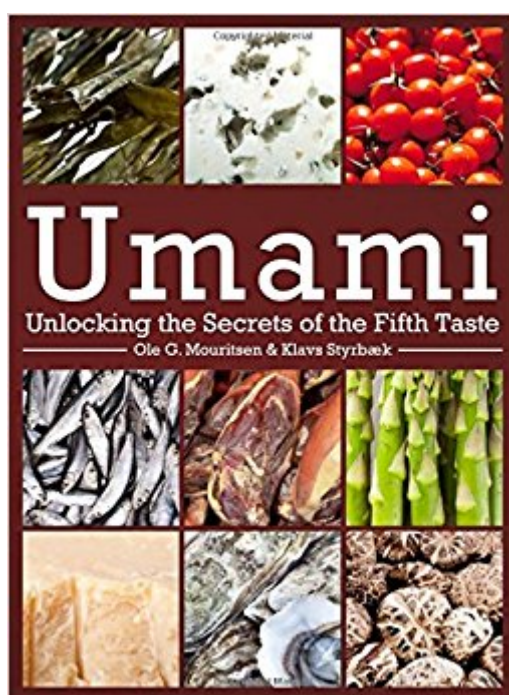


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# Umami: Unlocking The Secrets Of The Fifth Taste (Arts And Traditions Of The Table: Perspectives On Culinary History)



## Synopsis

In the West, we have identified only four basic tastes—sour, sweet, salty, and bitter—that, through skillful combination and technique, create delicious foods. Yet in many parts of East Asia over the past century, an additional flavor has entered the culinary lexicon: umami, a fifth taste impression that is savory, complex, and wholly distinct. Combining culinary history with recent research into the chemistry, preparation, nutrition, and culture of food, Mouritsen and Styrboe encapsulate what we know to date about the concept of umami, from ancient times to today. Umami can be found in soup stocks, meat dishes, air-dried ham, shellfish, aged cheeses, mushrooms, and ripe tomatoes, and it can enhance other taste substances to produce a transformative gustatory experience. Researchers have also discovered which substances in foodstuffs bring out umami, a breakthrough that allows any casual cook to prepare delicious and more nutritious meals with less fat, salt, and sugar. The implications of harnessing umami are both sensuous and social, enabling us to become more intimate with the subtleties of human taste while making better food choices for ourselves and our families. This volume, the product of an ongoing collaboration between a chef and a scientist, won the Danish national Mad+Medier-Prisen (Food and Media Award) in the category of academic food communication.

## Book Information

Series: Arts and Traditions of the Table: Perspectives on Culinary History

Paperback: 280 pages

Publisher: Columbia University Press; Reprint edition (November 24, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0231168918

ISBN-13: 978-0231168915

Product Dimensions: 7.5 x 0.6 x 10.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 13 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #278,440 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #57 in Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Beverages & Wine > Wine & Spirits > Wine Tasting #185 in Books > Business & Money > Industries > Restaurant & Food #193 in Books > Cookbooks, Food & Wine > Cooking by Ingredient > Herbs, Spices & Condiments

## Customer Reviews

The book is written in a very engaging manner, easily moving between vignettes of the latest

science and mouth-watering menus and photographs. (Gordon Shepherd, Yale University, author of *Neurogastronomy*) Mouritsen and Styrbæk demystify and explain in layman's terms the science of umami, including many Japanese elements that have not been explained in English before in this all-encompassing book. Along with Mouritsen's other publications *Sushi and Seaweeds*, *Umami* will be referred to time and time again. (Yukari Sakamoto, author of *Food Sake Tokyo*) A remarkably comprehensive account of umami taste and one in which the science is not only accurate but accessible and interesting. (John Prescott, author of *Taste Matters: Why We Like the Foods We Do*) In his earlier books *Sushi and Seaweeds*, Ole Mouritsen wove together biological, chemical, and gastronomical perspectives into rich portraits of these intriguing foods. In *Umami*, writing with the chef Klavs Styrbæk, he does the same for this much celebrated yet enigmatic 'new' taste. *Umami* is a wide-ranging and welcome progress report on our understanding of taste and deliciousness. (Harold McGee, author of *On Food and Cooking: The Science and Lore of the Kitchen*) This book will be your go-to umami resource. The content is cleverly layered with molecular-level explanations of how we taste alongside rich cultural perspective and beautiful recipes. With its stunning graphics, this book is eye candy. (Amy Rowat, founder of Science & Food) Biophysicist Ole Mouritsen... seamlessly meshes science and gastronomy... (Nature) This book, representing the fruits of a longstanding collaboration between the scientist Ole G. Mouritsen and the Danish chef Klavs Styrbæk, is richly illustrated and packed with umami-rich recipes to try at home. It should be required reading for those catering for the airlines, since umami is one of the only taste that holds up well in the air. (Times Literary Supplement) An engaging read... *Umami* is at once a scientific treatise, cultural history, unique collection of recipes, and handsome coffee-table--or for that matter, kitchen-table--book. (Sandra J. Ackerman *American Scientist*)

In the West, we have identified four basic tastes—sour, sweet, salty, and bitter—that, through skillful combination and technique, create delicious foods. Yet in many parts of East Asia over the past century, a fifth taste—umami—has entered the culinary lexicon. Umami is savory, complex, and wholly distinct. Combining culinary history with research into the chemistry, preparation, nutrition, and culture of food, this book encapsulates what we know to date about the concept of umami which, when harnessed, enables us to become more intimate with the subtleties of human taste and make better food choices for ourselves and our families. In the West, we have identified four basic tastes—sour, sweet, salty, and bitter—that, through skillful combination and technique, create delicious foods. Yet in many parts of East Asia over the past century, a fifth taste—umami—has entered the culinary lexicon. Umami is savory, complex, and wholly distinct.

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I just received the book and have read the first section and find it most interesting. I was of the old school that MSG was unsafe so was glad to read the modern clarification of this myth. The recipes look like a fine addition to my collection and the photographs are excellent. I actually bought the book to give as Christmas gift to a gourmet friend and I think I made a good decision with it.

This product is going to take a while to read. You get a history lesson about Umami. and it's an advance course on the stuff. IT's like being at cooking school without enrolling. But I am learning about Umami, and might in the future learn how to power pack punch the flavors of dishes.

One of the most significant cookbooks I have.If you take cooking seriously, this should be in your library

A must buy! If you're an aspiring Chef!

The book is an excellent review about the science behind deliciousness. While reading it you go through an adventure of old recipes, you feel the taste and you want to try everything.

This book is a must have for any Modernist Cook.Its got the Science the how to & what goes with what.You will not be sorry.

Beautiful book with most interesting facts, history lessons, and recipes. Helped my food preparation already

Great book about natural flavour enhancing of umami, the fulfilling taste that makes food better.

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