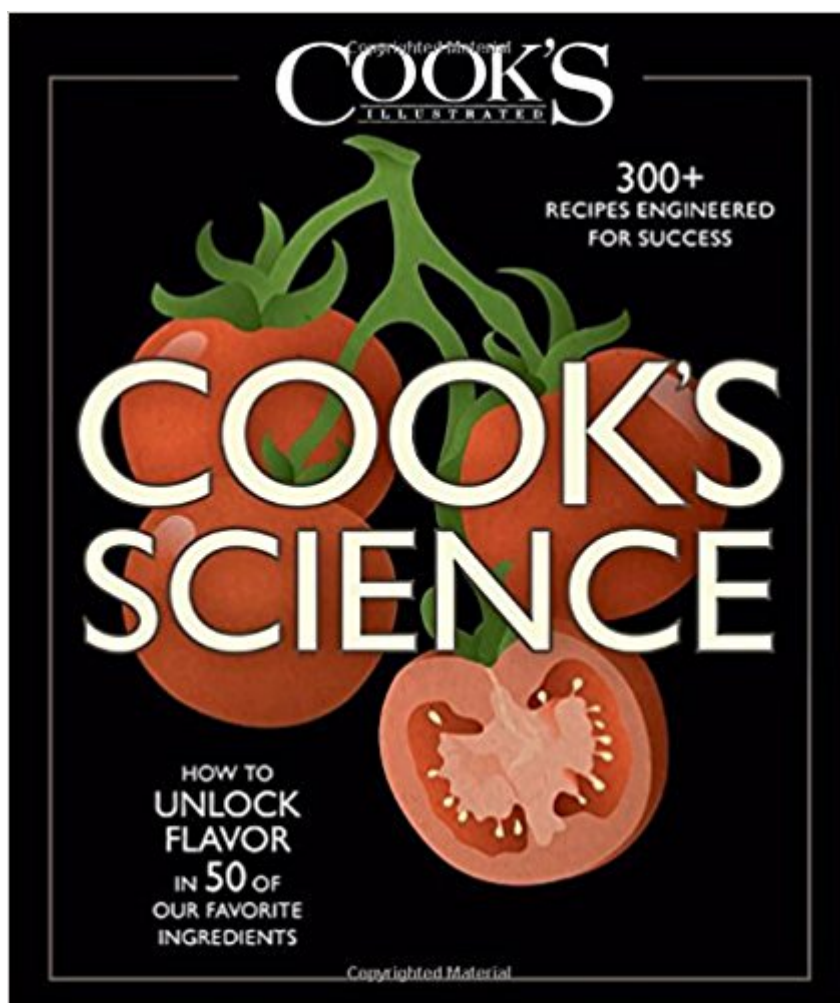


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Cook's Science: How To Unlock Flavor In 50 Of Our Favorite Ingredients



Synopsis

In *Cook's Science*, the all-new companion to the New York Times-bestselling *The Science of Good Cooking*, America's Test Kitchen deep dives into the surprising science behind 50 of our favorite ingredients--and uses that science to make them taste their best.

From the editors of *Cook's Illustrated*, and the best-selling *The Science of Good Cooking*, comes an all-new companion book highlighting 50 of our favorite ingredients and the (sometimes surprising) science behind them: *Cook's Science*. Each chapter explains the science behind one of the 50 ingredients in a short, informative essay--topics ranging from pork shoulder to apples to quinoa to dark chocolate--before moving onto an original (and sometimes quirky) experiment, performed in our test kitchen and designed to show how the science works. The book includes 50 dynamic, full-page color illustrations, giving in-depth looks at individual ingredients, "family trees" of ingredients, and cooking techniques like sous vide, dehydrating, and fermentation. The 400+ foolproof recipes included take the science into the kitchen, and range from crispy fried chicken wings to meaty-tasting vegetarian chili, coconut layer cake to strawberry rhubarb pie.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Cook's Illustrated is a widely renowned America's Test Kitchen brand that is the work of over

60 passionate chefs based in Boston, Massachusetts, who put ingredients, cookware, equipment, and recipes through objective, rigorous testing to identify the very best. America's Test Kitchen brands are well-known for top-rated television shows with more than 4 million weekly public television viewers, bestselling cookbooks, magazines, websites, and a cooking school. Discover, learn, and expand your cooking repertoire with Julia Collin Davison, Bridget Lancaster, Jack Bishop, Dan Souza, Lisa McManus, Tucker Shaw, Bryan Roof, and our fabulous team of test cooks!

I bought the *The Science of Good Cooking (Cook's Illustrated Cookbooks)* 4 years ago, and to date it remains one of my favourite cookbooks. I find myself reviewing the techniques repeatedly. *Cook's Illustrated's Science* is a new book from Cooks Illustrated. Instead of covering 50 techniques, e.g. *Gentle Heat Prevents Overcooking*, and *Salting Vegetables removes liquid*, this book covers 50 ingredients and their characteristics and best uses. They are: 1. Short Loin 2. Flank 3. Pork Loin 4. Pork Shoulder 5. Pork Belly 6. Chicken Breast 7. Chicken Wings 8. Lamb 9. White Fish 10. Salmon 11. Shrimp 12. Scallops 13. Lobster 14. Tofu 15. Eggs 16. Cream 17. Butter 18. Yogurt 19. Goat Cheese 20. Parmesan 21. Green Beans 22. Sweet Potatoes 23. Cauliflower 24. Mushrooms 25. Kale 26. Cabbage 27. Tomatoes 28. Garlic 29. Onions 30. Ginger 31. Dried Chiles 32. Apples 33. Strawberries 34. Oranges 35. Coconut 36. Pasta 37. Whole-Wheat-Flour 38. Brown Rice 39. Cornmeal 40. Oats 41. Quinoa 42. Cannellini Beans 43. Lentils 44. Olive Oil 45. Stock 46. Red Wine 47. Honey 48. Balsamic Vinegar 49. Bittersweet Chocolate 50. Almonds

As always, the test lab uses a very scientific approach, bringing in machinery such as moisture and texture analyzers to see if the food objectively really is as chewy or moist afterwards as we think. I liked too that this book took more time to go into how base level ingredients - proteins, carbohydrates, water and their distribution might impact whether food tastes sour or mushy, crispy or soggy. In terms of the actual ingredients themselves - I'm learning a tonne! A real keeper was knowing that meat actually sears better and is tastier if you cook it straight from frozen rather than defrosted (of course fresh, never frozen trumps all!) Or knowing that foods like cauliflower have a sweet spot in cooking time to bring out the nutty flavour. Or confirmation that fresh ginger makes meat mushy. I like ginger's tenderizing effect on say, Korean beef marinade, but I was unpleasantly surprised to find sous vide meat with a ginger marinade made the meat really mushy. Reason : ginger contains an enzyme called zingibain that breaks down collagen in the meat over time. Speaking of sous vide, I'm happy to see this book make more reference to this technique, as I've incorporated sous vide cooking into my daily routine much more frequently. As always, each chapter is broken down by first giving an overview of the

ingredient, a test lab experiment (for example, how to best fry white fish and preventing it from sticking on a non-stick pan? Answer : use vegetable oil, not spray on a very hot pan), as well as a number of lab tested recipes for that ingredient. There was a good variety of recipes with a mix of classics and international, as well as a DIY section for making your own bacon, tofu, and jams. Overall, I think both books are well worth having, one to learn the best techniques, the other to learn the base characteristics of your cooking ingredients. I'm already sure I'll be gifting this book to many of my foodie friends :)

Cooks Science was a disappointment because (1) the recipes are repeats of those published in The Complete America's Test Kitchen Cookbook and (2) because they repeat the same information verbatim in the "How the Science Works" section, the "Test Kitchen Experiment" and the preface to each recipe. They could have cut the text by 2/3 and had the same information. If you have any of their other books, save your money and avoid this one.

If you want to know what works best and why, this is for you. Even if you choose to ignore their recipes, the results of their tests are fascinating, practical, and helpful for avoiding mistakes. Most cookbooks concentrate on the "how", this one tells you the secrets of the "why". If you are only going to own two cookbooks, this should be one of them.

Generally, Cook's Science does a splendid and scholarly job of informing us on culinary matters. My problem that caused me to return the book was the awkward weight of the hardbound book--might better have been two spiral bound flat-lying hard-covered volumes--and the crowded, small-print pages that were hard to really utilize in a kitchen while actually working there on a countertop. I realized that this would be a book I might peruse in a good light when relaxing, but in terms of taking it into the kitchen to work from, I would tend to pick up some other book in preference to it. Too bad. Maybe a good student reference?

I've only made one recipe out of this book so far, the gingerbread, but it turned out fantastic. There are no pictures except for diagrams and charts explaining the properties of the specific ingredients, but that's probably because there just isn't any room! Each extremely detailed recipe is preceded by about 3-4 paragraphs in which they explain their process of reaching the perfect recipe. A great buy at any price.

Fabulous!!! Just what you'd hope for in this comprehensive, engaging, smart, and enticing book. Purchased for my sweetheart and he just poured over it the minute he opened it. Beautifully bound and presented too. Recipes look fantastic and we can't wait to try!

I have to admit to ordering both books by the authors. The important facts are covered in each book but different recipes. Everything I have tried has been successful. Yeah!!!

not all that impressed. not that many recipes. science part is just so-so.

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